

AS A MAN WIPETH A DISH

2 KINGS 21:1 – 22:11

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~ The United States of America is on the road heading directly towards revolution as I type this report and you read it. I doubt anyone can support disagreement with that statement. For a country that espouses to be a “Christian nation,” we sure aren’t leading the cause of the world turning to Christ. No, friends, I’m afraid our problems are far more severe than we understand. This leg of our Spiritual Safari should give Americans – and the rest of the world – plenty to think about as we compare the evil and treacherous King Manasseh with the good King Josiah. One of five great revival periods in the nation Israel happened in Judah during the administration of Josiah.

After our previous dramatically sensational report, this chapter may be quite a disappointment for many of you dear readers. Even so, we have more tremendous spiritual lessons to learn – and they are not easy lessons. We have seen Hezekiah was the best king to come along since David. There were no other kings of Judah that compared to Hezekiah. However, there are some ways in which King Hezekiah compared to David that weren’t good ways. I believe they are noteworthy. One of those ways is that King David didn’t do well as a father – as we clearly saw in our safari – neither did Hezekiah. Hezekiah’s son, Manasseh, was the absolute worst king who ever ruled the southern kingdom of Judah. Period.

Well, his story begins here, and it is a heartbreak to see this one hundred eighty-degree turnaround from good to evil in the kingdom of Judah. Sometimes, profound changes occur by merely turning the page of Scripture. Now, I realize I am dogmatic in my doctrine, but if I thought it were any other way, then I would be dogmatic about *THAT* other way. So, that said, my estimate is the departure of the Shekinah glory from the temple – of which Ezekiel was given the vision of – departed during the reign of Manasseh. I admit this is purely speculation and I cannot sustain this Biblically – but, at this particular time in which we begin this study, the Shekinah glory was apparently still filling the temple. And if the Shekinah

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glory didn't leave the temple during the reign of Manasseh, then I find nothing afterward that would have caused the physical presence of God to leave. This is the bottom of the barrel in terms of Israel's history. I believe with all my heart this is the time the temple became desolate. From here until the Babylonian captivity, the temple was completely forsaken of God....

XXI

1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzibah.

~ Notice God gave Manasseh ample time to turn to Him. He began reigning when he was twelve years old and sat on the throne until he was sixty-seven. His is the longest reign of all of the kings of Judah. Manasseh never outgrew his rebellion. Actually, he became worse and worse as the years went by. Even so, God is always patient, friends – just like He has been longsuffering with *YOU* – and me! God is gentle, and not willing that any should perish. Well, Manasseh was the son of Hephzibah, so we know all about momma now, too – she was not a good mother, obviously; she takes part of the blame for her son – that's why her name is mentioned as is the case with all of the kings of Judah. For Manasseh to have worshipped Baal and be compared to Ahab should tell us all we need to know about the extent of his wicked ways – but God doesn't leave it at that....

2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

~ Manasseh worshipped Baal, the sun, the planets, the moon, the stars, trees, animals, certain pieces of land, other men – everything there was to worship was worshipped openly and freely in Israel – *EXCEPT* the True and

Living God! I'm sure he had as many gods as the Greeks ever dreamed up. Of course, the Greeks had Apollo, Diana, Aphrodite, Zeus, Poseidon, Hestia, Hermes, Demeter, Athena, Dionysus, Artemis, Ares, Pluto, Hades, Hephaestus, Tethys, Prometheus – and that's the short list! I think Manasseh had *five times* as many – and he worshipped them all. Now, if you think we have advanced in our civilized and sophisticated modern-day society, then take a cursory dive into the contemporary astrological and horoscope industry; and get an educated view of the entertainment business. We're *FAR* more pagan than mankind has ever been at any point in world history. There are a lot of people worshipping the host of Heaven today; and they have no awareness of it. Many people build altars in the city – but just as many build them in the house of the Lord where God has put His Name – just as Manasseh did. Honestly, we're a shameful group of people, friends....

4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

7 And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.

~ I think we can all agree child sacrifice is blatant Satan worship. This is where Judah is given up by God, and this is where God decides very definitely the southern kingdom is going to go into captivity. They don't know it at the time in which we are studying – but they're getting ready to do some traveling – right on over to Babylon! God told them that He would put them in the land, and they would remain there – *IF – IF – IF* – they would obey His commandments and His laws and precepts. Well, as we read on here – they didn't do that....

9 But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,

11 Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols:

~ Not only was Manasseh as bad as the heathen – he was *WORSE!* I really suggest we all take a note or two here, my so-called Christian friends. We're talking about the man who led the people of God. God isn't going to permit Israel to stay in the Promised Land while willfully disobeying Him and giving the enemy occasion to blaspheme the True and Living God. If you don't think God will judge you and me, and punish our sin in this life, my beloved – then please write me back and explain this next verse....

12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.

~ Not only should our ears be tingling now, but our hair should be standing on edge, too. God did some dish washing which involved turning Judah

upside down. God says He will wipe His people out of the land as if wiping rotten food out of a bowl. Did you ever stop to think that you are walking on God's earth? I know we believe we're very clever and sophisticated – and we may recklessly cite Romans chapter eight verse one – but, before you do, make sure you are in Christ, my beloved. You just happen to be breathing God's air and using his sunshine and rain. It's His food and water we consume; and it's His body we have been loaned temporarily.

God says, every now and then, He washes His dishes and cleans up His house. When He does, He doesn't think twice about the garbage that goes down the drain. Nations throughout the centuries lie in ruin along the highway of broken dreams. Take a guess why. I'll tell you why: they did the same things we are doing today as man attempts to live without God. Man says he doesn't need God. I hate to tell you this, but you have that exactly backwards! God doesn't need *YOU* – and you'll do well to consider that completely and think it through to its final conclusion. Our next verse might help process exactly what we're talking about....

14 And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies;

15 Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

16 Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.

~ When a man persists in a life of sin, he never sins in just one respect – he always sins in *MANY* – *MANY* different ways. Not only have we forgotten God today, but we have become immoral, rude, hateful, liars, fraudulent and fanatical profanity-laced and lawless people who wouldn't know the truth of what is right if we crashed our car into it – and we're terrible drivers, too! If this world thinks we will have law and order without turning back to the Lord Jesus Christ, then we are the most idiotic bunch of

brainless losers to have ever inhabited the earth. We always want to turn the spotlight on the bad things happening in the world, but we never seem to turn the spiritual spotlight on the bad things happening in our hearts and lives. Mankind offers nothing but a negative and preposterous proposition in his philosophies. Manasseh is guilty of murder, and guilty of leading many people on a treacherous path. That's a pretty bad record to have given by God immediately preceding your death...

17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

18 And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

19 Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

20 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did.

21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

22 And he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

23 And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.

24 And 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.

25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

26 And he was buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

~ Politicians today have one goal: to get elected. They will literally say anything and promise that which is incredulous; and many of them are willing to sell their country and countrymen out and give up all of their freedoms for a fleeting moment of power. We live in dangerous days, my friends. That's what was going on in Judah; and the record of Manasseh and his son Amon are both brief and bad.

This brings us to the last of the good and great kings of Judah. Have you noticed how young these kings have been when they began their reign? The main reason for that is because daddy was dead. They were only dead because God removed them from power. Josiah had barely learned the alphabet when he took the throne. Well, the sun has come out once again and the light shines bright over the land. Josiah was blessed by seeing a tremendous revival in his days as the result of believing, trusting and obeying God....

XXII

1 Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

3 And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,

4 Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people:

5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

7 Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.

8 And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

~ So, our safari ends this report with the Lord's money being used to support the man who is actually doing something for God! That's unusual. And this is something you dear readers should think about carefully. If you give to ANY organization or ANY individual who is either not doing anything tangible for the cause of Christ directly – or that you have not investigated thoroughly and completely – then your giving is shameful and sinful. Each of us will answer for sinful donations, and God is not going to use your

misdirected offering. Anyone who is not doing something to further the Gospel that can be *SEEN* does not deserve our support at all – and God never blesses them or *YOU* for giving to anything else. Yes, I am harping on this point because there are a bunch of shameful giving today. If you are going to turn your money over to anyone, it had better be to a man who is a *DOER* - not a who-knows-what-they're-doing man.

Many churches turn in a report that is not credible; and they say, “*figures don’t lie.*” Well, figures don’t lie, but the men who figure do! The men in this last chapter didn’t even have to give an accounting of their spending because they could be trusted – and because everyone could see the repairs to the temple being made! They could be trusted because there was tangible evidence of what they had done! Oh, my friends, I cannot urge you enough to figure out what I am trying to convey to you now. The first thing they did was repair the temple. If revival is ever to happen, it will have to happen according to Scripture. It won’t happen any other way. That’s why we don’t see it today.

I’ll be honest with you dear readers – because I always am honest with you – I see *NO* evidence revival will happen again in this world. In our next report, we are going to exhaust the topic of revival; because we hear so much about them, but we never see them – *nothing* – that could possibly be construed as “revival.” I will say in this report: the proper, correct and complete teaching of the Bible *MUST – MUST – MUST* be the basis for revival! If you disagree with that statement, then you do not believe the Word of God. I know there are a lot of groups who pray for revival, but I wish they would spend a little more time in an educated, systematic and sincere Bible study to show that they are sincere in those prayers.

Verse eight tells us Hilkiah found the Book of the Law in the House of the Lord – and friends – the church is not a good place to lose the Bible! Unfortunately, it is lost in the church. How many churches in this world today honestly rest on the Word of God and preach it properly, correctly and completely? I know there are a few faithful pastors remaining, and I am trying to hold up their hands and support them; but how many pastors have absolutely lost sight of the Lord Jesus Christ? Remember, even Mary and Joseph lost track of Jesus *IN THE TEMPLE!*

In verse eleven, the king didn't gather a group of nice little people and say some nice pious prayers; he didn't form a flowery evangelistic campaign with a banquet of fine food. He didn't call together a conference of all the good little Jesus preachers to talk a bunch of sweet talk nonsense about optimism and hope to bring everyone together; no, what he did was tore his clothes!

What *YOU* and I need to do is get together and hear the Word of God! If we really did that, we would bow down on our faces and ask God for forgiveness and repent. If you tell your congregation this is what they need to do, I'll almost bet they get rid of you – *FAST!* *MANY* so-called Bible believing churches and outreach organizations today are as far from the truth of the Bible as anything can possibly be. If the Word of God doesn't bring *CONVICTION* and *CHANGE* to your heart and life, then you aren't interested in the reality God is speaking to you through this report in His Word.

I hope you will honestly pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment if you have even bothered reading this far. I have to ask as Isaiah did: who hath believed my report? Frankly, I'm not sure there are many. In fact, I know there aren't; because many are called, *FEW* are chosen. Only the chosen are reading this paragraph, friends. That's not many ~