



October 18, 2015
2 Chronicles 33
"Second Chances"
Pastor Gary Hamrick

Have you ever wondered if God gives second chances? Have you ever messed up in life and wished you could have a fresh start? Learn from the life of King Manasseh – considered to be the most wicked king who ever reigned in Israel and Judah – that God is indeed the God of second chances. Sometimes the turning point for us comes in the form of a crisis as it did in Manasseh’s life. But that crisis can often be the best thing that ever happened to us. Join Pastor Gary for today’s study about “Second Chances.”

Historical Background

1. In Hebrew, Manasseh’s name means, “causing to forget.”
2. Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king of Judah.
3. He reigned 55 years, from 697BC to 642BC, longer than any other king of Israel or Judah.
4. Manasseh *“did what was evil in the eyes of the Lord,”* and was considered by the ancient Rabbis to be the most wicked of all the kings of Israel and Judah.

Manasseh’s Seven Deadly Sins

5. He followed evil practices of other nations.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:2** – *“He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites.”*

- b. **Deuteronomy 18:9-12** - *“When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you.”*

- 6. He rebuilt the high places of idolatry.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:3** - *“He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them.”*

- 7. He built altars to Baal, made Asherah poles, and carved images that were placed in the Temple of the Lord.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:3** - *“He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them.”*
 - b. **2 Chronicles 33:6** - *“He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger.”*
 - c. Pastor Gary said, “What Manasseh was doing was a deliberate affront to the sacredness and the holiness of the name of God.”

- 8. He worshipped the stars.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:3** - *“He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them.”*
 - b. Pastor Gary made several important statements regarding Manasseh’s worship of the stars.
 - i. “All occult practices and all astrological worship of the stars can be traced back 3,000 years to ancient Babylon.” (Paraphrase)
 - ii. “The Babylonians came up with the astrological charts.” (Paraphrase)
 - iii. “Unfortunately, many people look to the stars as their source of guidance and counsel.” (Paraphrase)
 - c. **Deuteronomy 4:19** - *“And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars - all the heavenly array - do not be enticed into bowing down to them or worshiping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven.”*

9. He sacrificed his sons in the fire.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:6** - *“He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger.”*
 - b. Worship of the pagan gods Chemosh and Molech, included child sacrifice as part of worship ritual.
 - c. The Valley of Ben Hinnom is called the Valley of the Children or Tophet.
 - i. In Hebrew, Tophet means, Valley of the Drums, because they would pound on drums in an attempt to drown out the screams of dying children.
 - d. **2 Kings 21:16** - *“Moreover, Manasseh also shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end...”*

10. He practiced demonic rituals.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:6** - *“He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger.”*
 - b. Pastor Gary strongly urged Christians to avoid things like séances, Ouija board “games,” palm reading, mediums, tarot cards, as well as certain TV shows and movies, which promote the demonic.
 - c. **Leviticus 19:31** - *“Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God.”*

11. He led Judah away from the Lord.
 - a. **2 Chronicles 33:9** - *“... Manasseh led Judah and the people of Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the Lord had destroyed before the Israelites.”*

The Lord Pursued Manasseh

12. The amazing thing about the account of King Manasseh’s life is that the Lord never gave up on him.
13. **2 Chronicles 33:10** - *“The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention.”*
14. The Lord didn’t give up on the nation of Israel, and the inference is that the Lord pursued them and spoke to them through the prophets.

15. Ancient Jewish history indicates that it was Manasseh who had the prophet Isaiah sawed in two.
 - a. There is a veiled reference to this in [Hebrews 11:37](#), which says: “... [men and women of faith] were sawed in two...”

Manasseh's Turning Point

16. The Lord used the Assyrians to get their attention!
17. [2 Chronicles 33:11](#) - *“So the Lord brought against them the army commanders of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.”*
18. “Sometimes God will resort to bring us to a crisis if that’s what it takes to turn us around, because he loves us too much to allow us to remain the way we are. You might look at this and think to yourself, ‘Why would God does this?’ This doesn’t sound like a very loving God! [In my opinion] this is the best day of Manasseh’s life! The reason is because it’s a loving God who sees us on a reckless path and intervenes, and it’s a cruel God who sees us on a path of self-destruction and does nothing.” – Paraphrase of Pastor Gary’s comments
19. The crisis Manasseh experienced brought him to the Lord.
20. [2 Chronicles 33:12](#) - *“In his distress he sought the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.”*
21. Manasseh sought the favor (mercy) of the Lord.
 - a. [Daniel 9:9](#) - *“The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him...”*
 - b. [Psalm 103:9-14](#) - *“He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.”*
22. Manasseh humbled himself before the Lord.
 - a. Pastor Gary said, “Pride is the greatest hindrance to any of us having a relationship with God, because pride is arrogance, and in our arrogance we feel like we are self-sufficient.”

- b. [Proverbs 15:25](#) - *“The Lord tears down the proud man’s house...”*
 - c. [James 4:6](#) - *“... [God] gives us more grace. That is why the Scripture ¹ says: ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ ”*
 - d. [Matthew 23:12](#) - *“... [Jesus said,] whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”*
23. Manasseh earnestly prayed to the Lord.
- a. There is no record of Manasseh’s prayer in the Bible, but we do know the reaction of the Lord!
 - b. [2 Chronicles 33:13](#) - *“And when he prayed to him, the Lord was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord is God.”*
 - c. The Bible doesn’t tell us how the Lord brought him out of captivity back to his kingdom.
24. Manasseh didn’t experience what we might call a “foxhole conversion,” and the evidence for this is found in [2 Chronicles 33:15-20](#), which provides the account of the dramatic changes that took place in Manasseh’s life as well as in the nation.
25. The account of Manasseh’s life helps us know the Lord gives infinite chances to those who come to him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [2 Chronicles 33:1-9](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. Provide an overview of what Pastor Gary called “Manasseh’s Seven Deadly Sins.” (See #5 through #11 above)
4. Read and discuss the paraphrase of Pastor Gary’s remarks concerning times of crisis in the life of an unbeliever. (See #18 above)
5. What are some examples of times when you’ve been given a second chance?
6. Read and discuss [Daniel 9:9](#) and [Psalm 103:9-14](#).

¹ [Proverbs 3:34](#)

7. How have you experienced the grace and mercy of the Lord when it comes to second chances?
8. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's definition of pride and the related Scriptures he mentioned. (See #22 above)
9. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about a time when the Lord humbled them.
10. Read and discuss [2 Chronicles 33:15-20](#).
11. What are some of the ways the Holy Spirit worked in your life to make dramatic changes after you became a Christian?
12. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

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