



June 21, 2015

2 Kings 22

“The Effect of God’s Word”

Pastor Gary Hamrick

King Josiah, the last of the eight good kings of Judah, is the focus of Pastor Gary’s teaching this week. His name in Hebrew is yo ’shiyahu, which means Yahweh supports him or God is his foundation. He was the great-grandson of King Hezekiah. His father, Amon, and his grandfather, Manasseh, were ungodly, wicked kings. Josiah became the new king at the tender age of eight, when his father was assassinated.

If there was a key phrase that would best describe Josiah’s life and reign it would be that Josiah made God’s Word central to his personal life as well as the life of the nation he ruled. Josiah gave more attention and devotion to the Word of God, and he submitted his life and the life of the nation to more instruction from the Word of God than any other king, including David, whose many psalms made their way into the Bible. Even David didn’t make God’s Word such a national priority as Josiah did, and, in so doing, Josiah and the nation received many rich benefits because they placed the Word of God in a place of prominence.

Historical Background

1. Sadly, when you read about the discovery of the Word of God, you get the sense that no one even realized that it was missing, because we don’t read that they were looking for it; they just stumbled across it when they were “cleaning out the garage,” so to speak!
2. Hilkiyah the high priest told Shaphan, Josiah’s Chief of Staff, that he had found the book of the Law in the Temple.

3. **2 Kings 22:9-10** - *“Then Shaphan the secretary went to the king and reported to him: ‘Your officials have paid out the money that was in the temple of the Lord and have entrusted it to the workers and supervisors at the temple.’ Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king, ‘Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.’ And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.”*
4. Up to this point Josiah had never heard about or read the Book of the Law, because it was unaccounted for and no one had been looking for it.
5. The fact that Josiah was motivated to seek the Lord in the first place, even though he didn’t have the Bible to stir his heart, is an amazing thing.
6. **2 Kings 22:11** - *“When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes.”*
 - a. The tearing of a person’s garments was a sign of grief.
7. After hearing the Word of God, Josiah realized for the first time how much the nation had been sinning against God.
8. The one thing Josiah didn’t do was dismiss what he heard, instead he allowed the Word of God to have its intended effect on his heart, and he submitted himself to it.

Josiah - Age 8

9. Because Josiah was only eight years old and incapable of ruling a nation, it’s inferred that there he had a number of godly advisors around him, including:
 - a. Zephaniah the prophet
 - i. **Zephaniah 1:1** - *“The word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi... during the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah.”*
 - b. Huldah the prophetess
 - c. Jeremiah the prophet
 - i. Jeremiah was about the same age as Josiah, and they also grew up near each other.
 - ii. Jeremiah started prophesying in the thirteenth year of Josiah’s reign (Josiah was 21 years old), and Jeremiah would have been approximately 17 to 22 years of age.
 - iii. **Jeremiah 1:2** - *“The word of the Lord came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah.”*
 - d. Jeremiah’s father, Hilkiah, was the high priest during the reign of Josiah, and he too, may have been a close advisor.

Josiah - Age 16

10. Whatever the number may have been or whoever they were, it's obvious there were people speaking into Josiah's life.
11. **2 Chronicles 34:3** - *"In the eighth year of his reign while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his [forefather] David."*
12. Wisely, he did not repeat the sins of his father, Amon, and grandfather, Manasseh, who were wicked, evil men.
 - a. **2 Kings 21:6, 16** - *"He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger... Moreover, Manasseh also shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end - besides the sin that he had caused Judah to commit, so that they did evil in the eyes of the Lord."*
13. Josiah resolutely determined to be his own man and live a life that honored God.
14. Pastor Gary encouraged young people, and people of any age, for that matter, to remember that they are never too young to start seeking the Lord, because none of us can rely on the faith of our mother or father; we have to seek God for ourselves.
15. Josiah is one of many examples of teenagers mentioned in the Bible who sought the Lord and were used by the Lord as teens, including:
 - a. David was anointed to be king at 15
 - b. Daniel was about 1 years old
 - c. Jeremiah was about 17 years old
 - d. Mary was about 15 years old
 - e. Timothy was about 15 years old
 - i. In **1 Timothy 4:12**, Paul exhorted a young Timothy when he said:
"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."

Josiah - Age 26

16. **2 Kings 22:3-6** - *"In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the secretary, Shaphan son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the temple of the*

Lord. He said: 'Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him get ready the money that has been brought into the temple of the Lord, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people. Have them entrust it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the temple. And have these men pay the workers who repair the temple of the Lord - the carpenters, the builders and the masons. Also have them purchase timber and dressed stone to repair the temple.' ”

17. In what was likely motivated by his newfound relationship with God, Josiah wanted to do something that would honor God, so he undertook the repair and refurbishment of the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.
18. In the process of restoration, the Book of the Law was discovered!
 - a. This was probably the Book of Moses, which would be the first five books of the Old Testament (also known as The Pentateuch).

The Word Of God - A Convicting Effect

19. Josiah fell under conviction and tore his robes in a state of grief over his personal condition as well as the spiritual condition of the nation.
20. Conviction isn't a bad thing, even though we may not like to feel guilty, but the point is that unless we agree with God about our guilty condition, we won't experience his incredible redemption.
 - a. Pastor Gary said this is like being physically sick, but denying the doctor's diagnosis. We won't get physically well until we first agree with the diagnosis, and then accept the remedy.
21. God's diagnosis of us is that we are sinful and dying, which means that we will be eternally separated from him when we die.
 - a. If we agree with the diagnosis, then we can accept the remedy; that Jesus Christ died on a cross and that by believing in him we can have our sins forgiven and go to heaven when we die.
22. We must not dismiss conviction, because it's a good thing that will bring us to the Savior.

The Word Of God - A Cleansing Effect

23. When the Word of God brings conviction to your heart, you'll become motivated to deal with all of the sinful stuff in your life, and that's just what Josiah did when he purged the land of all the disgraceful, immoral shrines, objects, and idols.
24. **2 Kings 23:1-14** tells the account of the ways Josiah allowed the Word of God to have a cleansing effect.
25. His great-grandfather, Hezekiah, had done a similar thing, but Josiah's father and grandfather brought everything back and more!
26. **Ephesians 5:26** tells us that we are made holy by the cleansing and washing of the Word of God.
27. **Jeremiah 23:29** - “ *‘Is not my word like fire,’ declares the Lord...?’* ”
28. God's Word will cleanse the dross out of our lives just like the effect fire has on metal when it separates the pure metal from the dross to make it more pure.

The Word Of God - A Celebrating Effect

29. **2 Kings 23:21-23** - *“The king gave this order to all the people; ‘Celebrate the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.’ Not since the days of the judges who led Israel, nor throughout the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah, had any such Passover been observed. But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was celebrated to the Lord in Jerusalem.”*
30. When a person comes under the conviction of the Word and the cleansing of the Word, the natural response would be to celebrate the God who loves and forgives them!
31. The Passover celebrated the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt under the might hand of God.
32. Passover is the one Feast that Jesus linked to his death on the cross, by saying that we should do it in remembrance of him (referring to Communion/Lord's Supper/Eucharist).

33. Just as God delivered the Jewish people from 400 years of slavery in Egypt, so Jesus, by his death on the cross and subsequent resurrection from the dead, has delivered us from a greater slavery – the slavery of sin and death.
34. Because we have been set free by the precious blood of Christ, being forgiven, cleansed, redeemed, and on our way to heaven when we die, all because we believe what Christ has done for us on the cross, how much more reason do we have to celebrate the God who loves us and the Christ who died for us!
35. [2 Kings 23:25](#) – *“Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did – with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [2 Kings 22:1-13](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about the time they came under the conviction of the Word of God.
4. Read and discuss [2 Kings 22:11](#).
5. Spend time talking about the godly people the Lord put in your life at an early age.
6. Were you like Josiah, in that you had ungodly parents and other family members?
7. Read and discuss Pastor Gary’s statement about making a personal decision to follow the Lord. (See #14 above)
8. Describe the influence the Word of God, godly parents, godly friends, or a pastor or Sunday school teacher had in your life as a child (like Josiah when he was 8 years old), and as a teen (like Josiah when he was 16 years old).
9. Read and discuss [2 Kings 23:1-14](#), and focus on the way the Word of God had a cleansing effect on Josiah and the nation of Israel.

10. How has the Word of God had a cleansing effect in your life?
11. How does the Word of God bring you to a place of celebration? (See #30 above)
12. Read and discuss [2 Kings 23:25](#).
13. What would need to happen in your life to leave a legacy like Josiah's?
14. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).