

Josiah

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[0:00] The nation was corrupted. It was a turbulent time.! Judah was under God's judgment.

! Its people had forsaken God.! 31 years.

Now look at this. Imagine one of the 8 year olds amongst us. I don't know if there's any. Is there any 8 year olds amongst us just now? They're probably on the Sunday school.

But imagine one of the 8 year olds. Instead of going into grade 3. They become our nation's leader. That's what happened to Josiah.

Josiah. Josiah. He had a tough childhood. His father King Ammon. Had been assassinated. By his own servants.

[1:08] And now Josiah. Suddenly became king. Who knows if he would be the next target. For the assassins. The life of Josiah helps us to answer the question.

How do we live for Christ. In a hostile culture. Judah was a nation that was far, far from God. A land filled with idols.

And now Josiah, the boy king. Takes up the throne. Imagine that. 8 years old. And Josiah, he had no godly role model to follow.

Not in his own immediate family. But God used this boy. This little boy. To guide Judah back to him. In its last great revival.

And here's how we could see how a young believer can stand up. No matter what obstacles they face. What was it that made the difference?

[2:09] In 2 Chronicles 34, 27. It reads that God saw that Josiah's heart was tender. That was the thing. Josiah's heart was tender.

We'll get to that. Josiah shows us how to love God. And love God's word. How to get rid of what's hindering that walk with him.

That he wants us to have. And Josiah shows us. He shows us how to love God. How to follow him. So what makes a tender heart?

We're going to have a look through some of the record here about Josiah. What was it that showed his heart was different? That it was tender. That it was soft.

That it was sensitive to God. And we read on verse 2. This is 2 Chronicles 34, verse 2 of Josiah. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

[3:08] And he walked in the ways of David, his father. And declined neither to the right hand nor to the left. So his forebear, David, it wasn't his immediate father.

But one of his fathers up the line. He walked in the ways of David. Notice Josiah did what was right. He did what was right. He did the right thing in the sight of the Lord. Young person here today. You don't have to follow your family's ways. If you've got ungodly parents, ungodly forebears, if your mum and dad don't know the Lord, you don't have to follow their ways.

You can break the mould. Amen? And that's true, I know for some of you. You think, well, I don't have a godly mum or a godly dad. You can break that mould.

You don't have to be. You don't have to follow in their footsteps. You can break the mould. And that's what Josiah did. Josiah didn't go along with his nation's anti-God ways and its godless choices.

[4:13] He didn't go along with the crowd. He wanted to please God as the first and foremost thing with his life. He wanted his life to please God. And so can you.

So can you. Now we're talking about Josiah, but this is for you. Because the Bible gives us these human stories and we can put ourselves in their shoes.

So it says, He walked in the ways of David. He walked in the ways of David. It's talking about lifestyle.

Walking in the ways. It's talking about lifestyle. And we think of David. What does the Bible tell us about the ways of David? Of David it says, He was a man after God's own heart.

That's 1 Samuel 13, 14. The Lord had sought him a man after his own heart. 1 Samuel 13, 14. So think of David, King David.

[5:10] What an example he was. David was a humble worshipper of God. He was devoted to the word of God. Devoted to prayer. To worship. Regular worship.

And this was Josiah's life too. He turned his heart to the Lord like David. He went God's way. He walked in the ways of David, his father.

But what's more, he didn't waver. We know David had his faults. Just like all of us, David had ways that you wouldn't want to follow David. In what David did, on occasion, what was different about Josiah was, he walked in the ways of David, his father, but he declined not, neither to the right hand nor to the left.

He didn't waver. What about us? Do we follow the bad examples of others? We could think, you know, my father, my mother, you know, my grandfather, my grandmother.

Maybe they weren't always the best example. My family, my friends. Who are you following? Whose footsteps are you walking in?

[6:22] And when you see they're walking the wrong way, rather, break the mould. Be prepared, be willing to be different, to follow the Lord and those who follow him.

Josiah made up his mind that way, that he would stand true and strong. Josiah did not turn to the right hand, nor to the left. It's like it says in Proverbs 4, 25 through 27.

It says, Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left.

Remove thy foot from evil. Now, these are good words for us, aren't they? In other words, be a straight on Christian, straight down the line. Be dinky dine, be fair dinkum. Don't deviate, don't dilly dally, don't mess with this and that.

Be straight on Christian, straight down the line. And Josiah was like that. He didn't turn to the right hand, or to the left. Josiah was wholehearted. He was full on.

[7:27] And so you can be. So too can you be. No compromise. Now, you might think, wow, that's a bit hard for me. God will help you. If he helped Josiah to be full on, to be straight on, he can help you to be.

Because these human stories, are humans, just like you and me. God can help you to be like Josiah, in these things, wholehearted. Now, in the first part of verse 3, it tells us further about, Josiah's growth, and in his spiritual life.

We see, verse 3, the first part, it says, for in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek, after the God, of David, his father.

Here he was, he was just 16 now. At still, a very young age, 16. It says that Josiah began, to seek God.

He actively sought God, God's direction. Now, young person, you know, you might be a bit older than 16, but this applies to you too. Amen? You can do that too.

[8:34] Amen? You can do that too. You can be like Josiah, he began to seek, after God. He set his eyes, on that one goal, to so live, that God would be pleased, with him, with all his ways.

And his seeking God, it wasn't an on again, off again thing. He sought after God, with that tender heart. He hungered and thirsted, for God.

And he longed for that truth, that life transforming truth. He wanted to get right with God, and to keep right with God. And we'd do well to be, like Josiah, wouldn't we?

While he was yet young, while he was yet young, you might say, I'm a young person, in the scheme of things here, I know, there's only so many, that don't have grey hair, or at least grey hair, they're not dying.

You might be one of those ones, you haven't got grey hairs yet. While he was yet young, he began to seek, after God. Wouldn't that be a good thing, for you young person, for all of us, isn't it?

[9:44] To seek after God, to set your eyes on that. What about us? Josiah longed for truth, to get right with God. And now at the age 20, it says in the next part, of verse 3, he's now 20.

In the 12th year, he began to purge Judah, and Jerusalem, from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. So, it says here, here he is, he's now 20 years old. And what does he do? He begins to rid the land, of the idols, that held the people, of Judah captive. Those idols, that were there, holding them in bondage, the idols, the false gods. He began to purge, in other words, clean up, Judah, and Jerusalem. He began to clear out, all of these idols, these images. Josiah hated, the spiritual condition, of Judah. Josiah saw, that his beloved nation, had fallen deep, into sin. Judah had become, a pagan nation. And on every mountain top, and hill top, they had this, idolatrous shrines.

[10:58] And he destroyed it, it says he destroyed, those high places, where the people, sacrificed to false gods. Why is Josiah, set about, cleaning up, everything.

Cleaning up the cities, cleaning up, the communities, cleaning up the homes, where these images were. And just clearing them all out, and getting rid of them.

And we read on verse 4, it says, and they break down, the altars of Balaam, these false bales. They break down the altars, in his presence, in Josiah's presence.

And the images, that were on high above them, he cut them down. And the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, says he break in pieces, and made dust of them.

And strode it, upon the graves of them, that had sacrificed, to answer them. So what a picture here, this is violent stuff here.

[12:00] He smashed, all of these false idols, the graven, and molten images, of Baal, and Moloch. I know, we talked about it, on the Wednesday night, how the Protestants, would smash, these statues.

They might have been, beautiful looking statues, and images, and icons. When revival, when reformation came, they knew that they were, wrong. And they destroyed them.

What a picture it was, in Josiah's day. Maybe these images, were beautiful. People would carve them, intricately, and they were glorious. People bowed down to them, and paid homage to them. And they were precious to them. But Josiah saw those images, for what they were. They were, to the false gods. They were, idols.

And he break them in pieces, smashed them, to smithereens. And he, made dust of them. These graven, and molten images.

[13:01] Josiah recognized, that he not only, needed to close down, the pagan altars, but that every reminder, of them, was to be, utterly destroyed. So he made dust of them, and he threw the dust, on the graves, of the idol worshippers.

So it was, essentially, defiling the graves, of those who had, sacrificed to them. And it says, that he also, killed the priests, that had sacrificed, to these idols.

And the bones, of the priests, who had served the idols, in this idolatrous worship, he, he, he destroyed, sorry, he destroyed them.

And he, and he put these, bones, on the idolatrous altars, so that the altars, became unclean, and defiled, so they would not, be used again.

And he crushed the idols, to powder. Notice he didn't, just leave it to others. Notice it says, it was in his presence. He was there. Imagine having a king, like that. Imagine a prime minister, like that.

[14:00] That he wanted, to preside over the destruction, of the false gods. To have a prime minister, that wanted to preside, over the destruction, of that which is false, and ungodly, and abominable.

Instead, we've got a prime minister, who can't even marry, the woman he's sleeping with. That's the kind of prime minister, we've got. God help us. But, Josiah was different. Josiah was different.

Notice he didn't, just leave it to others. He made sure, that he was there. He was personally involved. He was present, when they broke down, the altars of the Baals, and hewed down their images. He took it seriously.

And so can you. This was dramatic. This was a forceful, turning away from sin. What about us? Is our heart tender, like Josiah's? Do we recognise, those false gods, those false things, in our lives?

Is our heart tender, such that we see, this exceeding sinfulness, of sin, that we commit, to getting rid of it, completely, totally, utterly, all the God substitutes.

[14:59] When we look at the word, images, or idols, it's God substitutes, isn't it? What's a God substitute, in your life? What is it? We too, must cut down everything, cut down everything, that keeps us, from true worship.

Cut it down, smash it up, grind it to powder, whatever it is, that's hindering, your walk with God. That's an idol to you. That's an image. That's a false God. That's a God substitute.

Josiah did this, throughout all the land, it says, he did it thoroughly, and at last the land was clean. So this destruction, of idolatry, it speaks to us.

There's a breaking down, of the altars, of the false gods. What about us? Can we identify, and confront, areas of sin, in our own life, the false gods, that take, our Lord's rightful place, things we need, to sort out.

Well, we take steps, to remove the idols, those distractions, I don't know for you, what it is, that might be an idol, that might be a God substitute.

[16:04] Now some people, virtually worship the sport, they play, don't they? Let's be honest. They're so devoted. I love, you know, sometimes when we come to church, and we sing, it might be pouring with rain, but they're out there, on the field, practicing, kicking that ball, through the goals.

You think, they're so devoted, such, such faithful worshipers, they're faithful worshipers, they're faithful, practicing, numbers of nights, of the week, you know, and then they've got, the game day, and the whole weekend, they drive, kilometers, to go and play the game.

What, devotion, what, what worship, they render. Now, you might say, oh, playing sports, not a problem for me, that's fine, it's up to you, your conviction, I'm not bagging, anyone here today, I'm just using that, as a kind of picture, an example, of how we can love something, so much, and yet, it just takes over, doesn't it?

What about us? What are the things, in our lives, that we love so much, that we put so much time into? Will we take some steps, to remove the idols? Is our heart tender, towards our God?

That's the point, can we seek his forgiveness? Can we seek out, those idols of our life, that control our lives, and fully dispose of them? Josiah turned his attention, to the temple, next, and this is, now at the age of 26, we read on verse 8, the temple was in this state, of neglect, and Josiah now, at the age of 26, he refurbished the temple, it says verse 8, now in the 18th year, of his reign, when he had purged the land, and he got rid of the idols, and the house, he sent Shaphan, the son of Azaliah, and Messiah, the governor of the city, and Joah, the son of Joahaz, the recorder, he says he sent them, to repair, the house of the Lord, his God, so here was the temple, of the day, it had fallen into disuse, it had not been attended to, some 250 years, since King Joash, so this temple, was just, starting to look, pretty, uncared for, and not used, and so Josiah, he ordered the builders, to come, to make the repairs, and verse 12, it says, the people worked faithfully, it wasn't just the king, or the priest, it was everyone, the people, the men, the people, it was everyone's job, it's the same with church, isn't it, our church fellowship, it's not the one or two, that it falls on their shoulders, that's not God's will, or plan, it's all of us, we're all in this together, that's how church is meant to be, that every one of us, has something to give, to be, to be a part, and so they all mucked in, they worked faithfully,

[19:00] Josiah's heart, was tender towards God, he saw that the worship of God, was neglected, he saw this temple, it had fallen into disrepair, what about us, are the things in our life, in our spiritual life, that's fallen into disrepair, have we forsaken, the place of prayer, have we forsaken, the place of fellowship, what of our place of worship, is it covered in dust, and cobwebs, I know there's one of our number, who's taken it on himself, to take some particular time, to clean up the place, mind you yesterday, I saw some cobwebs, so he missed those, but no, there's plenty of cobwebs, if you look carefully enough, but imagine this temple, 250 years of cobwebs, that would have needed, some work wouldn't it, but what about, spiritually speaking, what of the place of prayer, what of the place of worship, and it's not so much the building, but it's

that place of worship, isn't it, that worshipful place, have we neglected, the house of worship, and of course, your body is a temple, so it's even more, that we should have a heart tender, towards the worship, of our Lord, such that we want to repair, what we've neglected, so in Josiah's day, the temple, is a kind of picture, of the spiritual life, that was in neglect, and next up, something wonderful happened, in Josiah's life, while repairing the temple,

Hilkiah the priest, found the book, we read that in verse 14, so I'm touching on, just some key verses here, verse 14, and when they brought out, the money that was brought, into the house, they collected some money, to provide for the materials, for the repair of the house, and it says, Hilkiah the priest, found a book of the law, of the Lord, given by Moses, and Hilkiah answered, and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book, of the law, in the house of the Lord, you know, Eureka, I found it, and Hilkiah delivered the book, to Shaphan, so the book, the book they're talking about, of course, it would have been a scroll, it was the book of the law, it was God's word, it was the scriptures, this book had been forgotten, in some old, disused room, perhaps it had been placed there, as a way of protecting it, as a hiding place, from those who wanted to destroy it, and it says, the book of the law, this book that had been misplaced, in the temple, it had been carelessly mislaid, possibly thrown in a corner, like some Christians, treat their Bible today, isn't it, chuck it in the corner, and wait till Sunday, to get it out, dusted off again, now that's how some people, treat the Bible, yet God protected his word, and they carried it to the king, now I know, my dad tells the stories in, is it Nairobi, where, you know, they brought the scriptures, because they carried the scriptures, like this, it's almost like, this is, like, like the wedding rings, at the wedding, you know, this is, this is like, the crown jewels, they brought it to the preacher, and they treated it, with reverence, and honour, and trembling at the word, and so should we, shouldn't we, the word of God, that they carried it, to the king, they delivered the book, ultimately they delivered it, to the king, and this was a discovery, of immense importance, what about us, do we treat the word of God, such, that we've got a tender heart, towards the word of God, do we treasure his word, such that this is important,

I want to find out, what it means, I want to study it, and learn it, and heed its message, do we let God's word, convict us, and transform our heart, our thinking, is it the word, that guides our steps, our way, do the scriptures, come to life, and become real, that's revival, that's what happened here, Eureka, we found the book, we found the book, we must have the book, and we must have the book, you must have the book, we see the shape, that Judah found herself in, it was deplorable, she'd lost the book, look at the shape, we're in, look at Australia today, look at this nation, this sad, godless land, that we call Australia today, look at the shape, that we're in, look at what's happened, over the last few decades, in Australia, we've lost the book, we've lost the book, Judah had lost the book, we have lost the book, it's time that someone, finds the book, amen, someone find the book, in other words, recognise the importance, of the precious word of God, recognise the importance, of his word, his word is as relevant, today for us, as it was, as it ever has been, as it was in, Josiah's time, and when Josiah was informed, about the book of the law, he didn't lay it up, on the bookshelf, he put it to use, now better you have a bible, that's falling apart, that it's, you know, that it's used, than one that is not, now I know, I've got a, a funny saying, it's good to have a, red bible, as in, R-E-A-D, have a red bible, you know, it's very important, isn't it, those who put their bibles, to use, are those who treasure them, the most, treasure it, we don't treasure the bible, by putting it away, in some safe place, you know, some, as if it's on some altar, or something at home, have it on your, on your day by day desk, have it open, have it handy, have it nearby, may our hearts be tender, tender towards the word of God, such that we respect it, we value it, we heed it, it's still important, yet many people, they don't accept the bible, as the final authority, yet we know, as believers, it's our true guide, for life, for how to live, oh how we need, to have our land purged, don't we, there's some things,

Australia needs a good purging, of its idols, how we need the book, we need the book, look at what happened, when Josiah found, the book, we take it up, in verse 19, he was deeply convicted, and he tore his clothes, in anguish, this was a graphic sign, of conviction, of contrition, he tore his clothes, in anguish, it says, fearing the wrath of God, his heart was tender, wasn't it, it was the conviction, of the Holy Spirit, wasn't it, we see that there, in verse 19, and it came to pass, when the king, heard the words, of the law, that he rent, his clothes, rip, this was something, graphic, for the

king, to tear his royal robes, in contrition, it seems, that Josiah, had not heard, or seen God's word, before, he realised, the shame of it, the reproach of it, this book, that we've lost, how could we lose it, how could we neglect it, somehow, somehow, somewhere, the book, had got lost, and when they discovered, the book of the law, they read it, it was revival,

[26:01] God's truth, from the scriptures, works on human hearts, tender hearts, note that Josiah, saw his clothes, Josiah received the word, God was working, more on the heart, of the king, than of the priest, the priest, didn't tear his clothes, nobody else, tore their clothes, but what was different, about Josiah, Josiah had a tender heart, amen, Josiah had a tender heart, he knew this, had grieved the heart, of God, and he was moved, Josiah was a God seeker, his heart was tender, and soft, and he sought guidance, furthermore from, Huldah the prophetess, we're going to skip through a bit here, concerning the book, and its message, he sought guidance, from the prophetess, and verse 21, we jump ahead to, verse 21, it says, go inquire 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 that, which is written in this book, so, the one that he came to, for guidance, she knew the word of God,

Huldah, she was able to say, what it meant, and she spoke boldly, she spoke boldly, to the king, and God's message was that, his wrath, was against Judah, and because, now that, Josiah had repented, there was godly repentance, God would spare, Judah, while Joshua, Josiah, reigned, when God's word reveals our sin, let us seek him and pray, that's what happened here, that Josiah sought God's ways, and he was sensitive to sin, what about you and me, brothers and sisters, there's not much difference, really, when you think about it, between the book hidden, in the temple, and the Bible hidden, on the bookshelf, let's be honest this morning, the book was neglected, it was lost, it was hidden, they'd lost it, sometimes our Bible gets lost, doesn't it, through the busyness of the week, through other things, we neglect it, an unread Bible, is as useless, as a lost one, rather take the Bible, and of course nowadays, you can have it on your phone, there's lots of creative ways, you can listen to it, but take heed of it, the word of God, don't neglect it, don't lose the word, Josiah recognised, the awful consequences, of the nation's idolatry, he tore his clothes, this was grievous, his heart also was torn, and Josiah was overcome, with the shame, with the grief, that this had caused, to his precious Lord, Josiah knew, the Lord's fierce wrath, was about to fall, upon the nation, and he made a heartfelt commitment, to obey God's commands, what about us today, can we see ourselves here, in this situation, in this story, this human story of Josiah, where are we at, what about today, God's word is sadly neglected, isn't it, people have become indifferent, to the Bible, such that, you scarcely, pay a thought, to what does the Bible say, how to live, what to do, but Josiah was different, his heart was tender, he was hungry for the word, and he humbled himself, before the Lord, before the word, and so, Josiah's tender heart, got God's attention, you know, God looks at your heart, the Bible says, he tries the, kind of the innermost being of us, the very heart strings, he tries the hearts, and the minds, and God gave grace, to Josiah, what about you and me, are we going to be like Josiah, he gave heed to the word, wow, the words of the book, this is great, and there's great wrath coming too, pay heed to the word, and he wanted to hear from God, and he wanted others to hear from God, as it reads on, that he wanted to share, the word with others, so we'll go to verse 27, and this is really the, the central point, of what I'm trying to communicate, this morning, and God is addressing,

Josiah through Huldah, and God says this, because thine heart, was tender, because your heart, was tender, and thou didst humble thyself, before God, when thou heardest, his words, against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbled thyself, before me, and didst rend my clothes, and weep before me, I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord, so notice that, your heart is tender, you've humbled yourself, you've torn your clothes, you've wept before me, he says, I've heard you, I've heard you, Josiah had a heart, for God, and he was responsive, towards God, he humbled himself, he tore his clothes, in anguish, and he wept, before the Lord, what about you and me, do we take, our faith so seriously, that we would, take such measures, of repenting, of trusting, of anxious, seeking of God, of active seeking of God, of weeping, even weeping, before the Lord,

the Lord heard him, the Lord heard him, and for his sake, God's wrath, was delayed, till after his death, it reads on, verse 29, talks about, that the king sent, and gathered the elders, and verse 30, it reads, and the king went up, into the house, of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants, of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small, and he read, and he read in their ears, all the words, of the book, of the covenant, that was found, in the house, of the Lord, now, way back, Josiah's grandfather, had all but, wiped out, every copy, of God's word, the devil, hates God's word, he wants to snatch it, he wants to take it, he wants to corrupt it, he wants to, rob you, of the word of God, and that's what, Josiah's grandfather, was like, he wanted to, wipe out, the word of God, but thank God, someone, hid the word, in a safe place, and when, Josiah found it, he immediately, honoured the Lord, and he called, all the people of Judah, to come together, to read it, and he read it out, aloud, this is the, nation's leader, this is the, equivalent of the, prime minister, wouldn't that be wonderful, if the, if the, if the leader, of our nation, was to call, all the people, great and small, and read in their, ears the words, of the Lord, wouldn't that be something,

[32:48] Josiah honoured, the Lord so, and as they read, the word, they realised, how wicked, their lives were, and displeasing unto God, but God gave them, repentance, and revival, as their relationship, was restored, so notice that, he not only was, wanting to hear, the word himself, he gathered all the people, because he wanted, to pass the message on, it's the same, for you and me people, isn't it, this is too good, a message for us, to keep to ourselves, we've got to tell somebody, as the song goes, we've got to tell somebody, got to tell somebody, while we can, he did the only thing, he could, he recommitted himself, to the Lord, and he renewed, his holy covenant, that had been badly broken, what about us, is our heart tender, such that, we want to heed the word, we want to read the word, we want to share the word, we want to recognise, the importance of the word, to our own lives, that we'll be such a man, of God, a woman of God, that we want to renounce, the idols, that are holding our nation, holding our family back, and we want to, rededicate ourselves, to the Lord, wouldn't that be something, are there some images, and idols, we talked about that,

Wednesday night, are there some doubtful, things in our home, that are plainly, of the world, of the world, and the things of the world, shouldn't we smash them, shouldn't we grind them, to powder, shouldn't we renounce them, renounce the idols, verse 31 it reads, and the king stood in his place, and made a covenant, before the Lord, he said, I'm going to stand up, and I'm going to make a stand here, before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all, with all, his heart, and with all, all his soul, and to perform the words, of the covenant, which are written in this book, the king took his stand, in the temple, and he made a covenant, and it's good to make a stand, isn't it, I know as a young man, I trusted the Lord, and then I wavered for a while, and then I made a recommitment,

I said, I'm going to make a stand, and I'm going to make a public stand, I'm going to recommit, you know, you can commit your life to the Lord, you don't get saved, over and over again, you get saved once, but there's always time and occasion, where you can recommit your life, to the Lord, isn't it, you say, I'm going to rededicate my life, to the Lord, that's always a good thing to do, and that's what, Josiah did here, with all of his heart, with all of his soul, and along with all of Judah, it reads on, verse 32, and he caused all that were present, in Jerusalem, and Benjamin, to stand to it, so Josiah was a godly man, a faithful man, he cared about the things of God, and he wanted his nation so, he prayed for his nation, he stood up for his nation, he set the example, for his nation, so Josiah's response, after reading God's word, was to take a stand for God, and when we read this book, it moves us, doesn't it, we want to tear our clothes, don't we, in the sense of, you know, God, do a work in my heart, I open my heart to you, figuratively, tearing my heart, wide open, and we see that,

God moved, in Josiah's life, such that he wanted the people, he called the people, return to God, and tear down the false gods, false idols, believers here this morning, if you're a Christian, and you've got some cherished idols, take them out, and smash them when you get home, whatever they be, you know what they are, the things of the world, the things of the devil, the doubtful things,

when the early believers in Ephesus, realised the magic arts, you know, they were playing around, with magical things, with witchcraft really, they took those books, and they were worth a lot of money, and they put them on a fire, and they burnt them, they destroyed them, if there's doubtful things, in your life, things that you think, oh that's not really Christian, get rid of it, boot it out, stomp on it, smash it, grind it to powder, destroy it, that's what, Josiah, led the people to do, and verse 33, it reads on,

Josiah took away, all the abominations, out of all the countries, that pertain to the, children of Israel, and made all that were present, in Israel to serve, even to serve, the Lord their God, and it says, notice this, on all his days, they departed not, from following the Lord, the God of their fathers, wouldn't that be something, they departed not, from following the Lord, there was no mucking around, there wasn't any, flim flam, they departed not, from following, the Lord, now it's a kind of sad, note to, to contemplate, that despite everything, despite everything, Josiah did, despite all of his reforms, he couldn't change, the nation's heart, and prevent, the coming disaster, he died, and he was spared, from seeing the nation, destroyed, but yet the nation, reverted back, to their backsliding, what about you and me, Josiah sets an example, for us, we need to rid the idols, of our own life, and cleanse our temple, you are the temple, of the Holy Spirit, you are the temple, of the living God, cleanse your temple, let us love our Lord, such that we want to get rid, of anything, everything, anything that's doubtful, whatever gets in the way, and your conviction, might be different from mine, the best way that he knew how,

[38:34] Josiah gave all of himself, to God, every day, all through the day, what made the difference, Josiah's tender heart, it's a heart issue, it's a heart issue, it's not a legalistic issue, it's not thou shalt not, and a big long list of things, that thou shalt not, it's about your heart, it's about your heart, is it tender, is your heart tender, are you tender towards God, such that, yes Lord, I'm going to tear it all, wide open, tear open my heart, have all of me, take it all, I want to smash those idols, I don't want to bow down, to them any longer, his heart was tender, verse 25, it says, and like unto him, there was no king, before him, that turned to the Lord, with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law, of Moses, neither after him, arose there, any like him, of course it sounds very much like, our Lord's beckoning, isn't it, love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength, that's what Josiah demonstrates, wholehearted devotion to God, wouldn't that be something, that's something to aspire to, isn't it, it's amazing that,

God would do such a work, in such a young person, as he was still a young man, that was fully committed to him, when you think about it, it's better to have a young leader, who loves the Lord, than some experienced one, whose years have not been invested, in righteousness, and you could have someone, very you know, kingly, might know, might have studied, King 101 at university, but it's better to be, a Josiah isn't it, because his heart was tender, that's what mattered, that's what matters, and he was not the only good king, compared to King David, there was Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, but the difference with Josiah was, that he was the only one, who didn't turn to the right, or the left, wouldn't that be good, to be dinky dice, straight on, straight down the line, to not be moved, Josiah's life, it speaks to young people, but it speaks to you and me, older people doesn't it, I'm one of the older ones now, it speaks to all of us doesn't it, Josiah, and young people, you might be still, one of the younger ones amongst us, even a young person, can be a spiritual leader, look at Joseph, in spite of prison, and slavery, he saved his family, his nation, look at Samuel, he heard the Lord call, his name, while he was still a child, look at David, just a boy, defeated the champion, Goliath, young Mary too, yielded herself, to God's plan, and bore the Lord Jesus, God wants us to use, ourselves, in his service, God wants to use young people, as part of his plan, so young people today, just to call to you, will you seek God's will, will you seek his will, will you learn to be like him, will you be like Josiah, at the tender age of eight, and then at 16, he wanted to seek the Lord, wouldn't that be something, even if you're only eight, it's not too early, to think about God, and God's will, to accomplish it, when we put out of our lives, all those things, that hinder, that stop us falling, and obeying God, is your heart tender, that's the point, that's the bottom line, is your heart tender, that's what counts, will you seek the Lord, with all your heart, you can, Josiah did, may we

like Josiah, not just pull down the idols, the false gods of our lives, but smash them, and grind them to powder, grind them to powder, such that you can't, put them back together again, you can't get the super glue, and build that idol again, it's smashed to pieces, it's smashed to smithereens, may we be like Josiah, who rediscovered the book, the holy book,

God can use you, even you, even me, God can use you, even while you're still young, you might think, oh I'm only, I'm just a, you know, a one year old Christian, and you might still be a baby Christian, that's why we've got a Christian growth, class plan, because you can grow, you can be like Josiah, 8, 16, in his 20s, we see, God built the man, and it started with the tender heart, that's what counts, God can use you, no matter where you come from, Josiah's father, his immediate father, and his grandfather, they were wicked kings, he didn't have a good track record, as far as his family heritage went, they were godless, they were wicked, wicked, his father, and his grandfather, wicked, he wasn't raised in a godly home, that could be true for you today, you might say, preacher, that's me, you might say, I don't have Christian relatives, or Christian parents, or, it doesn't matter, you can still be used mightily of God,

Josiah discovered the book, and he was convicted, by its words, do we read, and understand God's word, do we let the word, guide our actions, it's a tender heart, it's a tender heart, that word, that you might not understand, it says, it's spiritually discerned, God can speak to your heart, help you to understand, give you guidance, like Josiah sought and found, and we let the word guide our actions, our plan for life, to follow, and in verses 15 to 20, it tells how, Josiah restored the true worship, the Passover, of course that speaks to us, of our Lord's death, and rising again, it speaks of the remission, the redemption for our sins, the Passover, it had been neglected too, they didn't care about Calvary, they didn't care about, the work of God, for salvation, but Josiah wanted that, to be front and centre again, the Passover, is our heart tender, our heart tender towards God, will you be a Josiah, will you say yes,

[44:43] I want to be like him, that you can renew your, faith commitment to him, that you want to smash the idols, that are stopping you, from walking victoriously, can you stand for godly principles, like Josiah stood, and he said, come and stand with me, and they did, Josiah was in a godless culture, and so are we, this land is godless, it's damned, it's under God's wrath, and judgment, he's just holding it back, we can stand, in such a godless culture, even when the crowd's against us, and against God, Josiah was one, who was willing to stand, stand alone, stand, eight years old, stand, and trust God, so can you, Josiah smashed the idols, and so can you, don't let anything, stand in your way, between you, and the Lord, and your growth in faith, say today's the day, I'm going to smash those idols, smash them, pulverize them, demolish them, destroy them, grind them to powder, we need to tear down, the false gods in our lives, we need to be like Joshua, tear it down, destroy anything, that comes between you, and God, whatever it is, whatever your excuses are, whatever is hindering your walk, hear the message, the word, accept the authority, and mandate, of God's word,

Josiah walked, in the ways of David, he didn't turn, to the right, or the left, he walked straight, and true, straight and true, you can be like him, he can be your role model, for life, you can get back on track, if your walk's not right, and Josiah, he rebuilt that neglected temple, and the worship, that was neglected, are we neglecting worship, such that the soccer players, put us to shame, shame, our world is broken, our worship needs to be restored, to be repaired, our relationship with God, are we tender towards him, we can know that tenderness again, we can renew our relationship with God, tell people God's message, that's what Josiah did, he received it, and he imparted it, share it, share the gospel, be a witness, be a testimony, for God's grace, that they can know God too, Josiah knew a personal, and a community revival, and so we can seek God, that he will do a work, he will do a heaven sent work, in and through us, a tender heart, that's what it needs, that's what we need, isn't it, brother, brother, sister, isn't it, a tender heart,

Josiah was a God seeker, and God made his heart tender, such that he had a wholehearted, devotion to God, and he wanted the truth, he wanted the word, and when he found it, wow, Eureka, I found it, the word, can we be like Josiah, just 16 years old, verse 3, while he was yet young, he began to seek, after God, the God of David, his father, while he was yet young, he began to seek,

don't you want to be such a one, you want to begin to seek God, to seek God, I love it, how it says in the word, you shall find me, when you shall search for me, with all your heart, don't you want to be such a one, you search for God, with all your heart, I know it says that, there's none that seeketh after God, it's like, it's almost like an exception, but you can be the exception, you can seek after God, Josiah sought after God, and he found him, what are you waiting for, what are you waiting for, if not now, then when, young person, start now, start today, to actively seek after God, through prayer, study, worship, godly living, take the word of God seriously, such that it's not on the shelf, or in some disused room, where it's forgotten, and neglected, but the word matters, the word matters, it's your life, the word of God, you take it seriously, you don't neglect it, and you give of your best, you don't delay, serve God as soon as you're able, when he was 16, he began to seek the Lord, well, if you're younger than 16, you don't have to wait, and if you're older than 16, it doesn't matter, you can seek him now,

Josiah purged the land, over its wickedness, and the idols, that were leading people astray, now, another sad point, Josiah's son, did not follow the Lord, that's kind of sad, isn't it, it's a sad note, fathers, I know it, I want my son, to follow the Lord, I want him to, but if God skips him, maybe my grandchildren will, amen, but brothers and sisters, think of your children, God help them, amen, pray for them, I continue to pray for them, sadly, Josiah's son, did not, follow the Lord, what about you, are you willing, to smash your idols, to empty your life, of every stronghold, of the enemy, to commit your life, he stood, and he said, I'm going to declare, I'm going to commit, I'm going to make a covenant, to commit your life, and of course, it's only God's help, that will give us any grace, to live the life, that we're meant to live, but what matters, is his heart was tender, and he only lived, a short life, at age 39, he was dead, he died in battle, this young man, used of God, to bring revival, to his nation, to lead his nation, in one of the greatest, revivals, of history, at 39, he was gone, how old are you, are you older than 39, you're living, on borrowed time, people of God, don't put it off, if you're over 39, then mate, you're living longer, than just I did, people of God, don't wait, to serve God, what about us, will our heart be tender, towards God, will we rise up, and stand strong, God has a purpose for you, now just a quick note, to finish on, I love this little quote, it says, though no one can go back, and make a brand new start, anyone can start, from now on, and make a brand new ending, you might think, preacher I've got regrets, I've blown it, I've neglected the word, I've got idols, and images, and false gods, that I'm devoted to, and I'm mucking around, I'm deviating to the left, and to the right, I'm not seeking after God, like I know I should, no one can go back, and make a brand new start, but anyone can start, from right now, and make a brand new ending, of course God can give you, a brand new start, he can give you, a brand new heart, right here and now, if you're yet to be saved, but I pray, if you're saved here this morning, that you'll know what it is, to have a tender heart, a tender heart, let us pray, Lord we thank you, that you, call such a people, as we, unworthy, unfit, I speak of myself,

[51:36] Lord, how, we need, more tenderness, more sensitivity, to have a heart, soft, and, to be like clay, that you can shape, rather than clay, that's hard, help us Lord, to be such a people, and Lord, whether we ain't, 16, 20, Lord, however old we are, you can do that work, in every human soul, just like you did, in that human man, Josiah, Lord do our work we pray, and be glorified, help us to, to be such that, we'll tear down the idols, help us to be such, that we'll rebuild the temple, help us be such, that we'll seek after you, we'll seek your face, and we'll find your will, and we'll do it, we'll seek the book, and we'll heed it, we'll obey it, we'll read it, and we'll share it, Lord to be such a people, with a tender heart, we pray in Jesus name, Amen.