

Josiah, Revival King

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[0:00] 2 Chronicles 34 And we'll stand for the reading of God's Word, shall we?

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left.

For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places and the groves and the carved images and the molten images.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for your Word today, that we can read it and heed it. Lord, let it work, let it do its work, we pray, in every heart and life we ask. In Jesus' name, amen.

Please be seated. I'm eating my way. Josiah, he was just eight. How many eight-year-olds have we got here today? Thank you.

[1:13] I can remember when I was eight, I came over from England when I was eight years old, eight and a half. Seems quite a long time ago now.

But think back to when you were eight, to be thrust on the throne like Josiah was. And we can read about Josiah in these passages here. Josiah was a godly king.

He was one of a few godly kings, one of what some have called the revival kings. The revival kings, because revival happened in his reign when Josiah was a king.

At just eight years old, he had a passion for the Lord. He feared the Lord and he led the nation to righteousness and to revival. It tells us there that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. That which was right or that which is straight, that which is true, that which is right in the sight of the Lord. He wasn't moved by popular opinion.

[2:12] He wasn't moved by what was right in the sight of the press of the day, of the political correctness of the time, if there was such a thing. He wasn't moved by what was right in terms of worldly thinking, but he was moved by what was right in the sight of the Lord.

And so should we. So should we be moved by that. That that is our guiding light. That which is right in the sight of the Lord. And he did not waver. We see that he did not waver through his kingdom, through his reign.

And there's some key things that Josiah got right that we can learn from today in 2010. And we can still use it in 2011. Some key things that he got right.

Simple things, yet vital. He determined to do what was right. What was right. Even though his own father and his grandfather had set themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord.

Josiah did what was right. He was not deterred by the circumstances. He was not deterred by those things that might have guided his life on a different course. He wasn't raised in a godly home, but he determined to do that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

[3:26] He did not fire the path of rebellion like the wicked things, the wicked kings before him. He chose rather to serve God. And some of the things that we can see in Josiah's life that we can learn from.

We can see them in verse 3. In verse 3, one of the things that he did, he got to prayer. He got to prayer. In verse 3, we see that he began to seek after God.

He began to seek after God. And so should we, brothers and sisters. We should seek, as the Lord Jesus urges us, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Seek that first. Seek God first. Seek in prayer to find God's will, to find God's way for your life and to follow it. And what did Josiah do?

We see in the light passage of 2 Kings 22, verse 6, that he ordered that the temple would be restored. He ordered the cleansing of the temple, that the temple should be cleansed.

[4:27] The temple had fallen into a state of neglect. It was neglected and covered in dust and dirt and rubbish.

It was neglected. It needed to be restored. And while this cleaning work was going on, a wonderful discovery was made. The high priest, Hilkiah, found the book of the law.

He found the book. That's the second thing. First, he got to prayer. And secondly, he got the book. He got the book. These are steps to revival that we see in the life of Josiah, the revival king.

One of them in the word of God. He got the book. Now, it's a reproach, really, that Hilkiah, the high priest, he'd forgotten the word of God. What a tragic thing that the high priest of Israel forgot the word of God.

It had got lost somewhere. Maybe in the busyness of other things. The preoccupation with other things took the place of the word of God such that the word of God had become so neglected that it was just covered in dust or dirt or rubbish.

[5:37] It was somehow put in some forgotten place, some nook or cranny that nobody knew where it was. And the high priest, he didn't obviously refer to it enough to even notice that he'd forgotten the word of God.

What a tragic thing. What a tragic thing for you, for me, that we would neglect the word of God, that you would forget the word of God, that you would put it on the shelf and let it gather dust and not let it enter into your heart.

Here we see that it was rediscovered amongst all the dust and dirt of the temple. Think of it for a moment. A temple without a Bible. A church without a Bible.

We're seeing that today. We're seeing Christians without Bibles. We're seeing preachers without Bibles. We're seeing sermons without Bibles. And we wonder, why no revival?

Because we've forgotten the book. We've forgotten the book. We need to get the book as Josiah did. And we read there from verse 15 of 2 Chronicles 34.

[6:41] And Helgiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, Listen to what he said. I have found the book. I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.

And Helgiah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the king. He would have, I'd imagine, carried that book trembling. Carried that book reverently.

Like I've heard it said in places in Africa. Where they carry the word of God. With reverence. With fear. With love. With regard. The holy scriptures.

The word of God. It's precious. It should be treasured. It should be adored. Not neglected as it was in those days. And they delivered the book to the king.

What about you? Have you discovered the life changing message of the Bible? Have you discovered this truth for yourself? What about you today?

[7:37] Have you neglected the book? What a great shame it would be when we neglect the book. I know I've said this before.

B-I-B-L-E. Basic instructions before leaving earth. This is the manual for life. This is the guidebook that our maker's instructions for living has granted to us.

Will we neglect it or will we find it? From verse 18 we read, Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book.

And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the law that he rent his clothes. When he heard the words.

When he heard the book. When he heard the scriptures. When he heard the message from God. He tore his clothes in repentance. In contrition. In conviction.

[8:38] As the word of God worked. And he repented. He wept. Will we regard the word of God? Or will we neglect it? I was challenged of late to read.

A brother. Some would know. Joseph Stephen wrote. How the government of our land. Needs to be governed by God's law.

By God's word. The government of our nation. Would it be wonderful if the government of our nation was a godly one? If the word of God was sense of stage.

It was the guiding point. The government of our nation. What about then of the government of our churches? Shouldn't the word of God govern what we do?

How we worship? How we serve him? How we honour him? How we honour him? The word should govern our churches. The word should govern our families.

[9:39] And the government of our families. Fathers and mothers would be governed by the word of God. They govern their children. According to the word of God. I'm encouraged by homeschooling families.

The families who care about the truth. That they want to impart it to the next generation. That the word will guide how we live. And the government of ourselves.

The government of individuals. The word of God should govern our choices. Our actions. Our eternity. Should be governed by God's word.

God's truth. We need to get the book. And what did Josiah do? He recognised his neglect of the book. He recognised his neglect of the word of God.

How we need to renew a love for the scriptures. To hear the book again. To get back to the Bible. Verse 21. It goes on what Josiah did.

[10:35] He said. Verse 21. Verse 21. He commanded. Go. Enquire of the Lord for me. And for them that are left in Israel and in Judah. Concerning the words of the book.

That is found. For great is the wrath of the Lord. That is poured out upon us. Because our fathers have not kept the word. Of the Lord. To do after all.

That is written in this book. He recognised that the fathers. The ones. The kings that had gone before. The wicked kings. The ungodly kings. They neglected the book. The high priest had neglected the book.

The people had neglected the book. How we need to hear the word of the Lord. To hear the word of the Lord. This book has explosive power.

This is a forbidden book. In many lands on planet earth today. Many Christians get scarce hold of the book. Because it is a book.

[11:35] It is a book that the government of their nations hates. Because it is soul saving truth. It is liberating. It sets men free.

From bondage and sin. And the prophet declared in Jeremiah 23 verse 29. Is not my word like as a fire.

Like as a hammer. And like a hammer. That breaketh the rock in pieces. It is not my word like as a fire.

Like as a hammer. We need to get the fire. We need to get the hammer. Of the word. Let it work. We need to get the book. Another thing that Josiah got.

Was a heart right with God. He got to prayer. He got the book. He got his heart right. He got his heart right. We read there in 2 Chronicles 34 verse 27.

[12:35] What had happened? Josiah had humbled himself. He heard the book. He heard the message. He heard the truth of the soul saving word.

The message of God to man. He heard it. And he realised his state. He realised his condition. He realised his utter lack. His utter lack of truth.

Of salvation. Of life. Without the book. He realised his need of repentance. He realised his need of sin to be dealt with. And he humbled himself.

He tore his clothes. In contrition. In godly sorrow. In obedience. In repentance. Before the Lord. The word. Got into his heart. And his heart was tender.

His heart was tender. Toward God. How is your heart. Today. If you were to go. To the great heart doctor. The great physician. The Lord Jesus Christ himself.

[13:29] And he was to put. His stethoscope. As it were. Upon the heart. Upon the inner man. That is within you. Is your heart right with God. The bible says.

That a man's heart. By nature is. Deceitful. And desperately wicked. Who can know it. That's our natural state. That's how we born into this world.

With a heart that is deceitful. That is desperately wicked. And we can choose to. Harden our hearts. To harden our hearts. To put up. The doors.

To put up. The obstacles. For God to work. To enter in. As Hebrews 3.8 says. Harden not your hearts. Harden not your hearts. Hebrews 3.13.

But exhort one another. While it is. Called today. Lest any of you. Be hardened. Through the deceitfulness. Of sin. We know. That for any of us.

[14:25] Sin is deceitful. And sin can harden us. It can block. God's moving. That softening. That he wants to. Do in our heart. We can block that.

We can resist that. We can grieve the Holy Spirit. We can harden our hearts. Through the deceitfulness. Of sin. Josiah got his heart right. He got his heart right. The others before him. They'd hardened their hearts. They'd stiffened their necks. They'd resisted the Holy Spirit. They'd disobeyed the word. They'd put up the. Walls. So God could not enter in. And Josiah sought the prophetess. There. And the prophetess. Told him that the Lord would bless his humility.

And his tender heartedness. And she said to him. Through the messenger. In 2 Chronicles 34. Verse 27. She prophesied. Because thine heart was tender.

[15:22] And thou didst humble thyself before God. When thou heardest his words against this place. And against the inhabitants thereof. And humbledst thyself before me. And didst rend thy clothes.

And weep before me. I have even hurt thee also. Saith the Lord. He'd torn his clothes. He'd humbled himself. He'd wept.

For his sin. For his nation's sin. And God says. I have heard you. I have heard you. When our hearts are tender. When our hearts are softened.

When our hearts are laid open. Laid bare. As we mourn for our sin. In repentance. And turning from it. We find his grace. We find his favour.

We find his reception. And. Josiah called the nation back. To rededicate. To return. To return. Back to God. And friends today.

[16:18] Even now. In this day. When the word is heard. You can soften your heart. Or you can harden it. You can. You can choose to harden your heart to God.

And say. I don't want a bar of this. Or you can soften your heart. Ask God to soften your heart today. Ask God to work. Within your heart. As Josiah did for himself.

And for his nation. And they acted upon. The burden of sin. Their soul's great need. And they responded. In humility. In brokenness. And in repentance.

And verse 13. It goes on. Josiah assembled the people. He assembled the people. All the inhabitants there. All the people. Great and small. And he read in their ears.

The words of the book. He read in their ears. The words of the book. Of the covenant. That was found. In the house of the Lord. And that's what we want to do. As a church. To read the words of the book.

[17:15] In the ears of the small. And the great. In the ears of all. That God's word can work. He read the word. Before the nation. He read the book.

To the nation of Israel. And they recommitted their lives to God. He got to prayer. He got to the book. He got his heart right. And he got committed.

He got committed. We see. In verse 31. They stood with all the people. And they made a covenant. They made a commitment. Before the Lord. To walk after the Lord.

And to keep his commandments. And his testimonies. And his statutes. With all his heart. And with all his soul. To perform the words of the covenant. Which are written in the book.

And he made the people. To stand. To this covenant. To this commitment. To their God. This was a wholehearted commitment. A wholehearted covenant.

[18:09] A dedication that was made. And friends. For you. For me. We can make that commitment again. Perhaps you've made that commitment. As a young person. Perhaps you can make it again.

You know. Some people. I know. I've heard it so often. At this time of year. New Year's. What do they call them? New Year's resolutions. It only takes a few days.

For it all to fall away. You know. Someone was telling me. I'm going to make a New Year's resolution. To come to church. Every week. And I just wonder. How long. How long will that last?

And. But I mean. That. But. What about a commitment. A covenant before the Lord. A recommitment. It's never. It's never. It's never too often. That we can make a recommitment. I don't think. Don't you think? Yeah. It's never too often. That we can recommit. Our hearts to him. Daily. Day by day.

[19:05] Moment by moment. To have that tender heartedness. To have that recommitment. That covenant. That dedication unto him. That humility again.

That brokenness again. That rededication again. And that's what Josiah had. With the people. And another thing that Josiah did.

He got rid of the idols. He got rid of the sin. In 2 Chronicles 34. 33. It says.

Josiah took away. All the abominations. Out of all the countries. That pertained to the children of Israel. And made all that were present in Israel. To serve.

Even to serve. The Lord their God. And all his days they departed not. From following the Lord. The God of their fathers. He took away. All the abominations.

[20:01] All the abominations. What are the abominations today? That we can take away. I was just reading lately. A challenging article about things that people might think.

Oh come on preacher. You're making too much of something so harmless as that. As harmless as a Disney movie. As harmless as a Disney movie. Surely not.

Got to be kidding. But I read this article about a recent Disney movie. And I haven't watched it myself to be fully informed.

And nor do I wish to really. But for example this Disney movie called Tangled. Tangled. It retells the story of Rapunzel. And the long hair. And that folklore kind of tale.

But at the core of this movie's theme. Is that the parents. Are hated. And disrespected. The mother is hated.

[21:02] And cast as a type of. An evil person. That this daughter can willfully rebel against. And go willy nilly doing her own thing.

Running off. Without a thoughtful respect to her parents. And this is the core of this movie. And there's many other things we can say about Disney movies. And such like.

But sometimes there's an ungodly content. There's an ungodly message. And it's a fundamental in God's word. That we should honour our mother and father. We should honour them.

We should respect them. We should love them. And we should obey them. And yet. We're hearing such things as that. In modern movies. And such like.

We need to be very guarded. About such things today. And how thorough Josiah was. He was thorough. He turned to the Lord. With all his heart. All his soul.

[22:00] With all his might. As the light passage says. In 2 Kings 23. He turned to the Lord. Wholeheartedly. And what did he do?

We read in 2 Chronicles 34. That he took away all the abominations. And the light passage too. In 2 Kings 23. It talks about the abominations that Josiah took away.

And what did he do? He destroyed the altars of Baal. He smashed the idols. So completely. That he pulverised them. To powder. To dust. So they could never be used again.

He polluted the altars that were used to worship Baal. With the dead priest bones. To make them unfit for worship. He tore down the houses. Of the homosexual temple prostitutes.

He did away with the child sacrifice. He did away with those who dealt with psychic things. With astrology. With spirits. With unclean spirits. It was a total purge of evil.

[22:59] Across the land. As they read the word of God. They heeded it. They recognised their sinful ways. And they repented of their sins. And they dealt with the idols.

They got rid of the abominations. Friends today. What of your life? What of your life? What are the abominations in your life? What are the abominations in your home?

Proverbs 6.16 tells us of some. That our Lord regards as an abomination. It writes there in Proverbs 6.16. These six things, thought the Lord hate.

Yea, seven are an abomination unto him. An abomination. It means it's a detested thing. It's a hateful thing to God. Some of those things are a proud look.

A lying tongue. A hand that shed innocent blood. A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations. Feet that be swift in running to mischief.

[23:58] A false witness that speaketh lies. And he that sought discord among the brethren. These are things we need to be guarded about. Brothers and sisters. A proud look. A lying tongue.

God says it's an abomination. Let's be wary about those abominations in our own lives. A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations. Feet that run to mischief.

Ask the Lord to take away the abominations. That reformation can come as we heed the word. And friends today, Josiah's testimony is one that should speak to us now.

In the present day. In the here and now. That God's power can work through you. Through me. In his power. And majesty. In his holiness.

And glory. And in chapter 35. The last thing that Josiah did. In chapter 35. Josiah restored the biblical worship.

[24:54] The biblical worship. The Passover had been neglected. The Passover had been neglected. And what does that speak to us of? The cross. The cross.

The cross. How can we miss that most fundamental of things? The cross. We're not talking about some wooden cross on the wall.

Some crucifix around your neck. We're talking about that rugged, rough, deadly piece of torture instrument. That our Lord was agonised upon.

That he was excruciated upon. Crucified upon. For you. For me. Josiah recognised that they had to get back to the cross. He had to reinstate the Passover.

As that commemoration of Calvary. In foresight. As the people returned to the word. They realised their need of redemption from sin.

[25:52] They realised their need of God's saving act. Of the cross. Of the blood shed. And it was said this was the greatest Passover since Samuel's days.

Greater than David's. Greater than Solomon's. Greater than all of that. Greater than all of those Passovers of those days. An enormous celebration as the Passover was sacrificed.

And friends we must get back to the cross as Josiah did. How did his life end? Sadly he was killed in battle. After neglecting a warning from God.

That was that he would not. He should not foolishly enter into a battle that wasn't his. You know God's word says it warts and all. But even Josiah made some errors too.

But whatever your state and standing today. Think of it. Just to recap quickly. Can we be like Josiah today? Can our church, can our... Each one of us be like Josiah.

[26:54] To have... A love for that which is right in the sight of the Lord. Not right in the sight of men. But what is right in his sight. Can we get back to the book?

We must. We must not neglect it. Daily. Yearn for it. Seek it. Obey it. Get back to the book. Don't neglect it.

Get your heart right. Get it tender. Not hardened. Deal with sin. Don't disregard it. Don't have those abominations. Those idols.

Those things that take his place. Destroy them and pulverise them to powder. He got to prayer. He got to the word. He got his heart right. He got rid of sin.

Of abominations. And he got back to the cross. And so should we. If we want revival. We'll see. As Josiah. One of the revival kings. He had those fundamentals.

[27:50] And so must we. I love to tell the story. Of hunting things above. Let's go.