



Sermon, Sunday February 20, 2022

“Hezekiah’s Religious Reform and Our Renewal”

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 32:1-8 ¹See, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice. ²Each will be like a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land. ³Then the eyes of those who have sight will not be closed, and the ears of those who have hearing will listen. ⁴The minds of the rash will have good judgment, and the tongues of stammerers will speak readily and distinctly. ⁵A fool will no longer be called noble, nor a villain said to be honorable. ⁶For fools speak folly, and their minds plot iniquity: to practice ungodliness, to utter error concerning the LORD, to leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied, and to deprive the thirsty of drink. ⁷The villainies of villains are evil; they devise wicked devices to ruin the poor with lying words, even when the plea of the needy is right. ⁸But those who are noble plan noble things, and by noble things they stand.

Introduction: Proclamation of the Prophet Isaiah

In today's text, the prophet Isaiah says that a king will rule in righteousness. The king who rules in righteousness here ultimately means Jesus Christ, but in historical context it refers to King Hezekiah. The prophet Isaiah was active in the days of Kings Ahaz and Hezekiah. The prophet Isaiah preached the word of God to the Jewish people even before Ahaz became king. However, after Ahaz became king, he did not listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah. King Ahaz was an evil king in the sight of the Lord, and he went down the path of idolatry. However, Ahaz' son Hezekiah took a different path than his father. When Hezekiah became king, he removed the high places, removed idols, trusted the Lord, and kept the commandments the Lord had commanded Moses.

The important thing in our religious life is to not lose the fear of the Lord in our daily lives. The moment we lose fear of the Lord, we go down the path of idolatry. Therefore, Christians must daily renew our mind, heart, and spirit. Through Hezekiah's Religious Reform, I hope that we will all be able to see what we need to renew in our daily lives and bear valuable fruit.

Body: Hezekiah's Religious Reform and Our Renewal

1. Hezekiah's Religious Reform

Let's look at **Isaiah 32:1** in today's text. “**See, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.**” To rule in righteousness in this verse means to walk worthy of the Lord's sight. It means that we rule the country according to the will of the Lord, not according to our own will. Then let's see how King Hezekiah ruled Judea according to the will of the Lord.

1) King Hezekiah led the Jewish people to worship.

The first thing Hezekiah did when he became king was to open the closed temple door, repair the temple, and repent of the sins of the people in the meantime (**2 Chronicles Chapter 29**). And he created an environment for perfect worship of the Lord. Regarding the reaction of the Jewish people to the reformation of Hezekiah, the Bible describes it as “**There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the days of Solomon son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.**” (**2 Chronicles 30:26**)



2) Hezekiah was a king who prayed earnestly to the Lord.

King Hezekiah prayed earnestly to the Lord whenever he was in trouble. The Lord heard his prayer and protected Judea from the invasion of 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (**2 Chronicles 32:21**). Also, Hezekiah prayed to the Lord when he was deathly ill. The Lord answered his prayer and extended his life (**2 Chronicles 32:24**). In this way, King Hezekiah saved the kingdom through prayer and extended his life through prayer.

3) Hezekiah was a humble king who knew how to repent.

Finally, Hezekiah was a humble king who knew how to repent. After King Hezekiah is healed, the envoys of the king of Babylon come to visit King Hezekiah. At that time, Hezekiah brags about his wealth to the Babylonian envoys. The prophet Isaiah rebukes King Hezekiah for his arrogant behavior. But what is surprising is King Hezekiah's response to the rebuke of the prophet Isaiah. Upon hearing the rebuke of the prophet Isaiah, King Hezekiah repents and renews his heart. **2 Chronicles 31:21 describes King Hezekiah's fear of the Lord as follows: "In everything that he undertook in the service of God's temple and in obedience to the law and the commands, he sought his God and worked wholeheartedly. And so he prospered."**

So, King Hezekiah of Judah plays the role of putting the words of Isaiah 32:2 into practice for the people.

"Each will be like a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land."

The Jewish people have nothing to worry about even if strong winds, storms, and droughts come. Because there is a king who rules the country with justice. The righteous rule of a righteous king leads to a change in the lives of the Jewish people.

2. Transformation of the Jewish People

A righteous king restores the Jewish people's worship to the Lord, pleads with the Lord in prayer, and obeys the Lord with humility. The people change as they watch a righteous king obey. Isaiah 32:3-4 describes the change as follows: **"Then the eyes of those who have sight will not be closed, and the ears of those who have hearing will listen. The minds of the rash will have good judgment, and the tongues of stammerers will speak readily and distinctly."**

The Jewish people had been blinded and could not see what the truth was, but now they can see.

Also, the Jewish people now know and listen to what is truth and what is useful. Also, the impatient one understands the wisdom of the heart. The Jewish people grew up seeing precious things and hearing precious words repeatedly. Finally, since the heart and mind are filled with good things, the words that come out of the mouth are also good.

Furthermore, they develop discernment. So, they recognize fools. And they learn what justice is. **Let's look at Isaiah 32:5. "A fool will no longer be called noble, nor a villain said to be honorable."**

In contrast, today's text speaks about the figure of a fool. **Look at Isaiah 32:6. "For fools speak folly, and their minds plot iniquity: to practice ungodliness, to utter error concerning the Lord, to leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied, and to deprive the thirsty of drink."**

He who does not hear good things like this verse can never speak good things. Also, those who do not fear the Lord will speak recklessly about the Lord. The hearts of these people are thirsty and empty because there is no love.

But as we see and learn about things like worship, humility, and prayer, we can follow the Lord's will, are filled with more humble minds, speak wise things, act honestly, and fear the Lord.



That is what today's text Isaiah 32:8 says: "But those who are noble plan noble things, and by noble things they stand." In obedience to the words of the prophet Isaiah, King Hezekiah ruled with justice over the Jewish people, and the king's righteous reign brought about change. So, how can we apply the lessons learned through the Religious Reform of King Hezekiah to our lives?

3. What the Lord Wants of Us

The Lord wants us to fulfill the role of King Hezekiah in our lives. **Look at Isaiah 32:9. "You women who are so complacent, rise up and listen to me; you daughters who feel secure, hear what I have to say!"**

In this verse, easy-going women and carefree daughters are those who have no interest in the Lord's work. These are people who think only of themselves, and when their work goes well, they don't worry about or work hard on other things anymore. However, if they are changed, they can be used for the Lord's work.

The Lord pours out the Spirit for our precious use and restoration. **Look at Isaiah 32:15. "Till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest."**

If we have faith in the Lord who has entrusted us with the work, love for our souls, and the hope of waiting for the time to bear fruit, we can handle the tasks the Lord has entrusted to us.

There are blessings given to those who have done the Lord's work well. **Look at Isaiah 32:18. "My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest."**

Conclusion: Always plan noble work and stand on this work.

Now let's summarize today's sermon. Those who had their eyes closed, those who could not listen, those who were impatient, those who had a dull tongue, and those who were easygoing were changed. It is said, **"But the noble man makes noble plans, and by noble deeds he stands."** So, don't run away, don't get tired, don't give up. Let's be a Sower with a far-sighted view, and without ceasing. Let us sow the seeds of worship, prayer, and humility. Then the change begins. The **'Spirit of Heaven'** will be poured out on us, and the blessing of enjoying **'peace'**, the fruit of righteousness, and **'eternal peace and security'**, the result of righteousness, will come upon us. I hope you will become the main character of such a blessing.

