

Lessons in Renewal

Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

I. Hezekiah

2 Chronicles 29:1-2 (NIV)

¹ Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. ² He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done.

A. "he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord"

B. God is aware

2 Chronicles 29:3-11 (NIV)

³ **In the first month of the first year of his reign**, he opened the doors of the temple of the LORD and repaired them. ⁴ He brought in the priests and the Levites, assembled them in the square on the east side ⁵ and said: "Listen to me, Levites! Consecrate yourselves now and consecrate the temple of the LORD, the God of your fathers. Remove all defilement from the sanctuary. ⁶ Our fathers were unfaithful; they did evil in the eyes of the LORD our God and forsook him. They turned their faces away from the LORD's dwelling place and turned their backs on him. ⁷ They also shut the doors of the portico and put out the lamps. They did not burn incense or present any burnt offerings at the sanctuary to the God of Israel. ⁸ Therefore, the anger of the LORD has fallen on Judah and Jerusalem; he has made them an object of dread and horror and scorn, as you can see with your own eyes. ⁹ This is why our fathers have fallen by the sword and why our sons and daughters and our wives are in captivity. ¹⁰ Now I intend to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, so that his fierce anger will turn away from us. ¹¹ My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before him and serve him, to minister before him and to burn incense."

C. Temple repaired

D. Priests consecrated

1. Priestly role --- represents the people to God

1 Peter 2:9-12 (NIV)

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

2. Our High Priest

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NASB)

¹⁴ Therefore, since **we have a great high priest** who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

E. Acknowledged past & choose a new future

1 Timothy 1:12-14 (NIV)

¹² I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.

¹³ Even though **I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man**, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. ¹⁴ The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

F. Sacred Gathering

2 Chronicles 30:1-3 (NIV)

¹ Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, inviting them to come to the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel. ² The king and his officials and the whole assembly in Jerusalem decided to celebrate the Passover in the second month. ³ They had not been able to celebrate it at the regular time because not enough priests had consecrated themselves and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem.

G. Invitations to Change . . . to honor God

2 Chronicles 30:6-8 (NIV)

⁶ At the king's command, couriers went throughout Israel and Judah with letters from the king and from his officials, which read: "People of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, that he may return to you who are left, who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷ Do not be like your fathers and brothers, who were unfaithful to the LORD, the God of their fathers, so that he made them an object of horror, as you see. ⁸ Do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were; submit to the LORD. Come to the sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever. Serve the LORD your God, so that his fierce anger will turn away from you.

H. The People Respond . . . large crowd gathers

Chronicles 30:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ A very large crowd of people assembled in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month.

¹⁴ They removed the altars in Jerusalem and cleared away the incense altars and threw them into the Kidron Valley.

I. Personal enthusiasm for God

2 Chronicles 31:1 (NIV)

¹ When all this had ended, the Israelites who were there went out to the towns of Judah, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. They destroyed the high places and the altars throughout Judah and Benjamin and in Ephraim and Manasseh. After they had destroyed all of them, the Israelites returned to their own towns and to their own property.

J. Generosity

2 Chronicles 31:3-6 (NIV)

³ The king contributed from his own possessions for the morning and evening burnt offerings and for the burnt offerings on the Sabbaths, New Moons and appointed feasts as written in the Law of the LORD. ⁴ He ordered the people living in Jerusalem to give the portion due the priests and Levites so they could devote themselves to the Law of the LORD. ⁵

As soon as the order went out, the Israelites generously gave the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything. ⁶ The men of Israel and Judah who lived in the towns of Judah also brought a tithe of their herds and flocks and a tithe of the holy things dedicated to the LORD their God, and they piled them in heaps.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, our desire is to be pleasing in your sight. Thank you for watching over our lives and showing to us grace and mercy. Grant to us the courage to turn away from ungodliness and turn towards You. We choose to be clean before you, to consecrate ourselves for Your purposes. We humbly ask for your mercy upon our homes, our community and upon Your Church. We are dependent upon Your great strength and power. May our lives bring honor to our Lord Jesus, amen.