

2 Kings 22-23

Good evening church, here we are for our mid-week Bible Study.

We welcome those of you watching online this evening, we are glad you could find us.

Tonight we will continue our study through the Book of 2 Kings, we will be looking at chapters 22 and 23.

Let's pray, then we will get into our study.

Tonight we have come to King Josiah, and along with his Great-Grandfather Hezekiah, Josiah ranks as one of the most important of all the kings of Judah.

Out of the 20 rulers in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, only eight of them could be called "Good."

Josiah may have surpassed them all, even above Hezekiah, because he seemingly avoided some of the mistakes that his Great-Grandfather made.

Josiah now comes into the picture during the final climactic chapter of Judah's history.

He will be used to bring one last Revival to the land, before they are destroyed and many taken into Babylonian Captivity.

As Josiah rose to power, at this point in history the Assyrians who conquered Israel were now waning in power, as the Babylonian Empire was now rising.

Remember Babylon sent its seemingly innocent envoys to King Hezekiah many decades earlier, when it was just a rising city.

Now it is a world player, and they would be the means for God to chasten Judah.

Now, Josiah's father Amon and his grandfather Manasseh have led with many decades of evil, approximately 57 years of evil ruling in the land.

That is a long time for the people of God to grow contempt for the things of God.

As we will see tonight, at this point in Judah's history, there seems to be one surviving copy of the Word of God.

This is tragic... However, God had risen up some very notable prophets during King Josiah's reign, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Nahum.

As we will see Josiah comes to the throne very young, and it may be these very prophets who impacted the King during his young and formative years, and even during his active years, where he instituted national reforms.

Much credit is given to his mother as well, Jedidiah, which means "beloved."

She must have had an incredible influence in her son's life, his father was killed when he was a boy, and he

was spared the evil influence that he was subject to for the first 8 years of his life.

He will remain under the tutelage of his mother, the prophets, and the elders until he makes his first decree at the age of 26, where he will order the restoration of the Temple.

Jeremiah used him as the standard in a rebuke to his own sons in **Jer. 22:16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy; Then it was well.**

But the kings who follow Josiah will not even come close to the example that he left behind.

He is the last good King in Judah...

Let's read the first 7 verses here in 2 Kings 22...

Josiah Reigns in Judah(2 Chron. 34:1,2)

22:1 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. 2 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law(2 Chron. 34:8-28)

3 Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the Lord, saying: 4 "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been brought into

the house of the Lord, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. 5 And let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the Lord; let them give it to those who are in the house of the Lord doing the work, to repair the damages of the house — 6 to carpenters and builders and masons — and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. 7 However there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully."

Josiah had to clean up the disorder that his father and grandfather had brought to Judah.

His first order was to restore and renovate the Temple of God.

And again, the Temple's Revival mimics the Spiritual Revival that is taking place in the nation.

Josiah will not only restore the Temple but he will cleanse the land.

Knowing the history of those who went before him, it seems he is developing his plan after the same plan of one of his predecessors Jehoash.

The sadly neglected Temple would be worked on from the contributions of the Worshippers coming to Worship Yahweh.

The money was given to the trustworthy tradesmen, who were then entrusted to the work of restoration.

The man entrusted with the oversight of the work was a man with a fine pedigree, Shaphan.

His sons will have prominent roles in the future of Judah.

It is important to note, that Josiah was not only going to destroy the pagan worship in Judah, but he was also going to restore the Yahweh worship at the Temple.

This is important, many people are wanting deliverance from the bondage of sin, they want to be delivered from the demonic strongholds in their lives, whether it be drug use, or other life controlling sins.

But this is the reality of our God, He will destroy them, but not for you to live your life then how you please.

True worship must replace the false worship that controlled your life.

Paul said in **Romans 6:12-14** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Our instruments, that is our hands, our feet, our mouths, our body and soul that was once used for unrighteousness, are to be put to death, and then

made alive now, to be instruments of righteousness to God.

Once He frees us of our debilitating sins and rebellion, we are not free to live how we please, but now we live unto Him, and for His Glory.

It was not enough to destroy the false worship, Josiah needed to also restore True Worship in the Land.

This is important to understand.

Look now starting in verse 8...

8 Then Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. 9 So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the Lord." 10 Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

11 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes. 12 Then the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, 13 "Go, inquire of the Lord for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has

been found; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

A pause now takes place in the renovations as an archeological discovery has taken place.

And if you ever go to Israel, you will see even today, when a discovery is made, any construction that is taking place, comes to a complete halt.

Last time we saw a hotel built over an archeological site in Magdala.

They had to build around it.

Here these Temple workers make a once in a lifetime discovery, they found the Book of the Law, it had been lost and forgotten for 75 years!

Think about this in your own life, when you go a day without the Word, it is easier to go another day, then a week goes by, then after a month it is sitting under a pile of laundry somewhere, or under a stack of bills.

And it kind of slowly drifts from the prominent place in your home, and maybe finally ends up on a Book Shelf or in a drawer.

But once it goes neglected it just get easier and easier not to come back to it.

For 75 years Judah had neglected God's Word, and perhaps this last surviving scroll was hidden away by

loyalists at the regime change, when Manasseh took over.

And we cannot help but think of the great lengths God has gone too to preserve the Scriptures, even when it seemed almost lost, one copy remained.

Today there are countless copies of God's Word, and you can think back to this moment, and understand that even when it seemed all was lost, God preserved the integrity of His Word, in order for it to sit on our laps today.

The books found here were probably the first 5 books of the Bible, the Pentateuch or the Torah.

The high priest Hilkiah recognized it immediately, some have come up with a theory that Hilkiah was the protector of the Holy Book, and allowed it to be revealed when it was safe.

Hilkiah presented it to Shaphan who in turn brought to the King.

And think of the Blessings and the Curses laid out in Deuteronomy, where God foretold all the things that would come upon them if they disobeyed the Words of the Book.

Horrible judgements were assured to them if they ever turned to idolatry.

God promised that they would starve and have plagues come upon them, and that they would go into captivity eventually.

And as Shaphan read this to the King, he was cut to the heart with conviction, Josiah knew now, at the revelation of God's Word, that there was no way they could escape judgement for his father and grandfather's wickedness that they introduced to Israel.

Now, Josiah had been seeking the Lord for a while now, without the revelation of God's Word, and he has been making great strides spiritually for Judah.

He obeyed what little light that he had about the will of God, and he took those first steps of faith, and God met Him and began to reveal more to him.

You see it was in the midst of Josiah's obedience that the king discovered the Book of the Law.

Understand something tonight, we cannot simply know God's Truths, too many pride themselves in Bible Knowledge, but it is Bible Obedience that God is looking for.

It is when we obey God's ways that more revelation comes, it is one step of obedience to the next, and step by step God reveals Himself to us.

And now that God's Word is revealed, we see conviction, as the King tore his clothes in repentance.

And true spiritual conviction always leads to some kind of action.

Spiritual conviction gets the person passed the just being sorry part, and gets them into doing something about.

Paul illustrates this, in a correction to the church in Ephesus, he does not give them simply the 'don'ts' only but also the 'dos'.

Eph. 4:25-32 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. **26** "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, **27** nor give place to the devil. **28** Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. **29** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Josiah does not just tear his clothes and say I am sorry, but he appoints a delegation study the Book and to

find someone who could explain its meaning so they can obey.

We read now starting in verse 14...

14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. 15 Then she said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to Me, 16 "Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants — all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read — 17 because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands.

Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.'" 18 But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, in this manner you shall speak to him, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: "Concerning the words which you have heard — 19 because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you," says the Lord. 20 Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes

shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place.""" So they brought back word to the king.

We see here Hilkiah sought out a prophetess named Huldah.

Huldah gives God's message in 2 parts, first addressing the "man who sent the delegation," meaning Josiah as a common man before the Law.

Remember God's Word is no respecter of persons, it does not take into account titles, nobility, economic status, it equally addresses all humanity the same.

Josiah was not above God's Word.

And it is revealed that Judah has gone too far in their rebellion, and they cannot be helped at this point.

They have passed the point of no return, and all the calamity laid out in God's Word will come about.

We naturally cling to God's Promises, and there are precious promises that we love memorize and send cute little texts to other people.

We make neat pictures with them and put them on our Instagram.

But there are also terrible promises laid out in God's Word, and for those who live according to the flesh, and continually live in according to their sinful desires, there are intense consequences promised to them in God's Word.

Gal 6:7-8 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Those of you who come from the drug world know the toll it all takes on a person as they reap to their flesh, corruption quickly comes upon them.

Those who struggle with unforgiveness, even begin to bear the marks and scowls of bitterness, it becomes evident in their lives.

Our sins will reap some kind of consequence in our lives, if we continue in them, and mock the Grace of God.

So to the man Josiah, it is revealed it is too late, they have crossed the line, and judgement is inevitable.

However, the prophetess has a second part to Josiah the King, first was to Josiah the man and the nation, now to the King who has taken the spiritual climate of Judah very seriously, he personally is given a message, “because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Lord.... You shall be gathered to your grave in peace.”

So the nation will be judged, but this unavoidable judgement is stalled for the sake of his humility and repentance.

Many wonder today if our own nation has gone too far, if it is too late for us.

We are a nation much like Israel, founded upon dependence upon God, a nation that looked to God for its strength and for our help.

And God has lifted this nation up, made us a light upon the hill, all the world is drawn to it.

Yet now, in our strength we have grown independent from God, rejected His will for our nation, and we have enshrined so many different idols in our worship, perversion has been normalized, murder in the womb has been desensitized, and we have removed God from our schools, and what little left that is in our government is now on the chopping block of this cancel culture that has arisen today.

The only hope to forestall our own judgment is by turning back to God with all of our hearts, and really seeking Him in repentance and humility on a national level.

Of course this starts individually with each and every man and woman.

And it may be too late to completely avert the judgement, but we can forestall it, and perhaps forestall it for generations to come, if the Church awakes from its slumber, revival can come and change course.

We can be used in this, like this King Josiah was used to forestall the judgements that were promised the Nation of Israel.

This is our hope and prayer.

So, next we will see the many reforms that Josiah brought about during his godly reign.

Look now starting in verse 1 of chapter 23...

Josiah Restores True Worship(2 Chron. 34:29-35:19)

23:1 Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. 2 The king went up to the house of the Lord with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem — the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord.

3 Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to follow the Lord and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.

After the delegation revealed the prophetess' message, the king immediately called for the elders, priests and prophets, and the people of the land.

He shared the dire message with them and called them to enter into a covenant with the Lord.

And perhaps our nation is need of a similar renewing of the covenant as well.

I believe it must start within the church.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

There are times when a corporate renewal of our dedication to Christ is a necessary thing to do.

The leader of the Second Great Awakening in the United States, the Reverend Charles Finney had this to say about our culture and country in the late 1800s....

“Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits.

If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree.

If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it.

If the public press lacks moral discrimination, the pulpit is responsible for it.

If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it.

If the world loses its interest in religion, the pulpit is responsible for it.

If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it.

If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it.

Let us not ignore this fact, my dear brethren; but let us lay it to heart, and be thoroughly awake to our responsibility in respect to the morals of this nation.”

The Rev. Charles Finney (d. 1875)

What is happening in our culture today is because the church has lost its backbone.

I read this quote today... “The current political climate, while difficult, has been great for the church! How? It finally revealed whether your *ministry* is wise or simply knowledgeable, courageous or spineless, theological or cultural. Ultimately you are now beginning to see if your church is about biblical truth (which will be hated) or carnal entertainment (which will be celebrated). Loyalties will be clarified.” Dale Partridge

King Josiah simply read the Words of the Law to the people, and Josiah pled for obedience.

Understand every Revival in history was centered on God’s Word, and today’s weakness at the pulpit is the lack of God’s Word.

Dwight Moody once said, “Defend the Bible? You might as well try to defend a lion. All you have to do is open its cage. The lion will defend himself.”

You see, as King Josiah found out here, the Word of God simply needs to be unleashed, and when it is, it will bear the fruits necessary.

The Word of God when studied, obeyed, preached and taught can take care of things itself.

This is the church's responsibility, and how sad it is to look out and see the church's passions today are for worldly causes and it has forsaken God's Word.

Josiah brings them into a renewed covenant under the terms of God's Word, and next he will institute reforms in the Holy Land...

4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel.⁵ Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven. 6 And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the Lord, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. 7 Then he tore

down the ritual booths of the perverted persons that were in the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image. 8 And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were to the left of the city gate. 9 Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. 11 Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who was in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12 The altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron. 13 Then the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, which were on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth

the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon. 14 And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

15 Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image.

16 As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

17 Then he said, "What gravestone is this that I see?"

So the men of the city told him, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel."

18 And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

19 Now Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to

anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel. 20 He executed all the priests of the high places who were there, on the altars, and burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

So they get rid of all the paraphernalia of the false grotesque pagan worship that had been brought into the land, and even into the Temple by Manasseh under his evil rule.

They took them to burn all the way up at Bethel, in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, which has now gone into captivity.

They did this so that the ashes could not seep into the ground around Jerusalem.

They got rid of all the various forms of pagan worship, that of following the stars or zodiac which is completely abhorrent to the Lord.

I know many believers look at their horoscope, and are very concerned about their zodiac sign, but this should not be intermingled with Christianity.

They got rid of the perverted worship of Ashorem, and the pornographic poles used in that worship.

Also the prostitutes in verse 7 were dealt with, the word meaning “those practicing sodomy in religious rituals.”

They rid the land of the terrible worship of Molech, where they were burning their own children to death.

They got rid of the horses used to worship the sun.

According to ancient tradition the sun was carried by a chariot led by horses through the sky each day.

So they worshipped the sun with these horses, they were objects of veneration, and they were removed by Josiah.

They used bones of humans to defile the false religious places to show disdain and defilement of that which led people away from Yahweh.

Now, in verse 16 we see something noteworthy mentioned, that it was prophesied by a prophet that Josiah would do these things.

Now, understand we have to go 325 years prior to this in 1 Kings Chapter 13... to the beginning of Jeroboam's reign when he introduced the golden calves and false altars, a prophet came on the scene.

1 Kings 13:2-3 Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'" **3** And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the Lord has spoken: Surely the altar

shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out."

And this is 300 years before Josiah is even born.

How could this prophet know this would happen, is this is too specific of a prophecy?

Understand something here as well, they had only found the Book of the Law, the first 5 books of the Bible, Josiah perhaps did not even know this prophecy to fulfill it.

And this is God's Sure Word! Understand when God says something is going to happen it will happen.

Of course His Promises are not on our timeline, everything is for Him and unto His glory.

325 years is a longtime to wait to fulfill a promise.

We usually read the Bible, thinking firstly how it will affect me, but the True Way to read and know the Bible is on how it will Glorify God.

Christianity is not a selfish religion where we believe and live for our immediate needs and desires, ours is a longsuffering religion, where we are too look beyond ourselves, and how to carry on God's Legacy unto the next generation and even further.

God is looking down from a timeless heaven, and we tend to see everything according to our own timeline.

We think if God has not answered our prayers in a week then we have been forsaken by Him.

But our answers may come years down the road.

Maybe you are praying for a dead beat husband right now, and it feels futile, maybe you are ready to give up, and tuck and run, but right now is not God's timing, maybe it is a year from now, that He will answer your prayers, and then it will be perfect timing.

God's Word and His Promises will come to pass, but on His timing.

So, now that the false worship was dealt with, Josiah will now bring back one of the most important feasts to the Lord their God.

21 Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." 22 Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the Lord in Jerusalem. 24 Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. 25 Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart,

with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

King Josiah really is following the example of Hezekiah here.

By reinstating the Passover, it would remind the Jewish people of their national origins at the Exodus out of Egypt.

It would remind them how God delivered them from the bondage in Egypt.

That was where God separated them out unto Himself in a display of His Amazing Grace.

They were God's Chosen People, a people designated to enter into a covenant with God, and set apart to be used by God, and to bring God Glory.

Hezekiah was forced to celebrate the Passover during the second month, but Josiah celebrated it on its correct date in the first month.

Josiah's Passover would offer twice the amount of sacrifices.

Josiah read and obeyed God's Word precisely.

God's people really need occasions like this when they can celebrate and remember all the Goodness of God and this wonderful fellowship we have with Him.

It is good to have times of reflection, and joyful hearts, today the communion table is a place of reflection and remembering all that Jesus has done for us to be able

to have this relationship with our God, this is the New Covenant given in His Blood.

Look now starting in verse 26...

Impending Judgment on Judah

26 Nevertheless the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. 27 And the Lord said, "I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'"

The judgement is unavoidable at this time, but it is prolonged under Josiah...

Verse 28 now...

Josiah Dies in Battle(2 Chron. 35:20-36:1)

28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 29 In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo when he confronted him. 30 Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

Josiah had no mandate to meddle in the affairs of Egypt and Babylon, and here at the end of his life, we see he got ahead of God, and he paid the ultimate price for it.

He is killed, after incredible reforms were made, and the death of Josiah is going to reveal a tragic reality about the Nation of Judah.

Although their leader was passionate for righteousness, we see for the multitudes it was only a surface religion, they pretended revival, and now that Josiah is gone from his restraining ministry, the people will return to those detestable idols at breakneck speed.

What a blessing it is to have righteous men and women in leadership, guiding the nation, but woe to that nation who elects for themselves evil rulers.

We now enter into the Dark Ages of Judah, now that the incredible light of Josiah's reign is snuffed out.

Starting in verse 31...

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz(2 Chron. 36:1-4)

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in

Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34 Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Pharaoh took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and he died there.

Judah immediately loses its independence, and Josiah fatal error of attacking Pharaoh Necho was the straw that broke the camel's back.

His son only rules for 3 months before he is taken captive where he will die in Egypt.

His brother is placed in that position by the Pharaoh, who changed his name from Eliakim to Jehoiakim, and placed a heavy tax on the nation as we see now starting in verse 35...

Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah(2 Chron. 36:5-8)

35 So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Necho. 36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiiah of Rumah. 37 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.

So corruption sets in again as the nation is taking its final plunge into judgment.

It is a tragedy when a nation forsakes God.

**Prov. 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin is a reproach to any people.**

You see the tragedy lies in the fact that if a nation will worship God, and serve God, they will be blessed by God.

Church understand our own nation is engaged in an incredible spiritual battle between light and darkness.

There is a pull for us to turn to the gods of our culture, the gods of pleasure, the gods of power, the gods of sex, or of materialism.

These false gods are weakening our nation, and leading to the downfall of our great nation.

I read an article today about Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and the liberal media wants to disqualify him because he is open about his faith in Jesus.

Our forefathers would be for the most part disqualified for office if that was the intended standard.

No, we are nation built upon Biblical and Christian values, one nation under God, trusting God, depending on God for our success.

Today, this has but all been erased, and we are at a crossroads as a church.

Most of the church today has bowed to the culture, and is whimpering in fear of the culture.

But we are called to be the Salt and Light, the influencers of the culture.

If there is any hope for our country, the church has to stop being influenced and pushed around by our world, and we need to renew our covenant with our God, we need to repent and turn back wholeheartedly to our God.

When we are filled with His Spirit and His Wisdom, we then will be the world changing influence we are called to be.

There is a battle going on, and we need to be engaged and in the fight for Truth.

We have historic times just ahead of us, I pray that we do not take our responsibility lightly.

God placed you in this time in history in this country, in this state for a purpose, He has called you for such a time as this, this is our time to rise to the occasion, and allow God to use us.

But we must first approach Him like King Josiah, with a heart that is tender, and humbled before the Lord and we need to have a heart and mind willing to obey all that He asks of us.

Amen...

Let's pray...