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GLENLOCK BIBLE CAMP 1981

HEZEKIAH - A ROOT OUT OF DRY GROUND

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Study #3

The Great Passover

Reading: 2 Chronicles 30

My beloved brethren and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ and our dear young people.

Well, we left Hezekiah in a state of ecstasy did we not? as he saw not only the temple set in order by the priests and Levites, whom he had appointed for the task, but he saw witness that amazing miracle, that Yahweh was able to set the people in order by the power of His Word. That to me, as I said on the last occasion, b&s, was a miracle, and Hezekiah saw it as a miracle, that in 16 days the work of 16 years had been reversed; and there is not one of us that can accomplish that, except it be through the ministrations of this Word.

And you know, even as the great king rejoiced, b&s, there was sadness in his heart because, to the north of the country, the ten tribes were in their last stages of agony, as the nation up there was falling apart, and it wasn't less than 6 years before it was going to be carried away by Shalmanezzer king of Assyria. It was a sad state of affairs indeed, and I'd like you to turn to 2 Kings chapter 15, to some remarkable circumstances which Isaiah the prophet is going to take up for us. In 2 Kings 15, and before we read these verses, let us again state this, that Hezekiah, I believe, had already determined, that he was going to send invitations to the northern kingdom, that they might come to Judah and keep the feast of the Passover. It was a call to unity, b&s, and you know, there's a great lesson in that for us; quite often we feel beyond our power and capacity to contain ourselves, to even try and help our brethren and sisters, because we sometimes feel that they've gone so far that there's no recovery for some people. Well, if ever that was to be true, it was true of the northern kingdom. We're going to see later on, that when Rabshakah addressed the walls of Jerusalem, he linked Samaria with the heathen nations, he saw no difference between Samaria and the heathen nations. And a heathen king saw it that way! so bad had they gotten; but Hezekiah was an optimist, a supreme optimist, and he believed that if he was able to send this invitation, the basis of the truth, he would be able to help these people.

And you know, the invitation couldn't have come at a more desperate time for the

northern kingdom. Now read with me in 2 Kings 15 what was happening up there. In verse 19 we read, 'And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem (who, of course, was king of Israel) gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand'. And so the Assyrian had attacked the northern kingdom, he was really now, pushing into that area, and the king Menahem had to pay him tribute to secure a moment's peace. There was one invasion of Galilee, and Galilee had felt the hand of the Assyrian, but over in verse 29, there came a second wave. 'And in the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria'. And so following along from the invasion of Pul, Tiglath-pileser came and he did more grievous damage in the land of Naphtali. Now I want you to notice that, b&s, because those are the words of Isaiah the prophet that he is going to use in a remarkable prophecy; a prophecy familiar to us as it relates to the Lord Jesus Christ, and it surely relates to Him because Matthew quoted it, but a prophecy which also had a very wonderful application to king Hezekiah. And after the land of Galilee had suffered two invasions, one more severe than the other, an invitation came up to them, for relief and strength and life, that they might come out from the Assyrians and from the Land of Israel, and come down to their brethren and seek some relief, in the truth of God that God had provided for them!

And in the light of these wonderful things, of course, we read the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 9, and surely Isaiah is looking at this history when he quotes these words and uses this language. The land of Naphtali, Tiglath-pileser had severely oppressed, and there had been the two invasions of the northern kingdom, and Isaiah lifts up his voice, in verse 1 and says, 'Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations'. And he makes reference there, b&s, to the two invasions, the first one was lightly afflicted, but a more grievous one by Tiglath-pileser in the land of Naphtali, but he says 'the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light': and that light came in the form of those letters, posts running all over the place delivering those letters. Delivering them to the people of Israel grievously afflicted; 'come to Jerusalem, seek the LORD God of your fathers, humble yourselves, get over your pride', and what a wonderful thing that was, b&s, to call the northern tribes down which had seen years of division, and created between the two divisions of the kingdom, a barrier of pride!

And would they humble themselves that was the question? and you see, Hezekiah was able to send up there and say, 'Now look, we're all brothers, we're all in the truth, we're all Christadelphians, we'll come halfway if you'll go halfway'. He couldn't come halfway, he couldn't do that, and he couldn't go to his brethren and cajole them like that, b&s, he had to tell the truth! And he had to say very frankly to them, we want you, we love you but, but we have a strong city and you haven't'. This song can only be sung in the land of Judah, it can't be sung in your land. It's unfortunate but that's the fact of the matter! And as a strong city, he said in the words of that song of Isaiah, the gates are open to our city, if you believe and keep the truth; and you know, b&s, there have been

circumstances in my short life, when I've seen that! And you can no doubt know some circumstances in your life, where in small measure, we've seen that principle, when you'd have loved to help your brethren and sisters, you'd love to have them come with you and to walk in the light of Yahweh Elohim of our fathers; to believe the truth in its purity, and to practice it to the best of our ability in its purity; to lift our standards, to look like Christadelphians, to look like decent, noble people who could follow the Lord Jesus Christ. And you'd love to have your brethren to come with you, but you can't go and say to them, we'll come halfway with you! We can't do that, and unfortunately because we very often have to say, 'Look, this is the truth', very often this forms a barrier of pride that people are not able to get over; and they can't accept that, and so they linger in that deplorable state, which ended in absolute tragedy for that northern kingdom, that the people that walked in darkness had seen a great light; I reckon that's a remarkable prophecy of Isaiah set in the context of 2 Kings 15, obviously taken from there by the very words that he used by Isaiah out of that context, and referring to that wonderful invitation of Hezekiah that he had sent to that northern kingdom.

One wonders why he did it? Of course, we know he loved his brethren, but you know, we would have got into such a state of depression about that, that we would have written them off. But he didn't, and you see, things were going bad for that kingdom. Not only were they going bad for the kingdom because the Assyrian was pushing at them, b&s, but they were going bad internally; the nation was falling apart at the seams, they had no help. Look at Hosea chapter 13, he was the prophet who in the north, trying to do his best with that northern kingdom. Listen to his words, as he speaks about the deplorable state of that kingdom; how true were these words, b&s. And in Hosea 13 and verse 9, these words were spoken to Israel in these last days and he said, 'O Israel, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help. I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities', and you see, Hosea the prophet was speaking words, b&s, to a kingdom that was lead by Hoshea the king; and Hosea and Hoshea, of course, means 'the salvation of God'. Where is any salvation in your king? were the words of the prophet and he referred to the very name of their king; and they would look at that weak king, a vacillating king who sat on the throne, who sought the assistance of Egypt who then tried to buy off Assyria. A weak vacillating man, very weak indeed, and they'd look at him and think, 'who in the heck is going to save us from the Assyrian?' And Hosea was appealing to them, 'where is any that will save thee?' I will be your king', and of course, those words indicate to us, the deplorable state into which that kingdom had fallen.

And you know, b&s, it's not my prerogative to stand in judgment, God forbid that we should ever try and do that, but please accept this in the spirit that it is given, that it is nonetheless true, that in the brotherhood today, with the onslaught of the world which is a tremendous siege that we're under from all the pressures of life, that there are, and there does exist in the brotherhood, those pockets of ecclesias who are dropping in their standards, who do not have a true value as far as the doctrines of the truth are concerned. It's a tragic truth that is, it can't be denied, the facts of history are before us. We would love to do for them what we can, time, b&s, is of the essence, we only have one life to live, and yet there is much to do; and we need more than ever before to send

a call throughout the brotherhood, wherever it is, to come back to the traditional standards of the truth. And when we use that word 'tradition' we're talking about the good traditions, the very fine traditions which our pioneers have left for us. Traditions of sound doctrine, traditions of sound understanding of the prophetic word, so we know the signs of the times and can relate to them. Traditions of decency, traditions of decorum, traditions of dignity and dress, personal righteousness and holiness, b&s. Of loveliness, all those things which the brotherhood known as the Christadelphians, the brethren and sisters of Christ have forever been renown; instead of that, we see in many homes today, the decline in standards, the shabby appearance of people attending meetings that call for dignity and respect. The failure to comprehend in its greatness, the power of God's Word; we see weak expositions in print which virtually cut right across the scriptures of truth and their plain statement of fact. And we see these things (and we're not here to criticize anyone) but they are facts of life as you see with your eyes this day, and we, b&s, for our part can only say, that in God's Word we have a strong city; not in us, but in that book we have a strong city, and we cannot under any circumstances, open that door to anyone, unless they accept what is there. 'O Israel, don't destroy yourselves' was the words of the prophet Hosea as he appealed to that nation.

That was the spirit, that was the background that moved Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles chapter 30, to send out those invitations to Israel, and we'll take up our story now, b&s, from that record and see what that wonderful man did to bring that nation together. Now notice the emphasis that is put in this chapter, a kindly, brotherly appeal goes out but it has to be couched in very strong terms of truth. And so we read that 'Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh'; now Ephraim and Manasseh, of course, where the two great tribes that occupied the territory immediately north of Judah. But as the time went on, we read over in verse 10, 'So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun' right up on the plain of Jezreel. And so in their enthusiasm as the post went out sent to Ephraim and Manasseh first of all, they ran through the country right up through the centre, right up north, and they came up to Galilee, and the invitations reached brethren further north, as they passed from hand to hand, 'Come to Jerusalem', and the invitation was this, 'that they should come to the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem'. You know, b&s, we hardly need that to be said, and they shouldn't have had to have that said; but that had to be said, they had to come to the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem, because many in the northern kingdom had forgotten that the centre of worship was established there by divine decree. And later on, Hezekiah was to say to them that Jerusalem is the place where they ought to worship, 'which He hath sanctified forever'. There is no compromise! forever, down in verse 8, 'Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto Yahweh, and enter into His sanctuary, which He hath sanctified for ever'. I can't compromise, we can't come one day to you and one day to us, we can't have a combined effort; we can't join together like that, unfortunately it's not so, you must come to me, not because I'm Hezekiah but this house is Yahweh's house forever, and we can't compromise that situation. And that was the basis, b&s, of the invitation.

And not only would they come to that Passover, to the proper place but they were to

keep it unto the LORD God of Israel. And you know, that phrase 'Yahweh Elohim of Israel', was the equivalent of saying, that it will be held on the basis of the BASF, and I'm not saying that to be funny in any way or form, I'm saying that, b&s, sincerely and honestly, that's exactly what that means! It was a call back to the ancient, the powerful and the pure religion of the fathers. And as our bro. Russell read that chapter this morning, did you notice, that time and time again, Yahweh Elohim of your fathers, Yahweh Elohim of your fathers; it was a call back to a traditional religion, a well founded family tradition, b&s, that all Israel had once been joined with. There was the call of truth, at Jerusalem on the basis of the ancient traditions of Israel's religion, which went back to their forefathers.

A remarkable call, and you know, he called them to keep the Passover. If only the northern kingdom could realize their situation, what was the Passover? Well, of course, it was the celebration of deliverance from Egypt, and look what they're suffering? Galilee has already been decimated by Tiglath-pileser, brethren and sisters, wives and children as Hezekiah reminded them, there were brethren left in that land, b&s, and their families had been taken from them and they were left there. He invited them to come down that Yahweh might be merciful to their wives and children who were in chains. They needed the Passover, they were a people that needed to celebrate the Passover, in the hope that Yahweh might make some form of deliverance for His people (and I want to show you later on, the Hezekiah offered them that promise of some relief for their families, not that they would be delivered from captivity, but there was a promise in the Psalms, that if a man lost his family and turned to Yahweh, Yahweh would alleviate their sufferings while they were in captivity. That was a promise written indelibly in the Psalms which Hezekiah appealed to them, 'I can't save your wives and children, they're gone but we can alleviate their suffering; the Psalm says it promises that! You come to me and see if it doesn't work!' And they needed therefore, to keep the Passover.

And you know, b&s, Yahweh was going to defend Jerusalem on the basis of the Passover. In Isaiah 31, look at this, when later the Assyrian was to invade the Land in the south and come to Judah, Yahweh was going to keep the Passover at Jerusalem. And speaking about the time when Judah itself would feel the weight of the Assyrian might, Isaiah 31 and verse 4 says, 'For thus hast Yahweh spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall Yahweh of Armies come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will Yahweh of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over He will preserve it'. As birds flying, passing over He will preserve it, and the very term is taken out of the Exodus, and as the angel of death went forward, b&s, what did he do? The angel of death went forward and he left dead in every house of Egypt, the might of that family in the firstborn. And that's exactly what happened as the Assyrian was out there on the plain, south of Jerusalem, the angel of death flew over Jerusalem and he passed over the Assyrian host and they woke up in the morning, and the cream of the army was gone. There was Passover! 'Come to me, says Hezekiah, and I'll get deliverance for you'; as birds flying!

What a wonderful thing it is to study the life of Hezekiah with Isaiah in the background. Have you noticed how many times I've quoted Isaiah already in this study? If you're taking notes, it will be full of it! You listen to how he's coming into this prophecy all the time, he'd come in with his words to encourage and teach Israel. As birds flying I will pass over Jerusalem, and that was the invitation that the king said to the people.

Now, coming back to that 30th chapter of 2 Chronicles, notice what Hezekiah does! It was by the commandment of the king that the Passover was kept, but notice on what basis the king had commanded it. For in verse 2 we read, 'For the king had taken counsel and his princes and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the Passover in the second month'; now the Law of Moses had said that if any man was unclean when the first Passover was held, or was on a long journey somewhere and was unable to make the journey back to Jerusalem, opportunity was given that on the second month to have what is called 'the little Passover' to gather in all those who were not able on the first occasion, to hold the great Passover. Hezekiah, having been too late, of course, the temple taking too long to clean, (missed by two days to be able to hold the feast in the first month); but he held it in the second month. But I want you to notice what sort of a man he was.

You see, b&s, he didn't say we're going to hold the Passover, he went and got the princes, and he got the whole congregation; he made it an ecclesial matter, he called the whole ecclesia together, and he spelled out what he wanted to do. And he said, 'I would have loved to have done this in the first month, I don't want to create any problem, what do you think if we held it in the second month? We have an application of the Law which says we can do it that way'. And I believe that was wisdom, because it was wisdom in this regard, Hezekiah knew because he was a very wise man, he knew that by inviting the northern tribes, it must be done on the basis of absolute purity. because if they came on their basis, it could weaken the whole structure of Judah; he wouldn't want that, and he knew full well, that many in Israel and Judah, particularly in Judah, if they didn't understand the situation, could easily run away with the view, that Hezekiah was compromising! so he called them all together and that's what he said to them, 'Look, this is the situation. We're too late to hold the Passover! We'd love to do it; I want to bring all the nation together but I want to do it on the basis of the truth, now what do you think? I think we can do it based on Numbers chapter 9, do you agree with that? Yes, we agree with that!' Now when the northern tribes came, nobody could say the king was compromising, and I believe he wanted to be very careful about that, not because I think he wanted to strut his own righteousness before them, but he wanted them all to understand, b&s, that there is no compromise as far as the truth is concerned.

Furthermore, I believe, that he wanted to gain their co-operation, it was a co-operative effort. You see, Passover's no good, unless everybody enters into it with their heart. We don't keep our Passover by commandment, one of the apostles says concerning our Passover, he told the Corinthians in the first place, that he says, 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us', and then he told the Corinthians later on, 'For as often as ye do this' there is no specific commandment; it's a co-operative effort. 'For as often as ye do this'

and we come together on the Sunday morning because it's convenient not because it's a law. But there are occasions when we have our memorial meetings if we're away somewhere, we may have them Saturday night. It doesn't matter, it's a co-operative thing; as long as we come together as often as ye do this in remembrance of Me, and He wanted that to be a co-operative effort, and even when the Lord Jesus had His great Passover with His disciples, what did He say?

'With desire, I have desired to keep this Passover with you', it wasn't a commandment, it was a desire to keep that Passover and that's what Hezekiah wanted to tell them. Now let's read on and he says this in verse 3, 'for they could not keep it at that time because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently'. That's reason #1, reason #2, 'neither had the people gathered themselves together at Jerusalem' (it was a practical impossibility) and then it says this, 'and the thing pleased the king and all the congregation'. Note the margin, the thing was right in the eyes of the king, now here's a fine touch of inspiration, when you read that every mind, I suppose, in this audience who knows anything about the scriptures, would go straight to the book of Judges; every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Here the expression is in the positive, it was right in the eyes of the king; but if your mind went to Judges it didn't go back far enough, because that's not the origin of that statement. I'll show you where that statement originates from and then you'll see why it's in that context. It's in Deuteronomy chapter 12, and what's that all about? The 12th chapter of Deuteronomy is one of those fundamental chapters dealing with a fundamental principle, the principle of Deuteronomy 12 is as stated in verse 5, 'that unto the place which Yahweh your God shall chose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and hither shall ye come', and the whole chapter, b&s, is based upon that principle. In verse 20, 'when Yahweh thy God shall enlarge thy borders as He has promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh because my soul loveth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, if the place which Yahweh thy God has chosen to put His name there be too far from thee, then says God, you can eat flesh in your own gate providing it is not sacrificial. But the whole chapter is based upon coming to the central sanctuary, verse 14, 'but in the place which Yahweh shall choose in one of your tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings and there thou shalt do all that I command thee'. And then in verse 8 it says, 'ye shall not do after all the things which we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes', and there's the origination of that commentary, in a context of a failure to see Yahweh's truth centralized in Jerusalem! And in that context when Hezekiah had got the agreement of all the people, it was right in the eyes of the king! Why was it right? because it was right by the fundamental rule of Deuteronomy, and that little commentary is lifted out of that chapter, into that context to tell us where his mind was; based thoroughly on the principles of the truth fundamentally stated in the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy. Straight out of that context that comment comes, isn't that remarkable, b&s, there's a fine touch of inspiration!

'And so they established a decree and made proclamation throughout all Israel'. Do you know what that word is for 'proclamation'? In that word for 'proclamation' is the word 'abba', and the word 'abba', b&s, is a word that means 'to cross over'; it's in the word

'Hebrew' and there was a message that went out which Rotherham says 'they passed along a voice' and the proclamation that Hezekiah sent out, was a message for all Hebrews to come home; and they had crossed over, hadn't they when they crossed the river Jordan and came into the promised Land, and what constituted not only in the Land but the kingdom of God on earth. And now the northern kingdom had crossed back over and in their minds it's going back to heathendom, and here was a call going out that called all Hebrews home. What a wonderful call that was, and it was coming from Beer-sheba to Dan, that's back to front isn't it? We never say that, to use the colloquial expression we say 'from Dan to Beer-sheba', and that's right, and everywhere else you read it that's how it's put, but not here, ah, no way! it's in the reverse! Why? obviously why because Dan's in the north and Beer-sheba is in the south, and for once in a lifetime the truth came from Beer-sheba to Dan. No way is it coming from Dan down south, no way, it's going from south to north and even that, b&s, is taken care of, very careful phraseology, and reverses that from Beer-sheba even to Dan.

And you know, it was a long time, we read in verse 5, it had been a long time at the end of the chapter in such a sort as it was written, it was a long time before the Passover was ever kept in the way it was kept here. Why was it? Because you see, Passover demanded the mustering of Yahweh's army; there were many things in the Passover, there weren't just one or two principles, you see, if you go back to the original record as Hezekiah did, and study carefully the foundation truths of the nation, you would read in Exodus for example, that one of the reasons for Passover was the gathering together of God's army, all the hosts of Yahweh. Now you might read that very glibly and think, that's just an expression, but it isn't really, 3 or 4 times in Exodus you read that! That Passover was not only the celebration of the deliverance of Egypt, but it was the gathering together of Yahweh's army. Whoever came to the Passover was enlisting in God's service, and it will be a long time before the whole army of God had got together to fight a common enemy. That's what Hezekiah is saying, and he brought them down on the basis of that truth, and in verse 6, he invited them in the terms, 'ye children of Israel' (halfway through that verse) 'ye sons of Israel 'Hebrew' he called as Hebrews as Christadelphians if you like, to bring it to our own generation, 'all ye brethren of Christ; God's army, come together he said on the basis of the truth of Yahweh Elohim of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. And you know, b&s, we get no greater thrill than going to the public lecture, and we've got a brother who stands on the platform and he speaks to the subject 'the promises made to the fathers, a biblical truth' or something like that, and the things we hear, we've heard hundreds and hundreds of times, and every time I hear that lecture, I'm on the edge of my seat; what a glorious thing that is, it's ever green and you thrill to hear that message and all its simplicity. And that's what he invited them to come and do, we should be thrilled with that, every time we hear that, Yahweh Elohim of Abraham, of Isaac and of Israel. The whole purpose of God is in that, b&s, you know, we read about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and have you ever stopped to ponder why He called Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel? Ah, you say, because the promises were made to them, well, the promises were made to David, to Moses, Joshua, you name it, everybody in the Old Testament had faith, they were all in the promises. What was it about Abraham, Isaac and Israel, what was it, what was it that conjured up in people's mind the totality of God's purpose in those three



men, because that's what it is, you know? Paul tells us in Hebrews chapter 11, 'that He wasn't ashamed to be called their God', in the Greek he says, 'He was not ashamed to be surnamed their God. So what God did was superimpose His own surname upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, 'I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and what's God's name? It is His purpose to fill this earth with His glory; how is he going to do that? By manifesting Himself in His Son, and then, of course, by broadening out that manifestation in others, who are like His Son. Well, Abraham was the father of the faithful, Isaac was called his only begotten son, and under Jacob it was said, that from him would become a great multitude, and the word used for Jacob is completely different than that used for Abraham and Isaac, and it means 'ecclesia'. And it's used in this context, the word 'multitude of people' used to Abraham and Isaac is a different word than that used to Jacob; and if you read the 28th chapter of Genesis in your leisure, you'll know the marginal comment against that word because it's different and it means 'to call out by assemblies'. So Abraham is the father of the faithful, Isaac is his only begotten son, and Jacob is the ecclesia because of his 12 boys! There's the totality of God's purpose, there's the truth, b&s, in an absolute nutshell, come to seek the Yahweh Elohim, He who will be the mighty ones of He who is the father of the faithful through his only begotten son, broadening unto the ecclesia. And outside of that they couldn't find the truth! He surnamed Himself on those three men.

And that was the basis of Hezekiah's Passover, an incredible basis, and out they went, in verse 8 (which we've already read) 'Now be ye not stiffnecked' says Hezekiah, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves', that's what they had to do, b&s. You see, before they could ever come enthusiastically, they had to get over the hurdle of pride. They had to yield themselves, and you know, we can't underestimate the force of pride in our lives! You know, pride's a terrible thing, more so as one gets older do you realize this; as you grow older (and I speak I suppose, I'm 50, and my wife keeps reminding me that I've at last reached that stage) but I suppose when you get a bit older you come to grips with this problem of pride. It's an awful thing, and you realize when you look back over your life, the tragedy that pride has played in your own life, and the doors that it has locked because you won't open them because of your pride, and there might be wonderful things on the other side of those doors! Like two brethren who may argue very bitterly about a matter, and in that bitterness there grows up a very strong antipathy in personality between those two brethren (I'm only using now an illustration). And the day dawns upon one of those brethren that he's wrong and he has to grudgingly admit at least in his own mind, that the other brother is right; he doesn't find any problem in coming to that decision because the Word has taught him that, his enormous problem is to go and tell his brother that he's been wrong; not that he has any problem in agreeing that he's wrong, the problem is with that brother. And you know, many brethren have locked themselves out of the kingdom of God over the years, no doubt, not because they can't come to the realization they're wrong, but they can't come to saying that they're wrong! And as I say this, b&s, there is in my mind, a brother who I know is wrong and I believe he knows he is wrong, and I hope and pray that one day, he'll unlock that door, and I say that because these tapes go everywhere!

And you know, it's a great tragedy, a great tragedy with these things, and you know,

when that invitation came, 'don't be stiffnecked', you've got to admit you're wrong, we can't admit we're wrong because at the moment we're right; we've been wrong but we're right today, says Hezekiah. We've have to say that, you've got to say you're wrong! and that was the great thing, and they had to come and 'enter into His sanctuary'. And Isaiah had something to say about that, didn't he? in his 8th chapter he had something to say about that too, and he always added the spiritual quality to these words, not that it wasn't a spiritual quality that Hezekiah said, but Isaiah took it one step further, and he had this to say about Hezekiah's invitation to 'enter into His sanctuary'. In 8th chapter of Isaiah and verse 14 he said, 'And Yahweh shall be for a sanctuary: but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem'. So you see, b&s, Isaiah's comment upon that invitation was that the invitation had gone out to Judah first and then to Israel, both houses of Israel had heard it, and not everybody in Judah had accepted it either. And Hezekiah's invitation to come into Yahweh's sanctuary had been scorned by some in Judah; we don't read about that in the Chronicles record, but Isaiah tells us because he can see behind the scenes, that there were some in Judah who had fallen over the rock of stumbling. It was a wonderful rock and foundation on which to build a spiritual life, and the rains and storms and even the Assyrians' flood would not move it, but it was a very sharp stone, b&s, to fall over! And many had fallen over it, not only in the northern kingdom but in the southern kingdom too, and there's a divine commentary of an onlooker who saw deeper even than Hezekiah at this moment of time. And some in Judah were not entering into that sanctuary!

Then Hezekiah told them in 2 Chronicles 30 what I referred to earlier. That if these brethren in the north were to accept his invitation, not only would they save their own lives, but they would intermediate the circumstances of their brethren and sisters that had gone into captivity. And in verse 9 of 2 Chronicles 30 he says, 'For if ye turn again unto Yahweh, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for Yahweh your Elohim is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away His face from you, if ye return unto Him'. Now, can you imagine receiving that invitation? Imagine me, standing here, (you're looking at me) imagine that I'm some puffed up fellow (which I am) up in the northern kingdom and I get a letter from this Hezekiah. 'What a nerve he's got, hah, hah, ha, what the nerve sending me an invitation; I'm sick to death of all this, criticizing us for this, criticizing us for that, who do they think they are? We serve God the same way as they do, he thinks that he doesn't smell like the rest of us do; I can't stand the sight of the man!' And I stand on my own pride, b&s, and I won't accept that invitation! And then I read this, if you come to the invitation, I will be able or God will be able to help your brethren and sisters carried into captivity. Ah, hah, hah! what? they're in captivity, the...in; who's going to affect the Assyrians? The wife of John is gone, I can just imagine what's happening to them! The horror of it all; and he reckons if I come to Jerusalem, they'll be better off! What a fool he is!

And you can imagine the reaction and you know, when you think about it, that would be a natural reaction! He's telling them that they in Assyria will be helped by their attendance in Jerusalem! You know, to a practical man, who thought no higher than

practical, carnal matters, that was absolutely ridiculous, but you see, Hezekiah was quoting a promise that God had made; he wasn't saying that that could be done, he didn't know how it could be done, b&s. He wasn't making a rash promise, he was quoting a promise that God had made. In Psalm 106 God made that promise, and unless God had made that promise, how on earth could Hezekiah ever say a thing like that? But here it is, and Yahweh is gracious and merciful and in this Psalm 106 and verses 44 to 46, here's the promise; 'Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry: And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies. He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives'. So He didn't altogether bring them out of captivity, but He worked circumstances for them to make them to be pitied. And b&s, Hezekiah was promising those men, not only that they would receive pity but they would receive it from the Assyrian, and they was renown in history for having no pity whatever! And Hezekiah's confidence was that if a man came to Jerusalem, he could confidently expect that his wife and his kiddies that had gone, would be better off under the Assyrian, on the basis of that promise. And we know the history of the Jewish people in captivity, b&s, the remarkable history; the remarkable history that we studied in this atmosphere in the book of Esther, when in great circumstances of trial they did receive pity, when it looked that all went against them, and Yahweh was able to work that wonderful miracle. And that was the basis of Hezekiah's invitation, there were many things to be gained by coming to Jerusalem that they might worship God in spirit and in truth.

And we run back to that 2 Chronicles record now, b&s, we notice how the invitation was received or wasn't received. And here we have in verse 10, 'So the posts (messengers) passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them', like I've just been doing here, trying to act out for you what might have happened. Similar things doubtless did happen, laughing them to scorn, saying, 'well, what a ridiculous thing! to go to Jerusalem when we've got the truth here; to go down there and God will give our family and friends pity from the Assyrians. What a ridiculous idiotic comment!' and they laughed him to scorn, BUT, and this is absolutely touching, 'Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem'. And we will never understand, b&s, how much it took them to do that! Try and imagine in your mind, wherever you've come from, we've all been through circumstances in life. I am not here, b&s, to create any disunity in your thinking; God forbid, the facts of the matter are that many of us have seen tragic circumstances of ecclesias drifting apart, even though they may still hold the fundamental doctrines together. And we've known the bitterness and pride and barriers that are built up; try and imagine what it would have taken those divers of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun to humble themselves and come to Jerusalem. Do you know why they did it? because that verse tells us; they weren't 'divers', that word in the Hebrew is 'enosh' they were poor mortal beings. The word 'ish' means 'a man in a great sense', the word 'enosh' denotes a man who's 'a very poor mortal man'. And there were men who got that invitation, looked at it and unto them, b&s, that walked in darkness, a great light was in that letter, and tears would run down their faces as they saw that letter and knew the principles. They'd been called 'home', back to the traditional worship of their fathers. It would kindle and arouse within them a love of the truth. They would think of the statement of faith which had bound

them together and had made great happiness of brethren with one mind. Tears would stream down their faces and they would think to themselves, 'look, it's been years since we've seen our brethren', and they would see there also a need to come down there and frankly admit they're wrong; and they were prepared to do that because they saw in themselves, we're weak, poor, mortal men, we can't do much for ourselves, the Assyrians are hammering on our door, it's no good standing on our pride brethren', and a few little groups, here and there are getting together, crying on each others' shoulders and saying, 'let's go home!' And go down to Hezekiah and say, 'we're sorry, we're wrong, we've been wrong for years, we've been in apostacy; you're right! please, can we come in?' And the doors swung open and the nation keeping the truth entered in; and He will keep him in perfect peace whose imagination is stayed on Thee', went Isaiah on to say. And their imagination was now stayed on Yahweh as they imagined the glory and the power and the greatness of the truth of God, b&s, which had brought them all home to 'roost' as it were, in the family. What a wonderful thing it would be, if we can only send ambassadors out from here or wherever we may be, to call our brethren and sisters together, all of them, back to the truth in its purity! In its purity, that we could with one mind join together in our public platform, not on these diverse titles which you see in the paper; one ecclesia saying for example, at the end of the year, that Christmas is a pagan festival and trying to put before the people the facts of Christ's death and resurrection and the truth about that, and then at another lecture time inviting people to come and sing carols with them, that's what's wrong with us today, b&s. We need to come home together and to get forth and preach that truth, in blazing truth, and nothing else but truth, and to bring people home as Hebrews and to be 'enosh' and humble ourselves and come home. If ever there's a need, it's a need for that today! And I can imagine how that would have affected Hezekiah, and of course, all those that are mentioned, especially two of those tribes, Asher and Zebulun who were from Galilee.

And it was Galilee, wasn't it? that Isaiah said 'Galilee of the nations; the despised and offscouring of the Jewish people', they were the ones who felt the weight of Hezekiah's appeal and they knew they were the offscouring of the world, and they came home to roost. What a marvellous thing that would have been to Hezekiah, and although the bulk of them rejected it, there were that few, b&s, and they came down and kept the Passover with one heart! we read in verse 12. 'Also in Judah the hand of God', it didn't say God's hand was in both places, also in Judah the hand of God; it was God that was affecting the people 'to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes by the word of Yahweh'. If we had time, which we won't (I was going to but I won't deviate) I would have taken you into Psalm 122, one of the songs of degrees which I've been deliberately avoiding for the sake of time, but in Psalm 122, Hezekiah who gathered that collection together, spoke about Jerusalem which was encompassed with the hills, and as the northern tribes would come down, the hills of Samaria which were at the same height as the hills of Judea; there was one difference-they were widely dispersed in Samaria with broad open valleys which swept around them where you could drive chariots abreast if you liked, and with great crowds of people who would make their way down, they'd pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as they came near the city of Jerusalem so the hills came in further, and further and further locking you in to defines and ravines and running you up ultimately to Jerusalem. And as the crowds of people

dispersed between the hills of Samaria passing one side or the other, without sight or sound of each other, they would meet on the other side. The hills would bring them together, says Hezekiah, closing them in further and further until when they came to Jerusalem, they were walking shoulder to shoulder locked together by the hills of Jerusalem and they were built together as God has compacted that city to the unity of faith! 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for my brethren and companions sake, I will now say, Peace be within thy walls'. And he prayed that the walls of that city might enclose the whole nation as the hills did, to rub their shoulders together in the truth and bring them as one to that place. And Jerusalem is the place we're all heading for, b&s, isn't it? and we're going to be locked together then, and you know, it's remarkable as this chapter sweeps on now, to talk about the great Passover from verse 13 onwards, that Hezekiah kept, was the feast of Unleavened bread.

Verse 13, it was the feast of Unleavened bread; of course it was. You see, the feast of Unleavened bread followed the Passover, but you see, it had a particular significance here, b&s, because with the unleavened bread, of course, they had to get rid of every piece of leaven in their house. And that is what Hezekiah was telling them! Don't bring from the north all your heathen ideas, leave them at home, get rid of them; tell Judah to get them out of Judah. They did, they got rid of every altar that was in the courts of Jerusalem, they cleansed the temple; now the people came to Jerusalem and the people cleansed the city! and they got hold of those altars which 2 Chronicles chapter 28 said that Ahaz had put in every corner of Jerusalem. And they got hold of them and they hurdled them over the walls into the brook Kedron, all the leaven went into the valley. And you know, the leaven they had, b&s, wasn't yeast that we buy, what they used to do was mix up their dough and then slice a piece off, and they'd stick that up in the cupboard and it would go rank and sour, it's what Paul called the 'old leaven', and when the time came, of course, to leaven a lump of dough to give it some bite and crisp taste about it, they would cut a piece of that old piece and stick it into the new piece, they'd roll it together and cook it and the old piece would permeate the whole, leaven of malice and wickedness that had gone stinging and rotten up there in the cupboard. Get rid of it! Rub it out even though it might make the taste better! It appeals to the flesh, get rid of it; and they kept the feast of Unleavened bread.

And verse 16 says, as far as the Levites were concerned, in verse 15, 'they were ashamed' even the Levites who were more upright in heart were ashamed, what were they ashamed about? they were ashamed because of the response of the people! Those great men who had sanctified themselves were now ashamed they hadn't done it more so, because the people were streaming into Jerusalem, brethren hugging each other, coming in from the gates in the north, hadn't seen them for years, and they'd grown up together in early years in the truth, when Israel was one, and here now were their children and their children's children, and they hadn't seen them for years, and as brethren came there was a tremendous wonderful zeal and enthusiasm and they hugged each other; and the Levites stood ashamed to see the wonderful enthusiasm. And yet they had sanctified themselves, such was the effect of that Passover. And in verse 16, 'And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God'; ah, b&s, you do yourself a great injustice if you don't pick up

every important phrase in the record. It's been a great joy to discover a method of interpretation of the scriptures, as far as I'm concerned, and I've ever used the divine method, and that is this, whenever you find a phrase dropped in there that seems to be a little out of place or seems to be extra, search it out!

Why does it tell us that Moses was a man of God in that context? because here's where it said that he was a man of God, Deuteronomy 33, and look at the context! look at the joy of discovery as one goes back to find this, and to see what it was we're being taught here! Here it is, here I believe is a wonderful exhortation to all true bible students, pick up those phrases, run them back through the record and look at the context, Deuteronomy 33 and verse 1, 'This is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said, Yahweh came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of His saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; and they shall receive of thy words', and that's exactly what Hezekiah was bringing them to do, and they came and sat at Hezekiah's feet and received the words of Yahweh; and he got hold of the Levites that taught the good knowledge of Yahweh and he spoke to their heart. The record said 'he spoke to their heart', and you know, when we think about it, he encouraged them, b&s, as I've told you before, the word 'heart' in the Hebrew is the 'intelligence', linked with the emotion; it doesn't exclude the emotion but it's intelligence linked with emotion; Hezekiah got them together and gave the students a lesson in bible study. 25 years old and he sat down with the intelligentsia of the race, and gave them a lesson in bible exposition, and sent them back among the people, and they came and sat at his feet and heard of the words of Yahweh. The man of God, oh, ho, there's the expression, what a marvellous context that is; 'He loved His people, all His saints are in His hands', and he brought them to sit down at his feet, and they shall receive of His words. That's the context, b&s, and that's what I believe we're being taught when those little phrases are dropped into those records like that and run you back to wonderful expositions. And my mind just absolutely loves that, to get into that section and see that section of Deuteronomy 33 and the projecting to the future. And we're all going to Jerusalem, brought by the very power of the truth that's brought us together and we will sit at the Lord Jesus Christ's feet and hear the words of Yahweh! and have all the questions answered which today remain unanswered because we are unable to unravel them because of our weakness and the lack of ability to get down to this book as we should. What a marvellous day that will be!

And of course, such was the enthusiasm, such was the crowd that turned up that it was beyond the capacity of the officials, the religious officials, the priests and the Levites that handled the matter. So Hezekiah's fronted up with another difficulty; as much as he doesn't want to compromise, what's he going to do? You can't eat the Passover unless you're clean, says the Law of Moses. You know, b&s, it's a remarkable thing when you think about it, we don't come clean to our Passover, we come to be cleaned! And when you think about it, and I believe Hezekiah did think about it, if keeping the Passover depended upon us being clean, then I doubt we'd ever hold a memorial meeting. And you know, that was one of the weaknesses of the Law, we come to be cleaned, yet they

had to come clean to keep it! Now I'm not saying by that, that, of course, it demands a certain holiness, I'm not suggesting it doesn't, but taking the terminology of the Law, as to what the Law demanded of cleanliness, if we take the spiritual counterpart to that, we would never ever keep the Passover. One of the remarkable things, and I believe that Hezekiah thought about that and now he had the opportunity, he could either go ahead and keep that Passover or, if he was going to demand a rigid stipulation to the letter of the Law, of course, it couldn't be kept.

Now the circumstances demanded that it be kept; these people had come in the genuineness of their heart. They hadn't come with a flippant attitude and to say, 'we don't care if we're not clean; they wanted to be clean. And so Hezekiah says in verse 18, 'for a multitude of the people even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they did eat of the Passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them saying, 'The good Yahweh pardon every one'. And you know, b&s, if we stopped at that word, then there may be some justification for saying that Hezekiah entered into a little bit of compromise; if we stopped at that word! But the verses divide his thought, 'the good Yahweh pardon every one that prepares his heart to seek Yahweh Elohim of his fathers, and you want to never read verse 18 without reading verse 19, because you'll do Hezekiah an injustice. He didn't go to Yahweh and say, 'look, Yahweh, we can't keep your Law, we're poor mortal men, perhaps on this occasion, break it down a little bit'. NO WAY IN THE WORLD DID HE DO THAT! The good Yahweh pardon every one that prepares his heart to seek Yahweh; now you tell me, b&s, what was better? That someone come there, wash his hands, wash his clothes and do all the ceremonies, keep away from this, keep away from that, throw leaven out the window, and go through his house with a broom and clean it all up and then come with a black heart? What was better if a man unable in time to do that, brought his heart to God and opened it up and it was clean? What's better than that? that's above Law! there's no compromise there, that way and wide above Law. You know, Paul made the point in Romans chapter 2, that the Gentiles that have not the Law and yet do by nature the things that are written in the Law, 'for he says, 'they do those things from the heart which are written in the Law'. What better and they didn't even know the Law? says Paul. He told the Galatians that the fruits of the spirit were love, joy and peace, and all those lovely virtues against such there is no Law'. What better, never did Hezekiah break the Law, b&s, yea, he does not destroy the Law of God, he established it; and the good Yahweh would pardon every one who prepared his heart to seek Yahweh Elohim of his fathers, though he couldn't do it according to the purification of the sanctuary.

And what was more important, the sanctuary or the people in whom God dwelt? And I believe, rather than compromise or make any weakness of the Law, I believe Hezekiah lifted it, b&s, to a plain far above Law. Marvellous! You know, Jesus said, 'it is not that from without which defiles a man, it is that which comes from within', and in that memorable section in the 7th chapter of Mark, when He said that, for He said, 'out of the heart of man proceeds uncleanness', and He was making the very point here that Hezekiah was making, that it doesn't matter what goes in a man; if he doesn't wash his hands before dinner, he's probably a grubby little wretch, but it won't kill him, and

whatever he takes into his system will be, of course, purified in the system itself; it's what comes out of him that makes him filthy in God's sight. You know, b&s, immediately the Lord said that, immediately afterwards, the record states, that a Syrophenician woman came up to pick up the crumbs off the table which had fallen from which the disciples were eating. That's what Mark says immediately after that, and there on the ground pleading for His power for her daughter, was a woman whom they called a 'dog'; who frankly admitted that she was a dog and in so doing received blessing from her Lord, because her heart was clean. What a wonderful thing, what a marvellous thing that is, and here Hezekiah a man of large heart, saw that principle very, very clearly, and he kept the Passover.

And in verse 20 we read that 'Yahweh hearkened to Hezekiah and He healed the people'. Now they didn't have any sickness or did they? They had spiritual sickness, yes, but you see, b&s, I believe He healed them in anticipation, that is, by prevention, He healed them by prevention because the punishment for this sort of thing, when one broke the Law of Moses with uncleanness, was that a plague would sweep through the people. That happened on several occasions and Yahweh healed them thus preventing that, under normal circumstances that would have happened, but it didn't happen! and they went forward and He healed those people, and so having seen that it says, 'and the children of Israel that were present in Jerusalem (not everybody, those who were found in Jerusalem, it says) 'kept the Passover and the feast of Unleaven bread seven days with great gladness. And the Levites and the priests praised Yahweh day by day, singing with loud instruments' (see the margin-instruments of strings). What are instruments of strings? not made by the best manufacturer, b&s, but played with all the might. And on that day they used those instruments as probably they'd never used them before, and their fingers flying over the strings, playing the glorious songs of Zion while pulling on their heart strings. And their heart strings, b&s, were vibrating, vibrating with the love of Yahweh and a melody went up to God which was highly acceptable although the people hadn't been cleansed according to the process of the sanctuary.

And as we move further down the chapter, we read that the whole assembly came together, in verse 23. In verse 23 when it says 'and the whole assembly took counsel to keep other days', that word 'assembly', b&s, is that word I made reference to earlier; the word which is used for the first time in the promises made to Jacob, 'a multitude of people'. It means to 'call out an assembly' it's the equivalent to an 'ecclesia' and you'll notice here even in the margin of Genesis 28, there is a notation to that effect; so he called the whole assembly together. And there was the ecclesia, and Hezekiah praised Yahweh in that ecclesia. And they voted another 7 days, and I don't doubt as often as we come up here to this camp and we rejoice together in the power of this book, irrespective of who's standing here(platform) dealing with these matters, in the power of this book, b&s, I don't doubt that if circumstances were different, we would get an overwhelming vote to continue this place, because of the wonderful, wonderful things that are written here, and the marvellous time we have together, and putting them together in our minds, to vote unanimously that we should continue on, if we had the time!

And what did Hezekiah do? I want you to notice what he did! verse 24, 'For Hezekiah



king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes of the congregation gave a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep.' Did you notice the margin? Hezekiah king of Judah did give, the margin says 'he lifted up', and further on the margin says when the princes gave 'they lifted up'. You know what they did, don't you? Here again, the details will all come to our rescue, marvellous study that Law, b&s, an incredible study that Law! How many times are we able to interpret a verse of scripture by what the Law says? You know what the word is, the reason the margin says 'lifted up' is because the word is 'ruwm' and the word 'ruwmah' is used in the term 'to ruwm' which is used for 'heave offerings'. Now a heave offering was different from a wave offering, the very terms themselves are well translated, one went sideways and the other went up. When people like the Levites dedicated themselves to Yahweh, they were a wave offering unto Yahweh, and I believe they actually stood there and rocked from side to side as if their whole life, their whole existence was now in God's service; and they were waved before Yahweh. But when a man brought a heave offering, he heaved that direct to God, he put it up there and said that belonged to God alone; but God, of course, was represented there by His priests and so heave offerings were the exclusive property of the priests. Now read the verse again, 'For Hezekiah king of Judah did give heave offerings to the congregation, a 1,000 bullocks and 7,000 sheep and the princes gave heave offerings to the congregation, a 1,000 bullocks and 10,000 sheep, and a great number of priests sanctified themselves'. Of course they did, because now they could live! and Hezekiah knew that that feast was going to run for another week, and he was going to need more priests! Who was going to supply the wherewithal for them? Well, he did! and he brought in his heave offerings when the priests saw that there was everything ready for them, and that they had a reasonable existence there; they just flocked into the office! And Hezekiah had it ready-made then to carry on that feast in a far better and more dignified manner and to bring to bear, the more particular details of that Law, by the very way that he himself generously brought in those heave offerings along with the princes of the congregation. Remarkable b&s, are those details!

And the chapter closes with great joy in Jerusalem! Verse 25 tells us that the strangers, notice what it says in verse 25, 'And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, (and notice this phrase, just dwell upon this) 'and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel', what a tragic thing it was that having to come into the truth, you've got to come out of the world, that you've got to come out of Israel! That's what that verse is telling us; strangers coming into the truth who had been in the northern kingdom, who thought they were in the truth, had now to come in for the first time! and come out of Israel. And those Israelites who came out of Israel along with the strangers, are equated together; they had all been strangers! and though they had lived under the caption and banner of Israel as if they'd been in the truth, they'd never been in the truth, some of them! 'and they came out of Israel, and they came and dwelt in Judah, and they rejoiced'. You know, there was a great emphasis on this, they rejoiced, it was great joy in Jerusalem, as there would be, b&s, if we could get over our differences all of us, and come to the absolute purity of God's truth and the dignity of His truth. There would be absolute pure joy, there's no doubt about that!

'For, it says, 'for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem'. Why does it say that? You know that's not loosely said either, what was it about Solomon's time, in keeping his Passover and not so much the Passover, but the dedicating of the temple, what was the feast of the dedication of the temple why does it quote that in relation to Solomon? Well, because of two things, do you know what Solomon did that was similar here? You know, there was such a similarity that it reigned in the mind of Hezekiah; the two things were that Solomon built the temple, he opened the doors, and they kept the feast which was voted to continue for 14 days. And so you see, Hezekiah saw the point; he said, 'yes, I remember, there was the time that Solomon opened the doors of the temple, they had a feast of dedication which went 7 days longer by popular vote'. And so here again there's a repetition, and you see what he was thinking, b&s? That temple as far as Hezekiah was concerned had just been built; and though Solomon had built it, Ahaz had so desecrated it, that it might as well be destroyed. He had rebuilt the temple, and now what would you do? and here again comes a magnificent climax to a chapter, a magnificent climax!

What would you do if you were Hezekiah? See, we haven't got a mind like him, I certainly haven't; I'm talking to you like this because I know what's written there, but if it hadn't been written there, I wouldn't have thought like this, but I can see what he was doing. And he saw the point, and he said, 'ah, yes, I can see, we've got a brand new temple virtually; this is the first time as far as I'm concerned that it has ever been used properly. These people have come here, it is the first time for them also; it's a new thing. Solomon opened the doors, Solomon had a feast of 14 days'. Then it says, 'then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came even into His dwelling place of the heaven'. You see what he did? he got the priests the Levites to repeat the prayer of Solomon; that Solomon had said if people turn towards this city and towards this house, whatever their circumstances are, whatever their circumstances are, if they turn towards this house, 'Oh Yahweh in heaven thy dwelling place, hear thy people'. Well, that's exactly what happened! Israel had been in apostasy, Judah had been in apostasy, their past history, b&s, was absolutely shocking! shocking their past history was, they lived in misery, sin, debauchery, idolatry, shocking history! Well, it doesn't matter, they'd turned toward Jerusalem at last, they'd faced the devil; repeated the prayer of Solomon. And what happened? Well, what did Solomon pray for? Their prayer ended in 'Yahweh's dwelling place'.

Now turn to the 6th chapter of 2 Chronicles, b&s, and have a look at this, and see what Solomon prayed for, and see how this was applicable to this wonderful circumstance as Hezekiah brought this to bear upon the people. This is what Solomon prayed for, how applicable were these words, verses 36 to 39, 'If they sin against Thee (for there is no man that sinneth not) and Thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; Yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto Thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and

have dealt wickedly: If they return to Thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their Land, which Thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which Thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: (see the fundamentals, b&s, see the fundamentals, fathers, city, house; wasn't that the emphasis that Hezekiah was putting on it; come home to the LORD God of your fathers, to Jerusalem, to this place, His house; that's what Solomon was saying) 'Then hear Thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against Thee'.

And the record says, 'And their prayer came into the habitation in heaven', and Hezekiah, b&s, once again by his enthusiasm and his love of the truth and of his brethren, had achieved a remarkable victory in the power of his God!