

My Three Sons

2 Chronicles 34:1-2 (NKJV)

1 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem.
2 And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Josiah is a great subject to study if you understand the times in which he lived.

He was made king after his father Amon, a wicked king who reigned only two years until he was assassinated by his own people.

Amon's eight year old son Josiah was made king.

He not only became a great king but as we see from our text he was the best king of them all.

His father was a very evil man.

His grandfather Manasseh was the absolute worst of the kings of Judah.

How he came to know the Lord we are not told.

When he was sixteen he began to seek the God of his father David; and when he was twenty he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images.

When he was twenty-six he set out to repair the house of the LORD his God.

In the process of this they discovered the book of the law, probably the book of Deuteronomy.

When they read the curses in it that God had warned Israel would fall upon them if they failed to keep the law, he and the people repented and made a covenant with God.

They observed the greatest Passover since the days of Samuel.

But his children never bought into what their father was about or what he was doing.

Unlike most kings who provided but one of their sons to be the king to succeed him, Josiah provided three. Three sons and they were all wicked and brought the kingdom to its demise.

- I. The early years.
 - A. Hezekiah was the great grand father of Josiah and was a very good king. But his son Manasseh was the most wicked king ever.
 - B. Manasseh spent his entire life rebelling against the Lord.
 - C. He set up many false gods and temples.
 - D. He even put false gods in the temple itself.
 - E. He removed the things that Solomon had set in the temple for worship and replaced them with pagan objects.

F. Later reforms.

1. 2 Chronicles 33:11 Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze [fetters], and carried him off to Babylon. 12 Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, 13 and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD [was] God.
2. But it was too little too late.

G. When Amon came to the throne he reverted to Manasseh's earlier policies but was put to death after only 2 years.

II. Seeking the Lord.

- A. 2 Chronicles 34:3 In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David;
- B. We do not know how or who might have had an influence on the young king but someone obviously did or he would have been like those before him.
- C. Maybe God touched the young king's heart and made him to see the error of his father.
- D. But whatever it seems he starts asking the right people the right questions for he continued to grow in spiritual stature.

III. Changing the world.

- A. When he was twenty he began the broadest reforms of any king ever.
- B. 2 Chronicles 34:3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. 4 They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which [were] above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered [it] on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. 5 He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. 6 And [so he did] in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes. 7 When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

IV. Re-establishing the true worship of the Lord.

- A. 2 Chronicles 34:8 In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.
- B. The book of the law
1. 2 Chronicles 34:15 Then Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan. 16 So Shaphan carried the book to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "All that was committed to your servants they are doing. 17 "And they have gathered the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen." 18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. 19 Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes.
 2. 2 Chronicles 34:29-32 (NKJV) 29 Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30 The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem--the priests and the Levites, and all the people, great and small. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD. 31 Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. 32 And he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin take a stand. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.
- C. Passover
1. 2 Chronicles 35:1-19 (NKJV)
 - a. 1 Now Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the first month. 2 And he set the priests in their duties and encouraged them for the service of the house of the LORD. 3 Then he said to the Levites who taught all Israel, who were holy to the LORD: "Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built. It shall no longer be a burden on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel. 4 Prepare yourselves according to your fathers' houses, according to your divisions, following the written instruction of David king of Israel and the written instruction of Solomon his son. 5 And stand in the

holy place according to the divisions of the fathers' houses of your brethren the lay people, and according to the division of the father's house of the Levites. 6 So slaughter the Passover offerings, consecrate yourselves, and prepare them for your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses." 7 Then Josiah gave the lay people lambs and young goats from the flock, all for Passover offerings for all who were present, to the number of thirty thousand, as well as three thousand cattle; these were from the king's possessions. 8 And his leaders gave willingly to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover offerings two thousand six hundred from the flock, and three hundred cattle. 9 Also Conaniah, his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave to the Levites for Passover offerings five thousand from the flock and five hundred cattle. 10 So the service was prepared, and the priests stood in their places, and the Levites in their divisions, according to the king's command. 11 And they slaughtered the Passover offerings; and the priests sprinkled the blood with their hands, while the Levites skinned the animals. 12 Then they removed the burnt offerings that they might give them to the divisions of the fathers' houses of the lay people, to offer to the LORD, as it is written in the Book of Moses. And so they did with the cattle. 13 Also they roasted the Passover offerings with fire according to the ordinance; but the other holy offerings they boiled in pots, in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them quickly among all the lay people. 14 Then afterward they prepared portions for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, were busy in offering burnt offerings and fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared portions for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. 15 And the singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their places, according to the command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer. Also the gatekeepers were at each gate; they did not have to leave their position, because their brethren the Levites prepared portions for them. 16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah. 17 And the children of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. 18 There had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel

who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.

V. And it ended too soon.

A. 2 Chronicles 35:20-27 (NKJV)

1. 20 After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. 21 But he sent messengers to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I have not come against you this day, but against the house with which I have war; for God commanded me to make haste. Refrain from meddling with God, who is with me, lest He destroy you." 22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself so that he might fight with him, and did not heed the words of Necho from the mouth of God. So he came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo. 23 And the archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am severely 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. So he died, and was buried in one of the tombs of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. 25 Jeremiah also lamented for Josiah. And to this day all the singing men and the singing women speak of Josiah in their lamentations. They made it a custom in Israel; and indeed they are written in the Laments. 26 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his goodness, according to what was written in the Law of the LORD, 27 and his deeds from first to last, indeed they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.