

“Back to the Bible”

2 Chronicles 31

“This is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah, doing what is good and right and faithful before the lord his God.” (31:20)

Once Hezekiah gets the temple cleaned out and celebrates the Passover, now the people have to make this part of their everyday life. Again, Hezekiah opens God’s Book and starts applying it. It’s easy to get excited about changes. A new king on the throne makes sweeping changes for the better. The temple is now clean and open for worship. But how to keep it going? How can they maintain their faith in God? Hezekiah still has a plan to move forward and it means getting back to The Book!

V.1 begins ‘When all this had ended’. What is the “this”?

30:15 the _____ and

30:21 the Feast of _____

How long did they celebrate it?

30:21 for ___ days

30:23 then _____ 7 days!

What was the atmosphere like?

30:26 “There was _____ joy in Jerusalem for since the days of _____ son of David king of Israel there had been _____ like this in Jerusalem.”

But now the celebrating is over and there is still work to do. What does Hezekiah order next?

31:1 “When all this had ended, the Israelites who were there went out to the towns of Judah, _____ the sacred stones and _____ the Asherah poles. They _____ the high places and the altars throughout Judah and Benjamin and in Ephraim and Manasseh. After they had destroyed ___ of them, the Israelites returned to their own towns and to their own property.*

The people finally return home but the priests and Levites have returned to Jerusalem to serve in the temple. Hezekiah has to establish a system for who serves when. What does he do?

31:2 “Hezekiah assigned the priests and Levites to _____— each of them according to their _____ as priests or Levites—to offer burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, to minister, to give thanks and to sing praises at the gates of the LORD’s dwelling.

Did he make this up on his own or was already known?

1 Chron. 23:6 “_____ separated the Levites into divisions corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath and Merari.”

David also assigned them specific duties that were different from when they served at the Tabernacle. Why?

1 Chron. 23:26 “the Levites no longer need to _____ the tabernacle or any of the articles used in its service.”

In order for the temple to function properly there needs to be the daily ritual of worship and sacrifices. Who provides for these?

31:3 "The _____ contributed from his own possessions . . .

What else did he do?

31:4 "He ordered the _____ living in Jerusalem to give the portion ____ the priests and Levites so they could devote themselves to the _____ of the LORD."

Why did the Levites and priests get paid out of the people's tithes?

Num. 18:20 "The LORD said to Aaron, "You will have no _____ in their land, nor will you have any share among them; _____ am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites."

18:21 "I give to the Levites all the _____ in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the tent of meeting."

How does God respond when people held back on their givings?

Mal. 3:8 "Will a mere mortal _____ God? Yet you _____ me. "But you ask, 'How are we _____ you?' "In tithes and offerings."

How did the people respond?

2 Chron. 31:5 "As _____ as the order went out, the Israelites _____ gave the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, olive oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything."

31:6 "The people of Israel and Judah who lived in the _____ 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 _____."

31:7 "They began doing this in the _____ month and finished in the _____ month."

There was plenty which resulted in praise to God. But Hezekiah had to do something with the excess?

31:11 "Hezekiah gave orders to prepare _____ in the temple of the LORD, and this was done.

v.12 "Then they faithfully brought in the contributions, tithes and dedicated gifts. Koniniah a Levite was the _____ in charge of these things and his brother Shimei was next in rank. "

***Notice the phrases as you read; 'served by appointment', 'in charge' (v.13); 'in charge', 'distributing' (v.14); 'assisted him faithfully', 'according to their divisions' (v.15). What does this say about how God expects these things to be done?**

***Why was this so important at this time in particular?**

Note this list of spiritual gifts. What is related to what was happening in Hezekiah's day?

Rom. 12:8 "if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is _____, then give generously; if it is to _____, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

What else did Hezekiah make sure happened?

v.16 "In addition, they distributed to the males _____ years old or more whose names were in the genealogical records—all who _____ enter the temple of the LORD to perform the daily duties of their various tasks, according to their responsibilities and their divisions."

v.17 "And they distributed to the priests enrolled by their families in the genealogical records and likewise to the Levites twenty years old or _____, according to their responsibilities and their divisions.

v.18 "They included _____ the little ones, the wives, and the sons and daughters of the _____ community listed in these genealogical records. For they were faithful in consecrating themselves."

V.19 tells us they did this for the priests wherever they lived.

What was the key to the success of how this ran?

v.21 "In everything that he undertook in the service of God's temple and in obedience to the law and the commands, he _____ his God and worked _____. And so he prospered."

[The Bible verses quoted are from the NIV 1984 edition © International Bible Society]

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