

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 71 – Manasseh Begins To Reign Through Cyrus Doing God’s Will (II Chronicles 33-36)

1. How do things look for Judah as Manasseh begins to reign?

Things look bad for Judah: “(1) Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: (2) But **did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel**” (II Chronicles 33:1-2).

2. What did Manasseh rebuild that his father had destroyed?

“For **he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them**” (II Chronicles 33:3).

How does the Lord feel about this (Leviticus 26:27-30 and Psalms 78:58)?

3. Did Manasseh have respect for the Lord’s house?

No: “(4) Also **he built altars in the house of the LORD**, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever. (5) And **he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD...** (7) And **he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God**, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever: (8) Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses” (II Chronicles 33:4-5; 7-8).

4. Was Manasseh just “a little bit bad”?

No, he wrought much evil: “**And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger**” (II Chronicles 33:6).

5. Was Manasseh able to lead the people to err or did the people of Judah stand against him?

He caused them to err: “So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel” (II Chronicles 33:9).

6. Was Manasseh willing to listen to the Lord?

No: “**And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken**” (II Chronicles 33:10).

7. What happened when the Lord brought the Assyrians up against Manasseh?

Manasseh was humbled and opted to repent of MOST of his errors: “(11) Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. (12) And **when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his**

fathers, (13) And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. **Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.** (14) Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. (15) And **he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.** (16) And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel” (II Chronicles 33:11-15).

8. What remained as an error in Judah?

“Nevertheless **the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the LORD their God only**” (II Chronicles 33:16).

9. Do we read any evidence that shows the seers [prophets] spoke to Manasseh about his errors?

Yes: “Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and **the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel**” (II Chronicles 33:17).

A seer is a prophet (I Samuel 9:9).

10. How did things go when Amon reigned in Judah?

Badly: “(21) Amon was two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem. (22) But **he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them; (23) And humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more**” (II Chronicles 33:21-23).

11. How did Amon’s reign come to an end?

“And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house” (II Chronicles 33:24).

12. What happened to those who conspired against Amon?

“But the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead” (II Chronicles 33:25).

13. Do things look good as Josiah begins his reign?

Yes: “(1) Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. (2) And **he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left**” (II Chronicles 34:1-2).

14. What happened in the eighth year of Josiah’s reign?

“(3) For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. (4) And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and

made dust of them, and strowed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. (5) And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. (6) And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about. (7) And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem” (II Chronicles 34:3-7).

15. Did Josiah want the house of the Lord repaired?
Yes, (II Chronicles 34:8-13).

16. What was found in the house of the Lord?
“And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, **Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses**” (II Chronicles 34:14).

17. Did Josiah want to know and follow the word of God?
Yes: “(15) And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. (16) And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do it. (17) And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen. (18) Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. **And Shaphan read it before the king. (19) And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes. (20) And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying, (21) Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book. (22) And Hilkiah, and they that the king had appointed, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college:) and they spake to her to that effect” (II Chronicles 34:15-22).**

18. What message did Huldah the prophetess give to Hilkiah and those that came with him?
“(23) And she answered them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you to me, (24) **Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah: (25) Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched. (26) And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard; (27) **Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD. (28) Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes****

see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again” (II Chronicles 34:23-28).

19. What did Josiah say when he gathered all the elders of Judah?

“(29) Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. (30) And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and **he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD.** (31) And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book. (32) **And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it.** And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. (33) **And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers”** (II Chronicles 34:29-33).

20. What was put in the house of God that would no longer be a burden carried by the Levites?

“And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, **Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel”** (II Chronicles 35:3).

21. Was the Passover observed under Josiah’s reign?

Yes, (II Chronicles 35:1-19).

22. What could have prevented Josiah from being killed?

Had he listened to the words of Necho FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD: “(20) After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. (21) But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. (22) **Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.** (23) And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. (24) His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah” (II Chronicles 35:20-24).

23. Was Jeremiah a prophet during the days of Josiah?

Yes, he was (II Chronicles 35:25-26).

24. What happened when Jehoahaz reigned in Judah?

*“(1) Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem. (2) Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. (3) And **the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. (4) And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt” (II Chronicles 35:1-4).***

25. What happened when Eliakim [Jehoiakim] reigned in Judah?

*“(5) Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and **he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. (6) Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon. (7) Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon. (8) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead” (II Chronicles 35:5-8).***

26. Do things get better under the reign of Jehoiachin?

Nope: *“(9) Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and **he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. (10) And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem” (II Chronicles 35:9-10).***

27. What caused the Lord to send the Chaldees against Judah?

*“(11) **Zedekiah** was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. (12) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD. (13) And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel. (14) Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. (15) And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: (16) **But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.** (17) Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. (18) And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. (19) And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. (20) And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom*

of Persia: (21) To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years” (II Chronicles 35:11-21).

28. What good will Cyrus do for God’s people?

*“(22) Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, **the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia**, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, (23) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, **All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up”** (II Chronicles 35:22-23).*