

Healed by God

“May the good Lord pardon everyone who sets his heart to seek God, the Lord, the God of his fathers, even though not according to the sanctuary's rules of cleanness.’ And the Lord heard Hezekiah and healed the people.” 2 Chronicles 30:18-20.

Hezekiah was a king of great faith. In Scripture he is compared with David, who was possibly Israel's most loved king. Hezekiah restored the temple and spearheaded Judah's celebrating the Passover, which was celebrated sporadically until that point, rather than yearly, as was commanded by God. As the Passover was celebrated in 2 Chronicles 30, many of the people were unclean and thus unfit to eat the Passover meal according to God's law. Yet Hezekiah, when he saw that many people – even some priests – were unconsecrated and unclean, had the wisdom not to call off the ceremony but to go through with it and instead pray to God. Because Hezekiah knew that the people, though flawed, sought God with all their hearts. And God heard Hezekiah and healed the people, even though they didn't follow the law according to its strictest code.

After Hezekiah prayed, after God healed the people and after the Passover was finished, the people of Judah continued to seek God with all their hearts. They didn't stop once the Passover celebration finished. They followed Hezekiah in his reforms. They tore down the idols in all the land and they obeyed Hezekiah as he reinstated the law of Moses across the land.

This is a good lesson for us today. God wants us to be people who desire Him more than we desire to follow rules, which, if we are able to fulfill them, do nothing but make us proud of our own abilities. This is the problem many Pharisees had. They didn't care that God wants people to obey Him with all their hearts rather than follow codes of conduct begrudgingly. The Pharisees wanted to feel good about their own abilities and how well they fulfilled the law. This is why Jesus quoted Hosea 6:6 to them when He told them, *“Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’”*

God would rather have children who want Him as their God than Straight-A Students who couldn't care less about their relationship with Him. In fact, the people who truly desire God to be their God are the people God heals and obey God after they're healed. Let us be people who seek God with all our hearts, who treasure the living relationship we have with the one true God. **[DJR]**