

Survey of the Bible part 48 **2Chronicles 28-30**

Last week we touched only on a bit of 2Chronicles as we looked at the nation of Israel and its kings found in Chronicles and how they represent the true and false Israel as described by God, even though both groups are described as Israel.

The same, by the way, is described of the present day Israel, the church, made up of both Jew and Gentile, in a similar fashion.

Simply because someone is a member of the visible church on earth does not make that person a true Christian. And so, like the days of O.T. Israel where you have both faithful and unfaithful Jews under the one heading Israel, you also have faithful and unfaithful “Christians” under the one heading “the church.”

So, the question comes up, what is an unfaithful “Christian”?

It is a Christian in name only, who was never truly a Christian who trusted Christ alone for salvation. This is what the writer of Hebrews speaks of.

Hebrews 6:4-6 ⁴ For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and *then* have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

In this case here you have a person who is obviously part of the body of Christ partaking in the ministry of the Holy Spirit working in that congregation who then falls away.

So, was this person a true Christian who was indwelt and sealed with the Spirit of God and then chose to unseal and unborn again himself so as to be lost forever?

This can't be since we are clearly told by Christ Himself that of those who are chosen of the Father and given as a gift to the Son as they are sealed by the Holy Spirit, none of those can possibly lost.

Ephesians 1:13-14 ¹³ In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 4:30 ³⁰ Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

John 6:39-40 ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

And so, when a believer trusts Christ for his or her salvation it's because Christ is the one who has caused us to be born again by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit and it is the same Holy Spirit who seals us for the day of redemption, which John describes as the last day.

Which is to say, that of all the sheep who follow Christ and hear His voice, all of those sheep will be brought home to glory and none will be lost. Therefore when we see a passage like Hebrews that describes, what appears to be a true believer being lost forever, it is not describing a true believer, but one in name only.

By the way, John knew this and actually lived this when he wrote these words.

1 John 2:17-19 ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. ¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

And of course, Jesus Himself, when using a parable about the kingdom, which is another way of describing His people in that kingdom, uses this analogy of both types of people working side by side even when only one group is considered to be part of the kingdom.

Matthew 13:24-30 ²⁴ Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ "But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.

²⁶ "But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. ²⁷ "The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ "And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ "But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ 'Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and *in the time of the harvest* I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.'""

The time of the harvest is the last day of which Jesus spoke in John 6:40 when our Lord said, ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

That day is the day in which there will be a separation of the wheat and the tares, the sheep and the goats. And so, all of redemptive history is seen in this light of which O.T. Israel is a type.

So, back to our text and back to Ahaz, the goat and the tare.

2 Chronicles 28:1-5 ^{NAU} Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do right in the sight of the LORD as David his father *had done*. ² But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; he also made molten images for the Baals. ³ Moreover, he burned incense in the valley of Ben-hinnom and burned his sons in fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out before the sons of Israel. ⁴ He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills and under every green tree. ⁵ Wherefore, the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Aram; and they defeated him and carried away from him a great number of captives and brought *them* to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted him with heavy casualties.

Here we see King Ahaz being judged by the Lord as the Lord delivered his army into the hands of their northern brethren according to the flesh, the Israelites. But even there God's grace intervenes as the northern kingdom is taking away into captivity the people of Judah to make them slaves.

2 Chronicles 28:8-11 ⁸ The sons of Israel carried away captive of their brethren 200,000 women, sons and daughters; and they took also a great deal of spoil from them, and brought the spoil to

Samaria. ⁹ But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded; and he went out to meet the army which came to Samaria and said to them, "Behold, because the LORD, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, He has delivered them into your hand, and you have slain them in a rage *which* has even reached heaven. ¹⁰ "Now you are proposing to subjugate for yourselves the people of Judah and Jerusalem for male and female slaves. Surely, *do* you not *have* transgressions of your own against the LORD your God? ¹¹ "Now therefore, listen to me and return the captives whom you captured from your brothers, for the burning anger of the LORD is against you."

Cooler heads prevailed and they allowed the captives to return to Judah and the anger of the Lord subsided.

But in the midst of all of this King Ahaz tries to align himself with his pagan neighbors to fight against Israel. That alliance didn't work out so well, but instead of turning to the God of all creation he turns to the gods of his enemies who defeated him.

2 Chronicles 28:22-23 ²² Now in the time of his distress this same King Ahaz became yet more unfaithful to the LORD. ²³ For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they became the downfall of him and all Israel.

2 Chronicles 28:26-27 ²⁶ Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷ So Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel; and Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

So, how does Hezekiah do? Well, one might assume like father like son and we would certainly expect the same here with the next generation, but just like those of whom Christ chose to be His sheep, as we see in the N.T. period, it is the same here in the O.T. as God has chosen a people for Himself. And Hezekiah will be one of those people, a sheep and wheat to be gathered into the barn of God's kingdom.

2 Chronicles 29:1-6 ^{NAU} Hezekiah became king *when he was* twenty-five years old; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. ² He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to

all that his father David had done. ³ In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. ⁴ He brought in the priests and the Levites and gathered them into the square on the east. ⁵ Then he said to them, "Listen to me, O Levites. Consecrate yourselves now, and consecrate the house of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and carry the uncleanness out from the holy place. ⁶ "For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done evil in the sight of the LORD our God, and have forsaken Him and turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and have turned *their* backs.

He grew up in a house of evil and yet is found to be righteous as God has touched him in a special way for a special purpose as he reestablishes the holy house of the Lord for worshipping the one true God.

And so, he calls the Levites to their appointed task of representing the Lord in the temple with these words.

2 Chronicles 29:10-15 ¹⁰ "Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His burning anger may turn away from us. ¹¹ "My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, and to be His ministers and burn incense." ¹² Then the Levites arose: Mahath, the son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah, from the sons of the Kohathites; and from the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; and from the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah; ¹³ and from the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; and from the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; ¹⁴ and from the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and from the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel. ¹⁵ They assembled their brothers, consecrated themselves, and went in to cleanse the house of the LORD, according to the commandment of the king by the words of the LORD.

By the way, how is it that Hezekiah can say that he desires to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel when his father had broken that covenant?

Because it was in his heart, and only God can take out that heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh. This is a God thing that the Lord does with Hezekiah as the covenant is reestablished, not on God's part but on man's part.

God's part of the covenant has always been in place. Obey Me and be blessed, disobey and be judged.

What part of God's covenant was Israel and Judah living under prior to this time?

Judgment. But now that Hezekiah's heart has been touched by God we will see how Judah will begin living under the blessing part of God's covenant. And yet, interestingly enough notice that Hezekiah does not simply act on behalf of Judah but also on behalf of the northern kingdom Israel.

2 Chronicles 29:22-24 ²² So they slaughtered the bulls, and the priests took the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. They also slaughtered the rams and sprinkled the blood on the altar; they slaughtered the lambs also and sprinkled the blood on the altar. ²³ Then they brought the male goats of the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they laid their hands on them. ²⁴ The priests slaughtered them and purged the altar with their blood to atone for all Israel, for the king ordered the burnt offering and the sin offering for all Israel.

Why would Hezekiah do this?

Because despite their differences and their hatred toward one another God had chosen a people to represent Him and it included all of the house of Israel not just a part.

And so, in this sense we can say that all Israel will be saved according to Romans 11:26. But we also know that not all of Israel seeks the Lord, but in this instance in 2Chronicles we again have a picture of how Israel of the O.T. is used as an example of the fulfillment of God's word to where the Israel of God that Paul speaks of will in fact come to know and worship Him, all of them both Jew and Gentile.

In chapter 30 of 2Chronicles we have another beautiful picture of God uniting His people under one Head as Hezekiah's heart is turned by God to accomplish this.

2 Chronicles 30:1-5 ^{NAU} Now Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover to the LORD God of Israel. ² For the king and his princes and all the assembly in Jerusalem had decided to celebrate the Passover in the second month, ³ since they could not celebrate

it at that time, because the priests had not consecrated themselves in sufficient numbers, nor had the people been gathered to Jerusalem. ⁴ Thus the thing was right in the sight of the king and all the assembly. ⁵ So they established a decree to circulate a proclamation throughout all Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to celebrate the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem. For they had not celebrated *it* in great numbers as it was prescribed.

This is an amazing thing as God unites both Israel and Judah to come to the Holy City to celebrate the Passover.

By the way, what is the significance of Israel and Judah celebrating the Passover?

It was a reminder that God brought one people out of Egypt and that one people were called to worship the Lord together in the wilderness. They were also to be reminded that the Passover was a deliverance in blood.

So, if Israel of the O.T. is a picture of the future Israel in Christ then what is the significance of the lamb slaughtered and its blood put on the door posts that led to their deliverance from Egypt?

The lamb is the Lamb of God and his blood was shed to lead His people out of bondage to sin as the Great Shepherd who delivers people from bondage.

But what is the significance of O.T. Israel going out to the wilderness to worship God?

It signifies that the lamb of God who came to redeem a people for Himself expects us to worship Him in spirit and in truth in the place that we reside, knowing that this present world is not our home. We are strangers and aliens awaiting that time when we will finally be delivered into the Promised land.

This is part of what Peter meant when writing to the church.

1 Peter 1:1-2 ^{NAU} Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

1 Peter 2:11-12 ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. ¹² Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

What is the day of God's visitation?

The day Peter tells us to understand as the day that culminates our time here on earth as aliens and strangers.

And so, if we are aliens and strangers here what will we be on the day of God's visitation?

Residents not strangers in a world that will finally be our home.

That day of visitation is the last day that Scripture speaks of, that final day in which Christ promises to raise up each of His sheep.

John 6:39-40 ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up *on the last day*."

John 6:44 ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up *on the last day*."

John 6:54 ⁵⁴ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up *on the last day*."

John 11:24-26 ²⁴ Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection *on the last day*." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 12:48 ⁴⁸ "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him *at the last day*."

There will be a judgment on the last day, one to everlasting life, as those who are raised from the dead who are in Christ, He who has

taken our judgment, and there will be a judgment of those who rejected Christ, all at the last day.

Hezekiah gives us a picture of this work of Christ, this Lamb of God whose blood was shed for His people, in this case those being united from the north and south coming together to worship God as one people.

2 Chronicles 30:25-27 ²⁵ All the assembly of Judah rejoiced, with the priests and the Levites and all the assembly that came from Israel, both the sojourners who came from the land of Israel and those living in Judah. ²⁶ So there was great joy in Jerusalem, because there was nothing like this in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel. ²⁷ Then the Levitical priests arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard and their prayer came to His holy dwelling place, to heaven.

God orchestrated this marvelous gathering of His people and He will orchestrate that gathering of His people at the last day, a day that will live in eternity.