TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#214 Have You Seen Jesus, My Lord?
Welcome by: Bobby Rader
Opening Prayer by: Jerry Mallernee
#549 There Is Sunshine in My Soul
#480 Blessed Assurance

Scripture Reading by: Rock Cary
#315 When I Survey The Wondrous Cross
Communion Devotional by: Ken Coleman
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#469 Faith Is the Victory
Sermon: "Trouble in Paradise"
Acts 13:1-13

#911 Bring Christ Your Broken Life
#523 I Know the Lord Will Find a Way for Me
Closing Prayer by: James Scott

We will be viewing the series
The Chosen at 5:00 p.m. in the
fellowship room

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

July 24, 2022

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

A Lesson From Hezekiah

As you are all aware, we had to cancel Vacation Bible School this year midway through the session due to an outbreak of COVID. Thankfully, it appears that those who came down with the illness escaped having a major case. But cutting it short was unfortunate, especially because we had such great attendance from kids—a significant increase over last year—both those here in the congregation and their friends and neighbors that they invited. I appreciate so much all of those teachers, helpers, and others who put in the hard work to make the week a success; so much of that had already been done, that even trimming a couple of days off did not make much difference in the labor involved.

That's the positive. The negative is that the turnout from the adult class was, to be blunt, a disappointment. In that light, I think we could all do well to emulate the kids' eagerness to be here and learn a lesson that we actually covered in our class this week from King Hezekiah.

Israel divided in two after the death of Solomon: the House of David ruled over a remnant in the south, Judah, while the bulk of the nation, the 10 northern tribes, were governed by Jeroboam and his successors. This period of Jewish history was extremely troubled: Israel did not have a single ruler who was righteous, which ultimately led to the nation being destroyed by Assyria in 722 B.C.; Judah, meanwhile, had a handful of kings who were good.

Hezekiah was one of those good kings, one of only four that Scripture compares favorably to David. And his loyalty to God was no small accomplishment; his father, Ahaz, was definitely *not* one of the good ones. He stripped the Temple of its furnishings. He built altars on every street corner in Jerusalem and all the high places in the country. He even offered his sons as sacrifices to pagan gods. He completely turned his back on God and looked to Assyria for protection instead; the result was that Judah became a weakened vassal state, corrupted by idolatry.

It's remarkable that Hezekiah remained faithful to God under those circumstances. In fact, it's a wonder that he even survived to begin with, given Ahaz's abominable practices. But he did, first ruling with his father as co-regent for 14 years and then later beginning to reign on his own c. 715 B.C. If you note the two dates, you realize that Israel fell during that period. You might think, then, that dealing with Assyria would be at the top of the "to do" list of the new king.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Evelyn Coleman is recovering from covid.

Robert Modisette has covid.

Joe Edd Stifflemire had a heart procedure last week and is at home recovering.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Tina Garcia, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ka'Leisha Jones, Linda Frank, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Susan McCain, Gary Nielsen

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday, July 25th at 5:30 p.m..

We will have a Blood Drive on Monday, July 25th from 4-8 p.m. in the fellowship room. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Primetimers will be going to Cheddars in Baytown on July 26th at 6:00 p.m. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board. A driver is needed.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Aug. 2nd at 8:00 a.m.

We will have a meal on Wednesday, Aug. 3rd at 5:30 p.m.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"
is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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Instead, the very first thing Hezekiah did was clean house: in his first month on the throne, he began an aggressive campaign of religious reform. You can read all about it great detail in **2 Chron 29-31.** He went further than any of his predecessors in removing the altars in the hills where people worshipped pagan gods.

In their place he invited people to come and worship in a restored Temple. Ahaz had defiled the Temple, finally closing its doors. So Hezekiah immediately set about cleansing it. He commanded the priests to cleanse themselves and rededicate theTemple. Where Ahaz had installed a pagan altar in the place of the altar of the Lord, Hezekiah removed it and restored the Lord's altar to its rightful place. The Levites destroyed it all and put back the right instruments.

And Hezekiah did not just restore the Temple, he restored right worship. As you can imagine, the Passover had not been kept for many years; now, the cleansing project took so long that they missed the date! But the Law had a provision for observing it in the second month due to uncleanness, which Hezekiah utilized to go on with it. He sent out notices not just throughout Judah, but included all the territory of greater Israel, to the remnants of the Northern Kingdom that Assyria had left behind. They celebrated Passover in a way that had not been seen since the days of Solomon; the response was so enthusiastic and joyful, they even extended it an extra week! And when people returned to their homes, they voluntarily destroyed the remaining pagan shrines.

Hezekiah began his reign by making sure that he and the people were devoted to God. And that is the lesson we need to learn: make God the priority in your life. That goes for our private devotions, our personal study of Scripture and our prayer life. It also applies to the corporate worship of the church, to Bible classes and programs, to just being active and involved in the work and fellowship of the church. Don't let the world crowd him out!

Hezekiah had any number of other important things he could have focused on as he embarked on his kingship, but he realized that emphasizing the worship of God was more significant than anything else. Maybe, like those ancient Israelites, there are idols that we need to clear out and destroy. We need to do whatever is necessary to ensure that our commitment to the Lord is non-negotiable.

Bryant Perkins