

24 – JOSIAH

(2 KINGS 22:1-23:30; 2 CHRONICLES 34:1-35:27)

I. Josiah, King of Judah (2 Kings 22:1-2; 2 Chronicles 34:1-2)

- Josiah was 8 years old when he became king and ruled over Judah for 31 years.
- He did what was right in the sight of the Lord and walked according to the ways of David.

II. Josiah's Reforms (2 Kings 22:3-23:25; 2 Chronicles 34:1-35:19)

A. Josiah's Heart (2 Chronicles 34:1-7)

- In the 8th year of his reign, Josiah began to seek the God of his father David.
- In the 12th year of his reign, Josiah began to purge Jerusalem and Judah of its idolatry.
- He removed idols and the high places as he broke down the altars to Baal.
- These items were ground to dust and spread on the graves of those who sacrificed to them.
- The bones of the priests were burned on their altars as he cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.
- He also did this in Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon and as far as Naphtali.

B. The Temple Repairs (2 Kings 22:3-7; 2 Chronicles 34:8-13)

- In the 18th year of Josiah's reign, he sent a servant to seek an accounting of the Temple funds.
- The funds were to be used for the repair of the Temple and must be delivered to the workmen.
- There was to be no accounting of the funds given to workmen because they were faithful men.

C. The Discovery of the Law (2 Kings 22:8-20; 2 Chronicles (34:14-33)

- During the repairs, the High Priest found a copy of the Book of the Law.
- He gave the copy to the Shaphan the scribe who read it and reported it to the king.
- When Shaphan read the book to the king, Josiah tore his clothes in grief.
- The king sent the High Priest and others to inquire of the Lord concerning God's wrath.
- They went to inquire of Huldah the prophetess, who had a message from the Lord for the king.
- She stated that the Lord will bring calamity on Judah because they have forsaken the Lord.

Israel's Kings & Prophets: A Survey of 1 & 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles

- Because the king humbled himself at the reading of the Law, Josiah will not see the judgment.
- So, the servants and the High Priest brought back the word of the Lord to the king.

D. The Reading of the Law (2 Kings 23:1-3)

- The King sent his servants to gather all of the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.
- The king met with the elders and the priests in the Temple and read them the words of the Law.
- The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant to keep the Lord's commandments.
- All of the people took a stand with the king to keep the covenant.

E. The Reforms (2 Kings 23:4-14)

- The king commanded the High Priest to bring all of the idolatrous items out of the Temple.
- These items were burned at the Brook Kidron outside of Jerusalem.
- Josiah had all of the idolatrous items placed by the kings of Judah removed and destroyed.

F. Jeroboam's Altar (2 Kings 23:15-20)

- Josiah went to Bethel and destroyed the idol and altar of Jeroboam, son of Nebat.
- He had the bones of the graves nearby burned on the altar in accordance with the prophecy.
- The bones of the prophet from Judah, who prophesied against the altar, were not disturbed.
- Josiah removed all of the high places in Samaria and executed their priests.

G. The Passover (2 Kings 23:21-23; 2 Chronicles 35:1-19)

- The king commanded that the people keep the Passover to the Lord as written in the Law.
- He called the Levites to prepare themselves by clans for the Passover.
- The king gave the lay people lambs and goats, numbering 30,000, for the Passover offerings.
- The Chronicler records the details of keeping the Passover.
- The people, who were present, kept the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened bread for 7 days.
- The writer states that such a Passover had never been held since the days of the judges.
- This Passover was held before the Lord at Jerusalem in the 18th year of Josiah.

Israel's Kings & Prophets: A Survey of 1 & 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles

H. Josiah's Greatness (2 Kings 23:24-25)

- Josiah removed the spiritists and the idols as the Law commanded.
- There was no king like Josiah before and after him who turned to the Lord with all his heart.

III. The Coming Judgment (2 Kings 23:26-27)

- In spite of Josiah's reforms, the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of his wrath toward Judah.
- The Lord's anger against Judah was aroused by the all of the provocations made by Manasseh.
- The Lord stated that he would remove Judah and Jerusalem as he removed the northern kingdom.

IV. The Death of Josiah (2 Kings 23:28-30; 2 Chronicles 35:20-27)

- Pharaoh Necho came up to fight the Babylonians in Carchemish and Josiah went to oppose him.

Historical Note: Necho

Necho was the ruler of Egypt. he began to rule during the time when the Assyrian Empire was falling and the Babylonian Empire was emerging. He was able to gain and retain control of Syria until he suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Babylonians at Carchemish. Before his defeat, he removed Jehoahaz as King of Judah and set up Jehoiakim as king. Because of his defeat at Carchemish, Egypt lost all of its holdings in Israel and Syria.

See: 2 Kings 23:29,33,34,35; 2 Chronicles 35:20,22; 36:4; Jeremiah 46:2.

Historical Note: Carchemish

Carchemish was an ancient city of the Hittites that was located on the western bank of the Euphrates River 105 km northeast of Aleppo. It was an important commercial and military city. For many years it paid tribute to the Assyrian kings. It was the scene of the great victory that Nebuchadnezzar had over Necho of Egypt in 605 B.C.

See: 2 Chronicles 35:20; Jeremiah 46:2.

- Pharaoh tried to dissuade Josiah from interfering since he was not involved.
- Josiah did not heed the message and went in disguise to meet Egypt in battle at Megiddo.
- Egyptian archers shot Josiah and he was taken from the battle and brought to Jerusalem.
- He died from his wounds and they buried him in the tombs of his fathers.
- The prophet Jeremiah lamented for the king.
- The writer and the Chronicler list where the reign of Josiah is recorded.
- The people of the land made Josiah's son, Jehoahaz, king over Judah.