

The Prophets & Kings

From Rehoboam To Zedekiah

Book 1

A Daily Devotional Study Guide

Week 41

“Complete Disregard”

Study: 2 Chronicles 33:1-9, 2 Kings 21:1-9

Reading: 2 Chronicles 5:1-14, Ephesians 5:1-22

Memory: Isaiah 40:3

Over the years, our family has stayed at some pretty nice hotels, but we have also found ourselves in some hotels that leave lasting negative impressions. There are some that we have stayed at that you can tell were nice at one time. Yet, when things in the hotel weren't kept up with, the hotel declined in its look and appeal. Though the pictures on the website often show a much nicer place from when it was in its prime, the actual experience when visiting the hotel showed a disregard for the glory of the past. Without continual upkeep and maintenance, these places quickly lose their attractability and become places that are not enjoyable to stay at.

Today, we are going to be reminded how it is very easy to fall away from the faith leaving the next generation with a disregard for all the things that were godly and good.

What Does the Bible Say?

Manasseh was the son of Hezekiah, and though Hezekiah was mostly a godly king, his son did not follow in his footsteps. Manasseh was only 12 years old when he began to reign and was most likely influenced by his mother Hephzibah. At that time, Israel had been quite prosperous as a nation, but for some reason Manasseh didn't realize that the prosperity was from the Lord. God had blessed because Israel had chosen to follow the commandments of God. Manasseh chose to welcome back the terrible practices of the Canaanites who had lived in the land before the Israelites conquered it several hundred years before. He rebuilt the many high places for idol worship that his father had torn down. One of the main gods that he chose to worship was the god Baal, who was a primary deity in the pagan nations around Israel. He also worshiped Asherah which was a female sex goddess. He erected a “pole” to worship this goddess as many of the pagan nations did. It is unclear exactly what this would have looked like. Some commentators believe it was an image of a naked woman, others believe it was in the shape of the male sex organ and others think it was a carved pole like a totem pole. Whatever it was,

we know that it represented wickedness and was opposite of God's desire for worship. Manasseh also chose to worship the sun, moon and stars just like all the pagan nations (2 Chr 33:3-3, 2 Ki 21:1-3).

A complete disregard for the temple was displayed by Manasseh when he chose to erect altars in the temple courtyard that directed worship towards the sun, moon and stars. He also showed great contempt for human life as he set up an altar in the valley of Hinnom and offered some of his own children on the altar. The valley of Hinnom was located just south of Jerusalem and was described in the New Testament as the valley of Gehenna. This valley was used for burning trash in the time of Jesus. It appears that the child sacrifices were somehow linked to sorcery and the worship of the dead. Practices that we would label as "occult" practices today. All of these things saddened God and brought about His anger upon the children of Israel because of their great sin (2 Chr 33:4-6, 2 Ki 21:4-6).

Not only did Manasseh make an Asherah pole, but he chose to set it up in the middle of the temple. God's presence had filled the temple at the time of Solomon and but now He was having to share this space with a sexual goddess. When God originally filled the temple with his glory he instructed the Israelites to follow His ways. He promised them he would bless them if they continued to worship Him and He had proved Himself faithful over the years. Yet, by ignoring what God had done and choosing to worship pagan gods in the temple, Manasseh was bringing great judgment upon Israel. This pagan worship led to great debauchery in the land and the land became more evil than it had before the Israelites had entered into it (2 Chr 33:7-9, 2 Ki 21:7-9).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you view the faith of those who have gone before you? Do you continue in their example or do you disregard the faith they have passed to you in exchange for something you may find new or better? It is very sad when you read stories like this to see that in one generation the nation was worse than it had been for hundreds of years. This happens in the church as well. Churches that once stood strong for many years allow "new" doctrine in, and before long, the church is just as corrupt as the world. This also can happen in families as well. It is vitally important you learn from past generations and embrace the good, while shunning the evil. It does not take long for something that was great to go downhill very quickly.

2 Kings 21

How old was Manasseh when he began to reign (vs 1)?

How long did he reign (vs 1)?

What role do you think his mother played in his choices (vs 1)?

How did Manasseh reign (vs 2)?

How was his wickedness described (vs 2)?

How do you think the child of a godly father could end up leading this way?

What did he rebuild (vs 3)?

What gods did he worship (vs 3)?

What do you know about these gods?

Who else had worshiped these similar gods (vs 3)?

Why do you think Manasseh chose to worship the "heavens" (vs 3)?

Where did he build altars (vs 4-5)?

Why do you think he did this?

Why did this grieve the heart of God (vs 4)?

What did Manasseh do to his sons (vs 6)?

What are ways that we can sacrifice our children today?

How did the Lord respond to this (vs 7)?

Why do you think Manasseh set up the Asherah in the temple (vs 7)?

“The Shedding of Blood”

Study: 2 Kings 21:10-16

Reading: 2 Kings 17:1-41

Memory: Isaiah 40:3

Violence has existed in human society since the man first sinned. In different societies it comes in waves, often related to the morality of the people in that society. In general, we have seen an increase in violence in the United States that parallels the removal of God and His principles from our daily lives. It is starting to be less and less shocking when we hear about mass shootings that take place since they seem to be continually in the news. These, and other rejection of the Creator and His principles is so dangerous to our society today.

Today, we are going to read about how the increased amount of sin in Judah led to an increase of the shedding of innocent blood.

What Does the Bible Say?

The sin that Manasseh was leading the nation of Judah into was increasing and stirring up the anger of God towards His people. As he graciously had done so many times before, He did not send judgement right away, but sent prophets to Manasseh and Judah to warn them about their sin and encourage them to repent. God described how they had done more evil than the “Amorites.” This was a general term to describe the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. The judgement the prophets declared was a severe one. God declared that he was going to bring such great disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the very sound of it would cause the ears of all those who heard to tingle in horror (2 Ki 21:10-12).

In descriptive language God declared how he was going to stretch out a measuring line over Jerusalem and make the destruction equal in scope to that of the destruction of Samaria. Just as he judged the house of Ahab, He would send equal judgement upon the leaders of Jerusalem. The measuring tape and plumb line were used to make sure buildings were square and everything was equal. Samaria had been demolished and all the leaders of the northern tribes destroyed in 722 B.C. Manasseh started his rule around 689 B.C. This meant that the destruction of the

northern tribes would have still been fairly fresh in the minds of the inhabitants of Judah (2 Ki 21:13).

Though Israel was God’s chosen people, they were going to face great judgement and God was going to give them into the hands of their enemies. Instead of being the ones who had the ability to conquer, they would be the nation which was conquered. This was not just a one time evil, but something that the nation struggled with many times since God had delivered them from Egypt (2 Ki 21:14-15).

One of the things that the great sins of Manasseh led to was the shedding of much innocent blood. This is most likely a reference to the realization that an increase of sin and pagan practices led to an increase of innocent people getting killed. We know this happened through human sacrifice during Manasseh’s reign, but it was probably much more than human sacrifice. When evil is allowed to rule, it leads to greater selfishness which leads to more murders and the disregard for the lives of others. This shedding of blood was a disgrace, but the sin of the nation went so much deeper as they continually did the opposite of what God desired (2 Ki 21:16).

How Does this Apply to Me?

It is interesting to note that the increase in sin led to an increase in the shedding of innocent blood. This parallels much of what we are seeing in society today where the further we are removed from the principles of morality found in the Scripture, the more we see the sacredness of life being eroded. Though you can not change all of society by yourself, you can make a difference in the lives of those around you. Reaching the individuals that God has placed into your life with the love of Christ can make a powerful difference in the world you live in. Manasseh’s choices to live in evil hurt many, many people, just as Hezekiah’s choice to live in righteousness helped many people. You may not have all the influence of these kings, but God has given you the ability to influence the people around you by the way you live today.

Thought for the day

Who did God send to warn Menasseh and the nation of Judah (vs 10)?

Why were they warned (vs 11)?

How was their evil described (vs 11)?

Why do you think idols were so enticing to the people (vs 11)?

What are things today that can entice Christ followers into sin?

How was God described in verse 12?

What did God say He was going to do to Jerusalem and Judah (vs 12)?

How great was this disaster going to be (vs 12)?

Why was the illustration of the measuring line and plumb line used (vs 13)?

What did the illustration of wiping a dish emphasize (vs 13)?

Who was God going to forsake (vs 14)?

Is this something He wanted to do? Explain your answer.

What would His children become (vs 14)?

Why was God going to do this (vs 15)?

Was this the first time they had rebelled (vs 15)?

How is the grace and mercy of God displayed even in this proclamation of judgment (vs 15)?

What was also rebuked in verse 16?

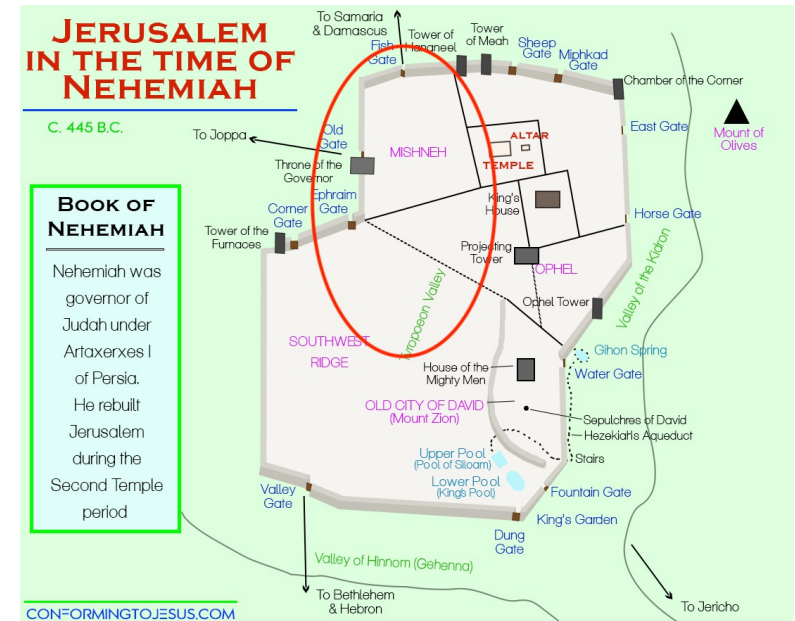
How bad was this problem?

“Incredible Forgiveness”

Study: 2 Chronicles 33:10-17

Reading: 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 23:33-42

Memory: Isaiah 40:3



The area in red is the area of Jerusalem that Manasseh build up and fortified.

What Does the Bible Say?

Though God sent prophets to warn His people about their sin, they did not listen. Manasseh continued to lead the people in their wicked idolatry and forced God to act on behalf of His holy name. God stirred up the hearts of the Assyrians to once again attack Jerusalem. The Assyrians had failed miserably when Hezekiah was king, but this time they were much more successful. We are not given great details about the battle, but we do know that they were able to capture Manasseh and take him back to Babylon. His trip to Babylon was an extreme disgrace as they bound him up and led him like a bull. It appears they put some type of ring in his nose and used a hook to pull him along the several hundred miles to Babylon (vs 10-11).

Manasseh wouldn't listen to the prophets, which would have spared him much heartache and great disgrace, but God did finally get his

attention. He was humbled by the Assyrians on the outside, which finally forced him to humble himself before God. He chose to repent of his wicked deeds and prayed for God to have mercy on Him. God heard his cry and chose to restore him back to his position as king in Jerusalem. We do not know how God did this because we are not given any of the details about his return, but what we can see is that God chose to display great kindness towards Manasseh by restoring him to the throne. After this, Manasseh clearly understood who God was and realized that he had been putting his trust and allegiance into the wrong things (vs 12-13).

Manasseh reigned for over 55 years and we are not told how long he reigned before his humiliation or how long after his humiliation. We are given information on some of his accomplishments as we are told that he built an outer wall to the city and that he boosted the military presence in all of the fortified cities of Judah (vs 14).

Though his building accomplishments were great, his restoration of the temple and removal of idols was even greater. All of the altars that he had rebuilt were removed and the idols that he had erected in the city of Jerusalem were thrown out of the city and destroyed. He carefully restored the altar in the temple so proper sacrifices could once again be made to the Lord. He instructed that the people once again worship the God of Israel, but the people didn't fully do as he asked. They did worship the Lord, but not only in the temple. They had gotten into the habit of worshiping and sacrificing at their high places and they chose to continue, though they only worship God at those places (vs 15-17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize the great mercy and grace of God? Manasseh was a very wicked man and did many wicked things. When God chose to deal with his sins, Manasseh responded with humility and repentance. This changed everything. God forgave Manasseh and restored him to a place of great prominence as the king of Judah. No one is ever beyond the mercy and grace of God, even the most vilest of sinners. You are never beyond hope no matter what you have done because God is a God of restoration. Though people often have a hard time forgiving others, God loves to forgive and will always forgive you when you humble yourself and repent of your sin.

What did God do for Judah (vs 10)?

How did the people respond (vs 10)?

What did God do to get their attention (vs 11)?

What did they do to Manasseh (vs 11)?

How was this an incredible disgrace?

Where did they take Manasseh (vs 11)?

What did Manasseh do while in captivity (vs 12)?

Why is humility such a vital part of following God?

How did God respond to his prayer (vs 13)?

What did God do for Manasseh (vs 13)?

What does this reveal about the great grace and mercy of God?

Where did Manasseh build a protective wall (vs 14)?

Why do you think he put commanders in the walled cities (vs 14)?

What did Manasseh do with the idols he had set up (vs 15)?

What did Manasseh do in Jerusalem (vs 15)?

Why was the restoration of the altar so important (vs 16)?

What did Manasseh command the people to do (vs 16)?

What is noted about the response of the people (vs 17)?

Why do you think this was mentioned?

“A Wicked Son”

Study: 2 Kings 21:17-26. 2 Chronicles 33:18-25

Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-33

Memory: Isaiah 40:3

One of the greatest advantages I had in raising my children was the chance to learn from the mistakes and successes of other parents. Because I worked closely with children’s and youth ministries when I was a young pastor, I often had conversations with parents and was able to observe many things that were helpful and hurtful to what they were trying to accomplish. Though each child is unique and can make their own choices and decisions, and there is no guarantee they will be godly even if you do everything exactly right, I found that the lessons I learned from others was very helpful to me in raising my children.

Today we are going to be reminded about the importance of learning from the failures and victories of others.

What Does the Bible Say?

For some reason, God chose not to spare the book entitled “Chronicles of the Kings of Israel” from being destroyed so we are left with a limited understanding of the reign of Manasseh. Though he reigned for 55 years, the longest of any king of Israel, what we know about him is very limited. The specifics of his prayer of repentance and his direct interactions with the prophets of Israel were written in that book that did not survive. Another book, “The Chronicles of the Seers” did not survive either. This book apparently went into more detail about the idols that were set up by Manasseh and the great evil he did before God punished him. It also records his prayer of repentance and how God was moved by that prayer to show mercy and restoration. 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles skip many of the details of the life of Manasseh and move to the end of his life simply stating that he died and that they buried him in the “garden of Uzza.” This family tomb was probably located in the garden of the palace and was most likely the burial spot for many of the kings of Judah. Following his death, his son Amon took over as king (2 Ki 21:17-18, 2 Chr 33:18-20).

Though Amon had seen what his father had gone through as a result of sin, he chose to follow the unrighteous path of Manasseh rather than the repentant path of his father. The fact that his mother is mentioned in 2 Kings could be an indicator that she influenced him in these evil ways. All of the idols that his father had once served and removed, were now brought back into a place of prominence. He chose not to humble himself as Manasseh had done, but instead, tried to take the nation of Judah further from God and further into sin (2 Ki 21:19-22, 2 Chr 33:21-23).

This wickedness and the way that he lived was not pleasing to the people who lived around him. His servants conspired against him and took the opportunity to assassinate him while he was in his own home. The people of the land didn’t like the actions of the servants so they hunted down the servants and killed those who had killed Amon. As a result, his son Josiah was placed on the throne when he was only 8 years old (2 Ki 21:23-26, 2 Chr 33:21-25).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you learn from the failures and mistakes of those who have gone before you? Do you take time to evaluate the actions and the results of the choices others have made and choose your path and direction based on those observations? We aren’t sure if Amon had seen the years of idolatry of his father, but we do know that he did see the years of repentance. He must have known some of the story of his father, yet he chose to live in the sins of idolatry rather than the mercy of repentance. This grave mistake cost him his life at a young age because of the great wickedness he participated in. These same foolish choices can be made today when people choose not to learn from the mistakes of others, often the mistakes of parents. Instead of learning from the lessons, they often repeat the same mistakes, many times taking them further than those who had gone before them. You will be wise to learn to examine the actions of others, not to judge them, but to learn from them.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for giving you good and bad examples to learn from.*
- * *Ask God to help you wisely learn from others.*
- * *Praise God because His way is always right.*

How old was Amon when he began to reign (vs 21)?

How did he choose to live (vs 22)?

Why do you think he chose to live in the sins of his father rather than the repentance of his father?

What did Amon sacrifice to (vs 22)?

Why do you think these idols were still around?

What lesson can you learn from this?

What didn't Amon do (vs 23)?

Why is humility before God so important?

How was the guilt and sin of Amon described (vs 23)?

What did his servants do (vs 24)?

Why do you think they did this?

What happened to these servants (vs 25)?

Why do you think many of the people liked Amon, but the servants wanted him dead (vs 25)?

Who was made king after the death of Amon (vs 25)?

Why was the reign of Amon such a tragedy?

Why is it easy to repeat the mistakes of those who have gone before you?

Describe how you actively choose to learn from the mistakes of others so you don't repeat them yourself?

“A Great Discovery”

Study: 2 Kings 22:1-10, 2 Chronicles 34:1-3, 8-18

Reading: Psalm 119:1-24

Memory: Isaiah 40:3

When I used to ref basketball, I found that I was a better referee when I would read the rule book on a regular basis. I would attempt to read it once a year before the season started, but found that the once a year read wasn't enough. It was easy to forget some of the intricate rules or rules about things that would only occasionally happen. I found that when I read the rule book a few times through the season and carried it with me in case I had any questions, I did much better as a referee.

Today, we are going to be reminded of the importance of the Word of God. We will see how it needs to be a part of our daily lives.

What Does the Bible Say?

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign as king of Judah. As with Manasseh and Amon, the name of his mother was mentioned which could give evidence that the reason he lived the way he did was because of the influence of his mother. He reigned for 31 years and during that time he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. It is unclear how he ruled for the first eight years of his reign, but most likely he was a type of “puppet” king. When he was around 16, eight years into his reign, he started seeking after the Lord and desired to do what God had commanded (2 Ki 22:1-2, 2 Chr 34:1-3).

After learning about God for those few years, he started making reforms in the land by purging the land of the false gods they worshiped. The timeline in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles slightly differ in their recording of the events of Josiah's life. 2 Chronicles states that he started purging the land when in the 12th year of his reign, but 2 Kings seems to indicate that it was in the 18th year of his reign after he found the Book of the Law. Most likely he started the purge in the 12th year and then ordered a complete purge after he read what had been written in the law that was originally given to Moses and the children of Israel.

Both 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles do state that in the 18th year of his reign they found a copy of God's law. In our society today, we have access to God's Word in so many forms, but in those days when everything was hand written, there were fewer copies of the law. Though Manasseh repented and turned back to God near the end of his reign, Judah had gone through many years where the law was neglected. This meant that fewer and fewer scribes would have been copying the law and most of the copies of it would have been destroyed or neglected. There were probably bits and pieces of it here and there, but it appears that a full copy of the law was not known to be in existence at that time.

Not only had the law been neglected, but much of the temple had been neglected as various statues had been set up and removed over the last 50 plus years. As part of the reforms, Josiah wanted to restore the temple and had ordered that money be collected from the people for this process to take place. This was not just a small remodel, but after years of neglect and destruction, it was a major construction project. The money for this project was placed in a store room and when it was time to start building and paying those who were doing the building, they found the Book of the Law in one of the store rooms of the temple. It appears at that time they had been following traditions passed down or teaching of the prophets, but they didn't have the direct law during the reign of Josiah. The book was given to Hilkiah, the high priest, who passed it on to Shaphan, the secretary of the king. Shaphan went to Josiah and reported on the construction and then revealed to Josiah that they had found the Book of the Law (2 Ki 22:3-10, 2 Chr 34:3, 8-18).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize how important God's Word is? A study of the Old Testament reveals that when there is a rise in the evil of the land, the Word of God starts to be neglected more and more. When righteousness rises in the land, the Word of God is adhered to more and more. The more the Word of God is read and followed the more righteousness will follow. The powerful lesson for you today is to choose to make the Word of God a vital part of your daily life. It is easy to get sidetracked by the things of the world and cause the Word of God to be less and less important in your life. It is easy to neglect the Word more and more as you become sidetracked. This is why it is vital for you to make the Word of God a priority in your life and in all that you do.

2 Chronicles 34

How old was Josiah when he began to reign (vs 1)?

How long did he reign (vs 1)?

How was his life summed up (vs 2)?

What do you think it means that "he did not turn aside to the right or the left" (vs 2 - ESV)?

When did Josiah start seeking God (vs 3)?

Why do you think it says he did this when he was still a boy (vs 3)?

What did he start to do in the 12th year of his reign (vs 3)?

Why did the land need purging?

2 Kings 22

What did Josiah command to be done (vs 3-4)?

What were they going to do with this money (vs 5)?

Who was going to be given this money (vs 6)?

What does this reveal about the state of the temple?

Why did they choose not to keep exact financial records (vs 7)?

What was found in the temple store room (vs 8)?

What did Shaphan do once he found out (vs 9)?

Why do you think he didn't tell the king about the Law first (vs 9-10)?

****I can't be sure about this, but I picture he went through the technical details and said, "Oh, by the way, we found the Book of the Law" knowing what Josiah's response would be.*

“Doers of the Word”

Study: 2 Kings 22:11-23:3, 2 Chronicles 34:19-32

Reading: Psalm 119:25-64

Memory: Isaiah 40:3

When my wife and I first had children we took a parenting class that described a parenting style they called “the threatening and repeating parent.” The leaders of this class described how it was detrimental to children for parents to give empty threats and to continue to repeat those threats. Not only would this produce a lack of obedience, but it would also reflect a type of God who didn’t keep His Word. They encouraged us as parents to carry out what we said we would do so that the children would also understand that God will do what He says He will do.

Today, we are going to see how Josiah believed that God would do what He said, and as a result, he greatly humbled himself and repented of the sins of the nation of Judah.

What Does the Bible Say?

Shaphan began reading the Book of the Law to Josiah. When the king heard what was in the book his response was to tear his clothes as a sign of humility and repentance. He asked the spiritual leaders to go to the temple and pray for him and the nation of Judah. He knew that the children of Israel had repeatedly chosen not to follow God’s direction and the Book of the Law stated the consequences for these choices. He was most likely asking them to plead for mercy on behalf of his nation because they were not following the law (2 Ki 22:11-13, 2 Chr 34:19-21).

Hilkiah led the other spiritual leaders to consult with a prophetess named Hulda. Nothing else is mentioned in Scripture about Hulda except the information given here. It is unclear why they chose to go to her, but she responded to their request with a revelation from God. God’s message was that the destruction mentioned in the Book of the Law would come upon the nation of Judah and they would experience great disaster and punishment for their sin. God was jealous for His people and despised their worship of other gods. Since they chose to continually

abandon Him, He was going to bring destruction (2 Ki 22:14-17, 2 Chr 34:22-25).

Though great destruction would soon come to the land, God was going to show mercy upon Josiah because Josiah humbled himself and repented of the sins of his fathers. God was going to reward him for his humility and his desire to obey. As a result, he would not see any of the great destruction that was promised. Instead, he would have a prosperous and peaceful rule of the land (2 Ki 22:18-20, 2 Chr 34:26-28).

When Josiah heard the report from God, he gathered all the leaders of the land and went to the temple. Not only were the leaders invited, but anyone who wanted to could join this gathering. Josiah began to read the Book of the Law to the people. When he finished, he made a covenant before the Lord to walk after His ways and follow the words that were written in the book. He then made everyone who was there join in this covenant as they united together and chose to serve God as God had asked them to serve Him. Josiah emphasized that they needed to follow God with all of their heart and soul which meant that it would be much more than just outward acts of religion (2 Ki 23:1-3, 2 Chr 34:29-32).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you view the Word of God? When you read it, do you pay attention to what it says and allow it to change you? The reading of God’s Word made a profound impact on Josiah and though he had been seeking after God, the Word revealed to him many areas of his life and in the nation of Judah that needed to be changed. The reading of the Word of God led to humility and repentance. As a result, God chose to spare the land from the destruction He had promised and graciously allowed Josiah to have prosperous and peaceful reign. You would do well to learn from Josiah when it comes to your response to the Word of God. No, this doesn’t mean that you have to tear your clothes every time you read the Word of God, but it reveals to you the importance of listening to His Word and choosing to make the necessary changes to conform to the image of Christ.

Thought for the day

2 Chronicles 34

How did Josiah respond when he heard the Word of God read (vs 19)?

Why did he do this?

Why did Josiah send the spiritual leaders to the temple (vs 20-21)?

What did Josiah realize that God said He would do (vs 21)?

Why had the Israelites not been following what was written?

Where did Hilkiah go (vs 22)?

What descriptions are given of Huldah (vs 22)?

****It is unclear why both 2 Chronicles and 2 Kings state that he was living in the "Second Quarter" or "New Quarter" but it must have had some significance to the original recipients of these books. The part of the city she lived in was probably part of the expansion made by Hezekiah to the west of the City of David.*

Who did Huldah receive her news from (vs 23)?

What was God going to do to Judah (vs 24)?

Why was He going to do this (vs 25)?

Why do you think God was going to pour out His wrath on the nation He said were His children?

Why did God say he heard Josiah (vs 26-27)?

What important lesson can you learn from this?

What did God say would happen to Josiah (vs 28)?

What does this reveal about the importance of following God's way?

Memory Verses

Isaiah 40:1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.