

Rediscovering the Book 2 Kings 22

Rediscovering the Book Introduction

- Josiah was among the greatest kings that ever reigned in Jerusalem.
- By the time he took the throne the nation had fallen into the deepest moral and religious chaos.
- Josiah was a great reformer who attempted to turn the nation back to God.

- He destroyed idols and tore down pagan altars.
- He removed idolatrous prostitutes and priests along with the various symbols of the nation's idolatry.
- He restored the worship of the Lord, including the worship at the temple, which had fallen into disrepair.

- He commanded the people to keep the Passover in Jerusalem, and the turnout was the largest in centuries.
 - See 23:21-23.
- He surpassed all other kings in his efforts to turn the people of Judah and Israel back to the Lord their God.
 - See 23:25.

- In 1 Kings 22, we will see what motivated King Josiah, namely the accidental discovery of an unusually important book.
- The prominence of the Scriptures is well explained in the Protestant French Confession of Faith, dating back to 1559.
 - *We believe that the Word contained in these books [that is, the Bible] has proceeded from God, and receives its authority from Him alone, and not from men. And inasmuch as it is the rule of all truth, containing all that is necessary for the service of God and for our salvation, it is not lawful for men, nor even for angels, to add to it, to take away from it, or to change it.*
 - *The French Confession of Faith, Article V. [1559]*

Our knowledge of Christ, the living Word, begins with our knowledge of God's written Word, the Bible.

As we grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we will never outgrow Christ as the Scriptures reveal Him.

King Josiah's Reign 22:1-2

- Only 8 of the 22 rulers in Judah "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord."
- All of them are compared to David as the standard.

- Josiah's father Amon and his grandfather Manasseh both "did what was evil in the sight of the Lord."
- Both of them rejected the Lord and served idols.
- Amon was assassinated by his own servants, resulting in Josiah rising to the throne at an early age.

Repairing the Temple 22:3-7

- After a long period of the most glaring idolatry, Josiah makes an effort to restore the worship of the Lord at the Temple.
- The temple is in a sorry state having not been used for its intended purpose for quite a long time.
- Their work at renovation brings a surprising result.

An Accidental Discovery 22:8-10

- How this could happen?
- Deuteronomy 31:9-13 required the law to be read to the nation once every 7 years at the Feast of Tabernacles.
- Deuteronomy 31:24-27 indicates that from the time of Moses, there was to be a copy of the Law kept next to the Ark of the Covenant.
- Deuteronomy 17:18-20 requires that each king was to write for himself a personal copy of the law and then read it.
- Nonetheless, it happened.

- The same thing happened in church history.
- The Reformation started when people like Martin Luther began questioning the church's adherence to traditions that clearly contradicted the Word of God.
- Let's listen to what he had to say.
 - *The neglect of Scripture, even by spiritual leaders, is one of the greatest evils in the world. Everything else, arts or literature, is pursued and practiced day and night, and there is no end of labor and effort; but Holy Scripture is neglected as though there were no need of it.*
 - *You should diligently learn the Word of God and by no means imagine that you know it ... The devil is a greater rascal than you think he is ... His definite design is to get you tired of the Word and in this way to draw you away from it. This is his aim.*
 - *Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)*

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Josiah's Reaction 22:11-13

- Josiah's desire was to restore the physical Temple.
- God's first priority was to return his people back to the Law.
- Josiah was just the kind of person that God was looking for.
 - See Isaiah 66:2.

Confirming God's Word 22:14-20

- This is really we really know about Huldah the prophetess.
- Many of God's most useful servants are quiet and unknown.
- Maybe just like you?

- Josiah's reforms would prove to be too little too late for the nation of Judah.
- All he could really do was slow the downward spiral.

- How influential we are may matter less in God's eyes than how influenced we are – by His Word.
- In this respect Josiah did amazingly well.

Renewing the Covenant 23:1-3

- If you read the rest of 2 Kings 23, you'll see all the rest that Josiah did.
- The list is long; his zeal was almost endless.
- Josiah understood the importance of hearing and obeying the Word of God.

Rediscovering the Book Conclusions

- Neglect of the Scriptures and spiritual decline went hand in hand in the history of Israel and Judah.
- They go hand in hand in our day as well.
- On the other hand, getting back to the Word of God is necessary if we hope to see revival.
 - *There is no short cut, no easy route, no new method to revival ... Let's get back to the Word of God ... A return to the Bible has to be the beginning of revival.*
 - *J. Vernon McGee (1904 – 1988)*
- Like Josiah, many of us did not inherit a love for the Bible from our families or the people around us.
- Like Josiah, we may also have to be the initiators.
- Let's make it our aim to never get tired of God's Word.
 - *I learned to love to read the Bible ... no matter how busy I am, I always make it a rule to read a chapter or a portion of a chapter in the morning, before beginning the work of the day.*
 - *Booker T. Washington (1856 – 1915)*
 - *The Bible is the proper book for [us] ... There the truth is distinguished from error far more clearly than anywhere else, and one finds something new in it every day. For twenty-eight years ... I have now constantly read and preached the Bible; and yet I have not exhausted it but find something new in it every day.*
 - *Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)*
- We might add that without the Bible we have no standard of truth or authoritative knowledge of God.

- It lights our path, comforts our heart and increases our faith like nothing else.
 - *I prayed for Faith, and thought that some day Faith would come down and strike me like lightning. But Faith did not seem to come. One day I read in the tenth chapter of Romans, "Now Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." I had closed my Bible, and prayed for Faith. I now opened my Bible, and began to study, and Faith has been growing ever since.*
 - *D. L. Moody (1837 – 1899)*

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- David was another king who fell in love with God's Word.
- Let's close with his assessment of it in Psalm 19:7-14.