

## 2 Chronicles 29:1-19 • Cleansing the Temple

### Introduction

Throughout the Bible we come across repeated teachings of the tabernacle and temple, all of which teach us something about ourselves personally and the church corporately. God dwells in His temple, which is no longer made of stone or other earthly materials but us, members of the body of Christ. What happens when we mis-treat our temple? Or allow ungodly influences to take root inside what is supposed to be holy and dedicated to God and God alone? How do we keep the temple pure?

<sup>1</sup>Hezekiah became king when he was twenty-five years old; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. <sup>2</sup>He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

### [Read 29:1-2]

**Q: Who was the father of Hezekiah, and what kind of a king was he (the father)?**

A: [See 28:1-4.] His father was Ahaz and "he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel..." He was not only a bad king but he sacrificed some of his children (sons). Through God's providence, Hezekiah was not one of those sons.

**Q: What kind of a king was Hezekiah?**

A: Good king. "And he did right in the sight of the LORD." 2 Kings 18:5 notes that Hezekiah's trust in the Lord had not been equaled by any king who preceded him nor by any who followed (cf. 2 Chr. 31:21).

**Q: In view of the current psychological teaching "We go bad because our parents didn't treat us well (didn't affirm us/we're victims/we hated our father/mother)," how do you explain Hezekiah's difference from his father?**

A: It may very well have been the influence of his mother. His mother was "Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah." Because Zechariah is not identified here as "the son of..." we can assume that Abijah was the daughter or granddaughter of the Zechariah in chapter 24 who was murdered by Joash, Zechariah himself being the grandson of the high priest Jehoiada. In other words, Hezekiah may have had priestly influences/good teaching from sources other than his father.

But...it also shows that every person ultimately makes their own choices.

**Q: Who were the prophets who influenced Hezekiah?**

A: Isaiah, Micah and Hosea.

<sup>3</sup>In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. <sup>4</sup>He brought in the priests and the Levites and gathered them into the square on the east. <sup>5</sup>Then he said to them, “Listen to me, O Levites. Consecrate yourselves now, and consecrate the house of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and carry the uncleanness out from the holy place. <sup>6</sup>For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done evil in the sight of the LORD our God, and have forsaken Him and turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and have turned their backs. <sup>7</sup>They have also shut the doors of the porch and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. <sup>8</sup>Therefore the wrath of the LORD was against Judah and Jerusalem, and He has made them an object of terror, of horror, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes. <sup>9</sup>For behold, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this.

<sup>10</sup>“Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His burning anger may turn away from us. <sup>11</sup>My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, and to be His ministers and burn incense.”

<sup>12</sup>Then the Levites arose:

Mahath, the son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah, from the sons of the Kohathites;  
and from the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel;  
and from the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah;  
<sup>13</sup>and from the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel;  
and from the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah;  
<sup>14</sup>and from the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei;  
and from the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel.

<sup>15</sup>They assembled their brothers, consecrated themselves, and went in to cleanse the house of the LORD, according

### **[Read 29:3-19]**

**Q: Of all the things Hezekiah did regarding running the country and strengthening the country militarily, what is the one thing the writer of Chronicles focuses on?**

A: Verse 3, “...he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them.”

**Q: Why did Hezekiah have to “open the doors”?**

A: Obviously the Temple had been shut down. [See 28:24.] The purpose was to keep the Levites and priests out so as not to influence the people away from the false religions back to the One True God.

**Q: Who were the first “helpers” to be called by Hezekiah?**

A: The priests and the Levites, those originally set apart for service to God.

**Q: The cleansing of the Temple took place in phases. What were they?**

A: First, the Levites had to consecrate themselves (v. 5, 15). Then they cleansed the Temple (first, the outer porch, then the “inner part of the house.” This took a total of 16 days (v. 17).

**Q: What did they need to do to “clean” the inside of the Temple?**

A: In verse 16, they removed everything that was not supposed to be there. In verse 19, they put everything back in it that was supposed to be there.

**Q: What is the significance of the fact that both the priesthood and the temple itself had to first be “consecrated”?**

A: In order to come into the presence of God, everything must undergo purification to be clean—not just literally but spiritually, free of sin. It’s an indication that the very first work is our relationship with God, making things right personally with Him before conveying His work to others. Spiritual renewal begins at the personal level first.

to the commandment of the king by the words of the LORD. <sup>16</sup>So the priests went in to the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse it, and every unclean thing which they found in the temple of the LORD they brought out to the court of the house of the LORD. Then the Levites received it to carry out to the Kidron valley.

<sup>17</sup>Now they began the consecration on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they entered the porch of the LORD. Then they consecrated the house of the LORD in eight days, and finished on the sixteenth day of the first month. <sup>18</sup>Then they went in to King Hezekiah and said, “We have cleansed the whole house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offering with all of its utensils, and the table of showbread with all of its utensils. <sup>19</sup>Moreover, all the utensils which King Ahaz had discarded during his reign in his unfaithfulness, we have prepared and consecrated; and behold, they are before the altar of the LORD.”

<sup>16</sup>Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? <sup>17</sup>If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

<sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

<sup>16</sup>Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, “The two shall become one flesh.”

### **[Read 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 – The context is pride]**

**Application:** *Why is pride not acceptable in God’s temple? How would you address it either in an individual or the congregation as a whole? What does it mean “the temple of God is holy” as applied to the fact that **WE** are His temple?*

### **[Read 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 – The context is immorality]**

**Application:** *Why is immorality not acceptable in God’s temple? In this context, why does Paul point out “you are not your own...you have been bought with a price”? How does rejecting immorality fulfill the command, “therefore glorify God in your body”?*

### **[Read 1 Corinthians 6:16 – The context is faithfulness]**

**Application:** *Although this is an extension of the need to remain free from immorality, why is it also a teaching concerning our spiritual faithfulness? How does this fit it with the two previous admonitions to keep God’s temple holy and to glorify God?*

<sup>19</sup>So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, <sup>20</sup>having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, <sup>21</sup>in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, <sup>22</sup>in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

**[Read Ephesians 2:19-22 – The context is the Body of Christ]**

**Q: What are the basic points as they relate to being built into His temple?**

1. **“You are not longer strangers and aliens, but you are...of God's household”**. In our former life we were outside of His temple, the body of Christ, cut off from His presence and living accordingly. Now that we are members of His household, we're to live according to new standards appropriate to always being in His presence.
2. **“Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone”**. These are all aspects of God's Word, the new standards to which we're supposed to not just adhere, but build upon going forward.
3. **“Christ Jesus...in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord”**. Everything comes together in Christ alone so that we are being transformed not just into His image, but becoming the representation of Him here on earth. When people see the “temple” (the body of Believers), they're supposed to see Christ.
4. **“You are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit”**. No matter where we are, whether or not we're in a physical building together or in the course of our daily life, we're the place the Spirit dwells. No one any longer has to go to a temple or single, physical place, but we take Him with us into the world wherever we go, bringing His temple to them.

**Application:** Now apply to this the 3 previous points of why we need to be rid of pride, rid of immorality, and established in faithfulness. In other words, why is it important to cleanse His temple and keep it clean?

**Q: What is a general principle that we can connect between the cleansing of the Temple by Hezekiah and the Levites, and ourselves?**

A: If we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, we need to keep the temple clean. For some, it may be starting from a very dirty perspective (having been influenced by Ahaz, a type of Satan), and for others it may merely mean “dusting” and setting things in order. Compare this to the 4 Scriptures cited above and what **WE** ought to do.

**Q: To where did the Levites carry the “dirty” things out of the Temple?**

A: To the Kidron Valley. The Kidron Valley is the place that the blood of the sacrifices flowed into. (See also 29:16 and 30:14). Jesus was betrayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, which is on the west slope of the Mount of Olives as you ascend up from the Kidron Valley (John 18:1).

**Q: Who cleansed the Temple, and for whom?**

A: The priests cleansed the Temple for the king.

**Q: Who cleanses our temple, and for whom?**

A: Christ, our High Priest, cleanses our temple for Himself, our King.