

THE REVIVAL BY HEZEKIAH
Great Revivals
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We're looking at the theme of revival. There are at least eight revivals in the Old Testament. The revival at Sinai after the making of the golden calf when the people of God repent and return to the Lord. The revival during the time of Samuel when people come out of the Dark Ages of every man doing what is right in his own eyes to unified worship and to the ministry of prophets and the administration of kings. There's a revival under Elijah's prophetic ministry at Mt. Carmel where people repent of their worship of Baal. There's the revival of Jonah at the city of Nineveh. The revival that occurs in the tenth century in the kingdom of Judah under the good king Asa described in 1 Kings. There's the revival under Hezekiah, the revival under Josiah and the revival under Ezra and Nehemiah. Revivals spanning the course of centuries of time. Eight, of which we only look at five. But as I have looked at the revivals I have noted some common characteristics of them which I share with you in the introduction today to the theme of the revival under Hezekiah.

All of the revivals except for the revival under Jonah and Jonah's is unique because it occurs in a foreign land among people who had not followed the way of God. But all the revivals except for Jonah involve a backslidden condition in the people of God.

We use that term "backslider." You may wonder where it originates. It originates in the King James translation and several passages in the Old Testament to describe the turning away of the people of God. The term "backslidden" is a poorer translation of what is really involved in the turning away from God that is described in the Old Testament during these revivals. It really is that – a turning away. Whereas the term "backsliding" indicates for example if you were walking up a mountain and had a goal and instead of reaching it you just kept sliding further back down. Or maybe running the bases in reverse. Maybe that conveys a turning away more accurately. It's doing something the opposite of the way it should be done. All the revivals manifest this kind of characteristic.

What are the characteristics of backsliding? As I have looked at these revivals personally I have noted at least three major characteristics of backsliding. God is not in first place in a person's life. Second, the presence of sin. Disobedience to God or a falling into moral sin. And the third thing that accompanies that is the nation – this is particularly in reference to Israel – winds up in peril or in trouble. As its spiritual defenses become weak so does its national defenses. And thus it becomes in its existence very much on the precipice as to whether or not it can survive.

We'll might that Old Testament example prove to be some sort of help to us in the New Testament age to understand. That when you fall into a backslidden condition the three things which are happening first, God is not in first place. Second, there is sin or disobedience in your life toward God. And third, eventually there comes peril or trouble. Not always in a physical way but certainly in a spiritual dimension.

We have today for our consideration the revival led by Hezekiah. Hezekiah's story is found in three different places of the Old Testament. We'll flip back and forth between 2 Kings 18-20 and 2 Chronicles 29-32. Also Isaiah 36-39 is an almost exact duplication of 2 Kings 18-20. We won't be looking at Isaiah today. But Isaiah did live in the time of Hezekiah.

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Hezekiah's situation, to date him, he comes at the later part of the eighth century before Christ. Some two centuries after Solomon. He is a successor of Solomon in the lineage of Solomon and is therefore in the lineage of Christ. He is king over Judah, the southern kingdom. He began to reign at a time when the northern kingdom of Israel was falling to the Assyrians. During his time of being king in the south, Palestine, the northern part, the ten tribes to the north were carried away into captivity. So he lived in a very awesome moment of personal destiny of his own nation. When the very existence of his own nation teetered on the brink.

There are three things that I would like for us to look at today as we share the life of Hezekiah. First thing we'll look at is the need for revival in his time. Secondly we'll look at some of the steps that Hezekiah took in the bringing of the revival. Thirdly, we'll look at the outcome of the revival. All the way we'll be attempting to make application to our own lives.

First, the need for revival.

The need for revival in Hezekiah's day is most clearly seen if you look at the life of Hezekiah's father, a man by the name of Ahaz. Ahaz came to the throne when he was 20 years of age. He died when he was 36. In the course of his 16 years a great spiritual backsliding has occurred within his own nation. The story of Ahaz is told in 2 Kings 16 and 2 Chronicles 28. I want to look more specifically at 2 Chronicles 28. To note the two prevalent conditions which pose the need for revival when Hezekiah comes to the throne.

The first condition in Hezekiah's dad's life, Ahaz brought his nation and himself to a place which may we call an advanced stage of sin. Sin is very much like cancer. In the early stages of cancer it is very easy to cure but very hard to detect. But in the later stages of cancer it is very easy to detect but very hard if at all possible for it to be cured.

So there are gradations of sin. In Ahaz's life we see a person who is at an advanced stage. What are the characteristics of his advanced stage of sin? 2 Chronicles 28:1 – he did not do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. There is first that clear disobedience to what he knows to do.

Secondly it is described of him, he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel. That doesn't strike you as all that impressive a statement does it? But when you look very seriously at the biblical text it leads to some incredible kinds of conclusions. First of all we make a distinction as to what Israel is. Israel is a confusing term. It's used of Jacob as a person. It's used of all the twelve tribes. It's used of the United Kingdom. It's used of the northern kingdom of ten tribes. It's used to describe the people of God. Here in this particular passage it's describing the northern kingdom, the ten tribes that were going to be carried away to captivity. It's said of Ahaz that he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. We looked at the life of Ahaz, a king of Israel. Some century and a half before Hezekiah. It was during these kings of Israel reign that they began walking in a certain kind of way. The first king of Israel had been a man by the name of Jereboam who we noted last week set up golden calves at the northern and southern end of his kingdom and said to his people "Worship these instead of God." Now Ahaz is described as walking in the ways of the kings of Israel.

As we look at the two kingdoms, Judah and Israel, any glance at the historical books of the Old Testament – Kings and Chronicles – notes for us that most of the kings of Judah did what was

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pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. But here is a king that deliberately stepped over the boundaries and began behaving like kings behaved in the northern part of the kingdom, a state of apostasy. That led to some incredible kinds of things. Making molten images for the Baals. Offering his sons in the valley of Hinnom as a sacrifice. Hezekiah evidently one of the sons who escaped such a procedure. Burning incense and sacrificing at high places – hills and under green trees. This was the characteristic of his reign.

To get an idea of the abhorrence of what is happening under him, suppose that several miles from here there's a Christian church of any kind. Suppose you hear they moved a large Buddha into the sanctuary and set the Buddha up on the platform. Replaced the pulpit with the Buddha. As people came in they began worshipping the Buddha instead of the living Christ.

That's the kind of thing that the kings of Israel did in reference to the God of Israel. They put in his place other things. Just as abhorrent as it would be for us to put a Buddha in a Christian sanctuary.

Suppose that we heard that this happened to somebody else. For years we said, It's not right what they have done. Only decades later, we ourselves bring the Buddha and set it up in our sanctuary.

This is what it means when it says that Ahaz walked in the sins of the kings of Israel. He moved the "Buddha" into his own life and into his own realm. He moved the Baals inside his kingdom.

As time progressed 2 Chronicles 28:22 tells us that in the time of his distress he became yet more faithless to the Lord. So that trouble and peril did not drive him closer to the Lord but he became more disobedient. We see in him an advanced state of sin.

We also see with this in Ahaz' life an advanced state of peril for his nation and for himself in his kingdom. 28:5 tells us that he was defeated by Syria. 28:5-15 tell us that he was defeated by Israel. That was incredible because Israel at that time itself was about to fold and be overrun by a foreign enemy yet it had strength enough to take Judah. To kill 180,000 warriors and to carry 200,000 women and children into captivity. Judah during the reign of Ahaz was defeated by Edom, the descendants of Esau. It was defeated from the west by the Philistines, 28:18. It was afflicted by Assyria, the great power to the northeast, verses 20-21. In all of these defeats and afflictions, Ahaz is represented as a person who is desperately searching for any option but the option of going God's way. Thus for example in 28:23 he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him and said because the gods of the kings of Assyria helped them I will sacrifice to them that they will help me. He is an example of a person who says, "I am going to do what I want to do no matter what God says. I know what God says and I know what I want and I'm going to forget what God said and do what I want." We never see in Ahaz's case God dramatically stopping him. His life simply comes to an end in a very short time.

The incredible thing about Ahaz and this of course affects Hezekiah and the kingdom as he comes to it, is that when you purpose to ruin your own life unfortunately and inevitably you take along other persons with you who are dragged down because of you. No man is an island, entire unto himself. Ahaz took his kingdom down. 2 Chronicles 28:19 says "The Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz." The people followed in his steps. In his idolatry and his immorality.

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This is the kind of scene that Hezekiah faces when at the young age of 25 he comes into rulership of Judah. We've looked at the conditions which he faced. Let's look at some corrective measures which he took which brought revival.

Hezekiah did not become like his father. The first step which he takes is found for us in 2 Kings 18:3. He was 25 years old when he began to reign. He reigned 29 years. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. His father had done what was evil in the eyes of the Lord. But he chooses not to be like his father. He chooses to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. I think in that choice we see in Hezekiah's administration at the outset that he is determined to do right. There is that deep-seated feeling that he will give his life to God, a determination. I sense how much this determination is vital to a spiritual walk, to renewal, to revival.

It is because of that sense of determination that I myself in witnessing or preaching do not try to coax people into becoming Christians against their will. When people are coaxed into making their commitment to Christ on the basis of threats, on the basis of doing it against their will, I know eventually the commitment is going to be tested and I know that if they have done it against their will or done it reluctantly or done it out of family pressure or group pressure that the determination is not there to carry through. And the fundamental quality in a Christian life is to first of all determine in your heart which way you're going to walk.

Hezekiah before he did anything else I think made it the hallmark of his life. He was determined to walk in the way of the Lord. Indeed the scripture says that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and strength. What about your determination to walk in the way of the Lord? The first corrective measure.

The second corrective measure, which Hezekiah took, we find in 2 Chronicles 29-31. He began to worship. Hezekiah opened up the avenues of worship again for himself and for his people. 29:3 says to us "In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them." Here the reference is to the temple. We have only to read an earlier chapter in Chronicles to realize Hezekiah's father Ahaz had locked the doors. And forbidden the worship of the Lord in the land by locking the temple. But it was the number one priority of Hezekiah's administration to open the doors of the temple. It's the very first thing he did. Striking, isn't it? His nation was in a time of great political decline. With that here was economic decline as well. But rather than taking care of political and economic matters first he addressed first of all the spiritual need of his nation and of his own life.

I'm grateful I hear so many people even who are not Christians saying that people are concerned about a spiritual renewal in our land. It is time we give priority to those things that are first in the heart of God. The fundamental needs of our nation are after all not political and not economic. They indeed are spiritual.

Hezekiah stands out first and opens the door of the people.

How do we relate this to where we're at? We don't have a temple today. I would suggest that one of the things that happens in moving away from God or backsliding is that avenues of relating to God become closed. The scriptures become a closed book. Prayer becomes non-existent. Worship becomes very haphazard and eventually non-existent. That revival is marked

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first by determination and beginning to open the doors we have closed in relationship to God. So that we become once more open to speak to him and open to hear from him.

Another thing which Hezekiah did in regard to worship is he re-consecrated the priest hood. 29:4-19 speaks to us of this. The priesthood had fallen into disuse and the practices of the priesthood had fallen into the condition of not being adhered to. He re-consecrated the priesthood and spoke to them. I see an application that when there is a beginning of worship, there is also in the believer's life who has watched carelessly a renewed devotion to the institutions which God has established. The institution that God has established by Jesus Christ here on earth is his body, his people, the church. We begin walking in renewed fellowship with that body. Caring for that body and loving that body and being part of it. A re-consecration of the priesthood.

The third thing, which Hezekiah did and it's seen in 29:20-36 is that he re-instituted sacrifice in the land. We would translate this in New Testament terms to saying that he began to prize again the value of the cross. At the cross we see the final sacrifice for sin being made.

These verses 29-36 we see involved 3 different kinds of sacrifice which Hezekiah offered. First a sin offering. Secondly a burnt offering. Thirdly a thank offering or it may be called a peace offering. He offered them in precise order.

The sin offering stood for the fact that he was repenting of the evil, which had been done. It came first. The offering symbolized the dedication of life in its entirety to God. Or all the sacrifice was consumed. It means that after he repented then he dedicated himself and his people to the Lord completely. More in the Christian life is involved that simply turning from the past. It involves a turning to the future and a whole commitment of life to the Lord.

Thirdly, he offers peace offerings or thank offerings which express gratitude to God in forgiving and accepting us. These things which had fallen into a state of disrepair had now been taken care of. In 30:1-27 he revived the celebration of Passover. Evidently this practice had fallen completely into disuse among the people of God. He calls a Passover. Whereas the Passover was to be celebrated in the first month of the year and the fourteenth day. So quick does the revival happen that it begins happening after that moment of time. So Hezekiah calls a revival for the second month and the fourteenth day. Why is he concerned about Passover? Because he is concerned to show his people living in their existential moment. Their *now* of time. God has proven himself faithful in the past and that some 400-600 years before their time God had intervened in the most dramatic way possible in his nation's affairs when with a strong arm he had brought them out of Egypt.. He was saying to that people With God there is no barrier of time. That day seemed centuries ago to you is but a day in God's eyes. And remember the fact that God had strongly delivered his people is to take courage in the present hour. That is the God whom we worship.

That's why when we take communion it doesn't see to us like 2000 years ago. We see Christ present and remember very currently his work, which was given on our behalf. When Hezekiah began to worship what he was doing was he was remembering God's grace acts in history, which verified God's reality in the present.

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One other thing, which he does in worship, which is seen in 31:2-12 in that he had the people generously share their substance so that the work of God may go ahead. 31:5 “As soon as the command was spread abroad the people of Israel gave in abundance. The first fruits of grain, wine, oil, honey. The produce of the land they brought in abundantly the tithes of everything.” In fact so much was the material we’re told it was gathered in great heaps. When we are worshipping the Lord a spirit of generosity inevitably comes to the people of God.

So what Hezekiah did in worship was he opened things which had been shut. If it was the temple, it was reopened. If it was the priesthood, it was re-consecrated. If it was the sacrifice it was re-instituted. If it was the celebration of Passover he had it occur again. If it was the lack of giving, he restored it so that in these chapters we see unfolding the worship of the Lord, which is essential for all revival. A worship of the Lord. An acting in his presence. The doing the things which he asked for. The giving of love and the receiving of love.

The third striking thing which Hezekiah does as part of the revival not only did he determine to do what was right. Not only did he begin to worship. But also he rooted out entrenched sin. This is told to us pointedly in 2 Kings 18:4. He removed the high places. The first thing he did in regard to entrenched sin was he removed the high places.

What is a high place? We know from Deuteronomy 12:2 that a high place was a center of Canaanite worship. Where the various idols were worshipped. Instructions had been given to Israel that when they came into the land they were to “dispossess the nations who served their gods upon the high mountains and upon the high hills and under every green tree.” It was on the high hills that the Canaanites or the heathens thought that God was present in high elevation. Therefore on the hills and on the mountains they would erect altars where sacrifices were made to their gods. Also these places became associated with amoral practices.

Israel as it possessed the land in its early years did not have a temple. So Israel itself worshipped on a high place of Gibeon where the tabernacle was kept. Thus Samuel, Saul and David all worshipped at Gibeon. But when the temple was built in Jerusalem all unauthorized places of worship on high hills the children of Israel were told to desist from. Whether it was the worship of the Canaanite gods which they were forbidden or whether it was even the worship of Jehovah. They were no longer to worship on the high hills. The reason is the Lord wanted to put an end to the day when everybody was doing their own thing. Instead have a unity of the people of God by going to one central place of worship and sacrifice. Also the Lord wanted them to learn many lessons in the temple about access to him through the burnt offerings, through the holy place, through the holy of holies. Lessons they could not learn on every high hill. So he made the requirement that they all come to Jerusalem.

But continually throughout the experience of the kings of Judah it was noted that no matter what king it was he did not destroy the high places. Every king in fact in 3½ centuries, in all the administrations of the kings for 3½ centuries there were only two of that period of time whoever struck against the high places. One is Hezekiah, the first one. The other will come later – Josiah.

What is all involved in this “high place” business anyway? It seems strange and foreign to our ears. You know what spiritually I think a high place is? Spiritually is something in the believer’s life which has gone on and on and on and the believer has not dealt with it. It simply

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remains there. As you look at the kings of the northern kingdom of Israel you'll find continually like the tolling of a bell – they walked in the sins of Jeroboam or the kings of Judah another bell tolled – he walked in the way of the Lord but he did not remove the high places. But he did not remove the high places. It's as if in the north Israel walked on the wild side, drove over the precipice. But in Judah the kings for the most part were good men. They did for the most part good things. But there was one area they never had the courage to strike against – that was the high places. So they left them from administration after administration.

The king would get up and say, "Today I must remove the high places." And he'd go to bed at night and the high places were still there. The days would fade into weeks and the weeks into months and the months into years. Just like in our own lives as Christians there are things which we tolerate. We wake up in the morning and say I'm going to deal with that today. Instead a day becomes a week and a week becomes a month and months become years.

What are the high places? High places are areas of life where we have never submitted to a spiritual discipline. High places are where we have allowed long standing bitterness in our life towards someone else and have never dealt with it. A high place in the Christian's life is a place where you come to a kind of passive uninvolvedness in the things of God or the people of God and have left it remain. A high place may be a moral sin, a secret sin or an open sin. A high place.

Hezekiah had the courage to deal with the high place. That's why I think the revival which happens under him is such an incredible revival. Because when the people of God truly deal with the high places then there is always an incredible move of the spirit of God. I ask you, to look and see if there are any high places in your life. Granted you're serving the Lord. Granted you're walking with him. But areas that the Holy Spirit has continually spoken to you about and you've continued to let the high place exist.

Hezekiah did one other thing in regard to rooting out entrenched sin. In 2 Kings 18:4 we find also that he took the bronze serpent that Moses had made and broke it in pieces for the people of Israel had come to burn incense to it. The bronze serpent... here was something that potentially was a religious relic. It was the serpent Moses had lifted up in the wilderness and the people had looked on it and was saved from the venomous snake. Now centuries later the object itself was being worshipped. That shows me about Hezekiah's desire to root out entrenched sin that he wasn't afraid to examine tradition. To destroy the tradition that was leading away from God and the relics of that tradition. 2 Kings 31:21 tells us he did these things with all his heart.

What was the outcome of the revival? There are four things I see as the outcome.

First there is certainly gladness. 2 Chronicles 29:30 the sacrifices being offered. Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praises to the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph. They sang praises with gladness and they bowed down and worshipped. Asaph and David were the two greatest hymn writers in ancient Israel. Maybe their songs hadn't been sung in a long time but under Hezekiah the people began singing again. Not only did they sing but they stand with gladness.

Verse 36 also speaks to us of the gladness. Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because of what God had done for the people for the thing came about suddenly." 30:21-23 tells us of the

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gladness at the reinstatement of the Passover. They were present seven days with great gladness. The priests and Levites praised God day by day. Singing with all their heart. The people ate food at the festival for seven days sacrificing peace offerings, giving thanks to the Lord. Then the whole assembly agreed together to keep the feast for another seven days. So they kept it for another seven days with gladness.” Unprecedented. Never before had the Passover been kept for two weeks in a row. But they said we’re so glad we’re going to keep it another week.

Inevitably the outcome of revival is gladness. Joy. A light and lift upon your heart. Why? Because the high places have been laid away. The sin that has the gnawing has been set aside. I sometimes think we wear things out, we forget the gladness with which things had originally come into being. Like “Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory.” I’ve sang that so many times. After a while you forget that the people who wrote that song wrote it because they had joy. Happy are the people whose God is the Lord is kind of another song that has almost been sung too much. Now you can sing it without being happy at all.

Reflect the joy and gladness that’s inevitably a part of revival. The joy of the Lord is our strength!

The second outcome of revival is strength. 2 Kings 18:7-8 tells us that under Hezekiah’s administration the people began to gain victory. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him. He smote the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory from watch tower to fortified city.” Enemies that previously had defeated him and pressed against him he was now standing up to and was being strong over. We should deal with the enemy from a standpoint of strength rather than weakness. That political phrase has a lot of spiritual ramifications. If you attempt to deal with Satan from a position of weakness that is a lousy position to be in. But if you deal with him from the position of strength, from the position of being accepted by God and having sins forgiven and having a clean conscious you’re talking another matter. Areas before where he had defeated you now you’ve regained a victory. The victory is there. Strength is there. Hezekiah was able to deal from a position of strength.

Another thing, this may surprise you as an outcome of revival, is testing. Hezekiah had his greatest tests after the revival. 2 Kings 18:19-27 a tremendous test unfolds before him. The Assyrians invade. They have captured Israel. They are moving south toward Judah. They are ready to take the place. They surround the city of Jerusalem. We now of this invasion from records outside of scripture. In fact Sennacherib who was the king of Assyria caused to be engraved in stone in his capital the description of his siege of Jerusalem under the reign of Hezekiah. He records that he captured 46 wall towns of Judah, that he took 200,000 captives and he says of Hezekiah that he blockaded Jerusalem and of Hezekiah “Himself I shut up like a bird in a cage.” Ever wonder where the phrase “bird in a cage” comes from? It comes from Sennacherib of Assyria. Hezekiah was a bird in a cage. His great test is at hand. In verse 19 we find a gentleman who is known a Rabshaken, that is his title. He is an officer in the Assyrian army. He comes and does some things that are symptomatic in the spiritual life.

The first phrase of spiritual testing which the employees to try to sap the confidence of Hezekiah and the people. “Say to Hezekiah, ‘Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, “On what do you rest this confidence of yours? Do you think that mere words or strategy and powerful war? On whom do you now rely now that you have rebelled against me? Behold you are now relying now on Egypt that broken reed of a staff that will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it.

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[this is a reference to the fact that Sennacherib thought that Judah had an alliance with Egypt. He said you'll get cut for that.] Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely upon him."

In other words the Rabshaken is saying to Hezekiah and the people, You're not standing on very much. If this isn't a strategy that the enemy tries to bring upon the people of God in tests to say, You don't have a leg to stand on. You're going to fail. You're not going to make it. The odds are against you. You can't survive. You can't do right. You can't live pure. You can't keep your commitments. On what do you base your confidence?"

The second thing that the Rabshaken tries in verse 22 is to cast doubt on God's word. And by the way he's saying all this, yelling up to the city wall so that all the people can hear him. "If you say to me, 'We rely on the Lord our God,' But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God: is it not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?" What's he saying? He's saying Hezekiah did wrong. He really shouldn't have removed those altars. Now God's mad with him because he removed the altars. When in fact Hezekiah had done right. Inevitably that kind of confusion happens and touches the people of God. Where you have made a decision based on what you know to be right from scripture and the enemy comes along and tries to scramble you and say, You didn't act right at all. God wanted something else. Confusion. Casting doubt upon God's word.

The third thing the Rabshaken tries to do is magnify the weakness of Hezekiah and the people. Verses 23-25 "Come now, make a bet with my master the king of Assyria I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders upon them." What a taunt! How weak he must have been. We now from accounts in the scripture that Hezekiah did have the 2000 men. But the Rabshaken was trying to say, you're so weak you can't come up with that many people to fight.

Then he says also in magnifying the weakness "Moreover is it without the Lord that I have come up against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it." Here he says God's told me to come and destroy you. What's he attempting to do? Magnify weakness.

You can also tell the difference between the voice of the spirit and the voice of the enemy. The spirit is saying, Confess and things will be all right. The enemy will say, things are going to get worse and worse. When you're discouraged you can tell the voice of the spirit and the voice of the enemy. The spirit will say cheer up. The battle is the Lord's. God will bring you through. The enemy will say, "You're going to fall flat on your face. You're going to be a miserable failure. There has never been such a mess in all of life as the mess you're going to make. You're going to lose because you're born a loser."

Always know the difference between the two voices. That's the Rabshaken – you're going to lose. A final thing which the Rabshaken does as he tries to make the nations fear, verses 26-27. An interesting dialogue occurs. "Then said Eliakim the son of Hiliiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshaken, [these three people are kind of a peace delegation from Judah] Pray speak to your servants in the Aramaic language for we understand it. Do not speak to in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people that are on the wall. [What they're saying is like Quit speaking in English. Everybody's listening to you. Would you speak French? We know that]

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But the Rabshaken said to them, ‘Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you and not to the men sitting on the wall who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?’ To make you fear.

What happens when you successfully survive testing? Hezekiah did. He took a letter from the king of Assyria, took it into the temple and spread it before the Lord and said, “Lord, you read it. Here’s what they’re going to do to us. I pray you’d intervene.” And the Lord intervened. Through the word of Isaiah which came in 2 Kings 19 “he says of Assyria, ‘I will put my hook in your nose and my foot in your mouth and I will turn you back by the same way by which you came.’” Verse 32 “Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David.”

And the outcome for Hezekiah the fourth outcome of revival is success. In the Old Testament success was visible because God was teaching his people a lesson which related to this age. The success was visible, physical and material.

In the New Testament age it is sometimes physical, but it is always spiritual.

By spiritual success we may mean that the physical outcome may not be a deliverance from martyrdom or deliverance from economic peril. But it certainly is always a guarantee that the people of God will come successful through any and every encounter. Spiritually intact and alive and vibrant. The New Testament is witness to this. 2 Timothy 4:6-8 finds the last words of the man who is in a prison hole. What does he think about his life? He is being tested. But he says “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” Notice the element of success, which he introduces now. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge will award me on that day. And not only to me but to all that love his appearing.” And James says in 1:12 “Blessed is he who endures trial. For when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those that love him.” When he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life. There is always success in the gospels in Jesus Christ. The outcome is always good.

See this revival under Hezekiah and lay it against your own life. May the spirit give you power in thought and in spirit to fit the pieces of that revival together with the pieces of your life so that you may experience what Hezekiah experienced. Gladness, strength, and success in testing.

We thank you in this moment, our heavenly Father, for the giving of your word to us. We thank you Holy Spirit for in this moment revealing the word to us so that it has become indeed a living instrument in your hands. To divide our innermost thoughts, to judge us and to bring us to a position of peace and wholeness. There are any things, which you have said to us today which none of us as an individual could summarize. But which nevertheless has had meaning somehow for each of us. Especially Lord in this moment I am sensitive to what has been a thrust of this message for me and a sense of what the depth of this message was for this audience today. That is the high places. The areas of life which we have not submitted to you. The doors which we have closed which you cannot enter. The practices which we have refused to do which you bid us to do. Things we are doing which you have

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forbidden us not to do. In every way our paths are right, except for the high places. It is the presence of these high places which continually leads us in a pathway of bondage and unwholesomeness and conviction and uneasiness. Search our hearts of God. I pray that in us here is the determination to indeed make that leap and to do away with the high places so that we can testify even as Paul in his day of testing, I have served God with a good conscious unto this day. For a good conscious we pray and we leave to the task of your spirit now the augmenting of this prayer in each of our lives. That broken walls will be build up and repaired, that stopped doors will be opened. And that our hearts will be at liberty to praise you and to seek your face and do something about the high places in our lives. Through Jesus our Lord. Amen.