

Friday, September 21, 2018

Willing

2 Chronicles 28-29

Then Hezekiah said, "You have now dedicated yourselves to the LORD. Come and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the temple of the LORD." So the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all whose hearts were willing brought burnt offerings.
2 Chronicles 29:31

Seemingly out of nowhere, Hezekiah comes as a breath of fresh air. Finally, the Chronicler is able to give account of a king who is given to the LORD. Even with a father who was a terrible example, Hezekiah is ready to serve the LORD fully and to lead the people of Judah once again in worship of God alone. The temple is reclaimed and the sacrifices begin. The sacrifices and offerings are made with great singing and celebration, the temple is once again consecrated and ready to receive individual sacrifices and offerings, and the king encourages all who are willing to bring their offerings to the temple of the LORD. All those whose hearts were willing brought the offerings. Do I have a willing heart of service for God? Am I willing to bring not only my thank offering, but my sacrifice as well?

Precious LORD, take my heart and shape it so that it is a willing heart. Lead me into willing sacrificial service and love. Take my offerings of thanks and look upon them as an offering of my heart in adoration of You, my Savior and my God. Amen.

Saturday, September 22, 2018

Return!

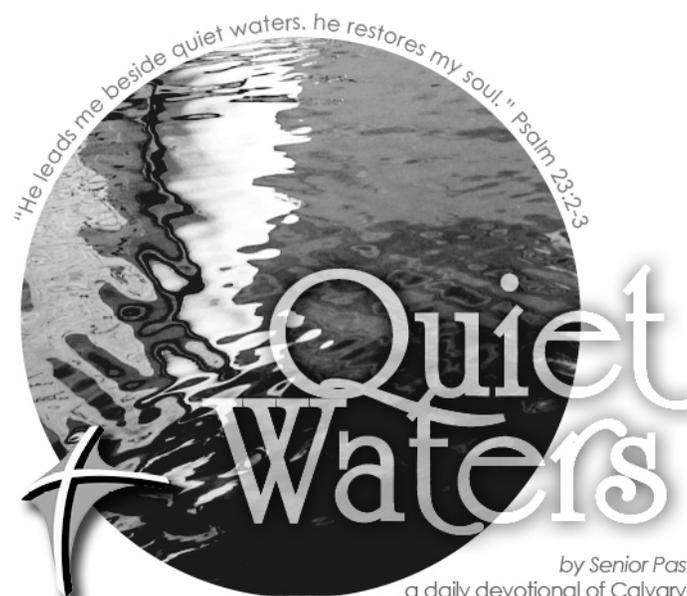
2 Chronicles 30-31

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..."
2 Chronicles 30:6

I weep as I read these chapters, imagining what was happening at this time. Passover had not been celebrated in the way described here since the days of Solomon. Hezekiah is calling the divided nation to reunite and once again come before the LORD as one nation to observe the Passover. He sends a letter to be read throughout all of Israel and it is met with ridicule by most—but some come. Some return to the LORD. They come broken before the LORD to worship Him and God is ready to welcome them home. He is waiting for them with open arms. See how the loving Father forgives and heals all who seek Him of the deep scars that have come from their pursuit of false gods (30:19-20). A Father is basking in the love of His children coming back to Him, knowing that this allows them, once again, to know His presence. One can almost feel the joy jump off the pages. God was pleased to hear their prayers, which reached His holy dwelling place (30:27). I pray that the people of God today would return to the LORD in this way and worship Him alone. I pray that I could see a revival of this magnitude sweep over those who claim the name of God today—starting with me.

Dear God, how we have wandered from and worshiped so many other gods. How often we ridicule Your call to return. Forgive and revive. Please, start with me. Amen.

September 17 - 22, 2018



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, September 17, 2018

No one's regret

2 Chronicles 20-21

Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He passed away, to no one's regret, and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings. 2 Chronicles 21:20

Jehoram chose to follow all the bad in his father's example. It is true that Jehoshaphat was not a perfect king, and his son had the opportunity to make his own choices of how to lead God's people. He chose evil. He chose to marry a daughter of Ahab and follow detestable ways. God spoke, through Elijah, a prophecy of pain over Jehoram, and then brought it to pass. He died in great pain. Yet God remembered His covenant with David and so one of Jehoram's sons was spared so that the house of David would remain as promised.

Jehoram left a stark legacy. He caused people to worship other gods. He instituted many of the same ways of false worship that were found in the Northern Kingdom. He did not walk in the ways of Asa or Jehoshaphat and because of that, no one regretted his passing. They made no fire in his honor. He has discredited God. I must be very careful to have my life reveal God to people so that they can know how to worship Him in all His glory and splendor. I must not allow myself, in any way, to cause people to discredit God, who is so dear to me.

Dear God, please help me not discredit Your name. Help me never bring anything other than praise to You and Your majesty. Amen.

Tuesday, September 18, 2018

Proceeded

2 Chronicles 22-23

When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family of the house of Judah. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the royal princes who were about to be murdered and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Because Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram and wife of the priest Jehoiada, was Ahaziah's sister, she hid the child from Athaliah so she could not kill him. 2 Chronicles 22:10-11

The throne of David is in peril. The Chronicler is continuing in the account of the kings of Judah. Notice that the kings of Israel, for the most part, are only mentioned as they fit in with the account of the line of David. The marriages into the family of Ahab have proven disastrous. The line of David is all but eliminated. Man is trying to prevent God's plan. While not mentioned, one can be sure that Satan is behind this. It was Athaliah's plan to destroy the line to the throne, so that she could set up a line for herself. The High Priest Jehoiada rallies the people to remember the line of David and Joash is made king. It is in this account of death and intrigue that we are reminded that God's plan can not and will not be thwarted. The house of David is the lineage for the throne of Israel. The exiles need to remember this. They must be reminded that God has guarded the covenant He made with David. This serves to remind me yet again that God is faithful and people cannot keep His plan from prevailing!

Dear God, thank You for Your love and Your power. Thank You for preserving Your plan and Your promises. Thank You for being so faithful in my life. Amen.

Wednesday, September 19, 2018

Why?

2 Chronicles 24-25

The anger of the LORD burned against Amaziah, and he sent a prophet to him, who said, "Why do you consult this people's gods, which could not save their own people from your hand?" While he was still speaking, the king said to him, "Have we appointed you an adviser to the king? Stop! Why be struck down?" So the prophet stopped but said, "I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel." 2 Chronicles 25:15-16

Why would Amaziah bring back these gods from the people of Seir and begin to consult them? Once again, as I read the account of the people of God, I am amazed to see how easily they turn from Him. God has clearly given this king victory in a miraculous way. But instead of coming home and giving praise to God and offering thank offerings to Him, Amaziah determines to take the gods of Edom as his own and offers burnt offerings to them. What could possibly be going through his mind? Over and over, these people turn their hearts from God. Over and over they choose to worship other gods and turn their back on the Lover of their souls. Over and over, God reaches out again to show His faithfulness to His covenant with David. Over and over, they reject His love. Over and over, I have done the same. God continually reveals Himself in my life and, so many times, I have been too busy to notice it was Him and took credit myself or gave the credit to something other than Him.

Dear God, how many times have I missed seeing it was You revealing Yourself in my life? Please forgive me and allow me to see all the ways You are working. Amen.

Thursday, September 20, 2018

Excluded

2 Chronicles 26-27

King Uzziah had leprosy until the day he died. He lived in a separate house—leprosy, and excluded from the temple of the LORD. Jotham his son had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land. 2 Chronicles 26:21

Uzziah was considered a king who did right in the eyes of the LORD (26:4). As he sought the LORD, he was given success. He accomplished great things and he became very powerful. "But after he became powerful, his pride led to his downfall" (26:16). Uzziah took it upon himself to enter into the temple of the LORD and begin to do that which was to be done only by the priests. He went in to burn incense. When confronted, this man of pride became angry and, while in his rage, leprosy broke out on his forehead, which meant he had to immediately leave the temple, never to return. He was excluded from worship. I have often wondered what that was like for Uzziah. Clearly, he was a man who loved the LORD and loved to worship him. But his pride caused him to be excluded from the presence of the LORD in the temple. How many times does my pride exclude me from experiencing the full presence of the LORD in my life? Pride places me in opposition to God and keeps me from worshiping Him with my whole heart. I learn from Uzziah that I must worship God on His terms with a heart of humility and adoration.

Dear Lord, keep me from pride in my life that would draw me away from You. Please keep me from designing my own way of approaching You. Please Father, keep me humble before You. Keep my heart soft and undivided. Amen.