

# Repentance

04/03/2022

*Pastor Richard Miller*

## Notes

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### 2 Chronicles 29:23-24

The male goats for the sin offering were then brought before the king and the assembly of people, who laid their hands on them. The priests then killed the goats as a sin offering and sprinkled their blood on the altar to make atonement for the sins of all Israel. The king had specifically commanded that this burnt offering and sin offering should be made for all Israel.

King Hezekiah ruled over the southern kingdom of Judah, and the people were engaged in sin. He wanted a place where the people could come to be cleansed. But before he called the people to repentance, he knew that as the leader, he first needed to repent.

### 2 Chronicles 30:6-12

At the king's command, runners were sent throughout Israel and Judah. They carried letters that said:

"O people of Israel, return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so that he will return to the few of us who have survived the conquest of the Assyrian kings. Do not be like your ancestors and relatives who abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, and became an object of derision, as you yourselves can see. Do not be stubborn, as they were, but submit yourselves to the Lord. Come to his Temple, which he has set apart as holy forever. Worship the Lord your God so that his fierce anger will turn away from you.

"For if you return to the Lord, your relatives and your children will be treated mercifully by their captors, and they will be able to return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful. If you return to him, he will not continue to turn his face from you."

The runners went from town to town throughout Ephraim and Manasseh and as far as the territory of Zebulun. But most of the people just laughed at the runners and made fun of them. However, some people from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem.

At the same time, God's hand was on the people in the land of Judah, giving them all one heart to obey the orders of the king and his officials, who were following the word of the Lord.

They created a place where all were welcomed, and that is still our calling as God's people today. Our mission is to lead others to know Him. We should display excitement for what God has promised in the future. Know that though not all who hear will listen, some who hear the message will begin a relationship with God.

### 2 Chronicles 30:18-20

Most of those who came from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun had not purified themselves. But King Hezekiah prayed for them, and they were allowed to eat the Passover meal anyway, even though this was contrary to the requirements of the Law. For Hezekiah said, "May the Lord, who is good, pardon those who decide to follow the Lord, the God of their ancestors, even though they are not properly cleansed for the ceremony." And the Lord listened to Hezekiah's prayer and healed the people.

The people didn't follow all of the rules and expectations, but they were where they needed to be. Like Hezekiah, we should welcome everyone into church whether they know all of the cultural expectations or not.

Sin is an infection, and it will spread if we ignore it. Without Jesus' intervention, it will get in the way of everlasting life. We have to go to Jesus to be cleansed of our sin and begin a new life in Him.

## 2 Chronicles 30:23, 31:1

The entire assembly then decided to continue the festival another seven days, so they celebrated joyfully for another week...When the festival ended, the Israelites who attended went to all the towns of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, and they smashed all the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah poles, and removed the pagan shrines and altars. After this, the Israelites returned to their own towns and homes.

We know our world needs healing, but remember that God works through His people. The people had walked past the pillars and Asherah poles, but after the festival, their eyes had been opened. They decided not to let their old evil acts continue to stand. They made the choice to turn away from their past and turn to new ways through God.

## Group Questions

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- Why was it important for Hezekiah to repent first?
- How can we welcome all people into our church?
- In what ways is sin like an infection? How do we stop it from spreading?
- What changed in the people after the festival?

## Prayer

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God, help us to welcome all people into your family like you welcomed us. Like Hezekiah, let us lead by example so that more people can come to you.