

THE WORD OF GOD IS DISCOVERED

TEXT: II CHRONICLES 34:14-33

Introduction:

1. King Josiah was the last good king of Judah. He was only eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 31 years (II Chron. 34:1, 2). He began his reign approximately 639 BC.
2. His father was Amon, a wicked king who had reigned for only two years (II Chron. 33:21-25).
3. In the eighth year of his reign, “while he was yet young” (II Chron. 34:3), being about 16 years old, King Josiah “began to seek after the God of David his father.”
4. This seeking after God was evidenced by King Josiah’s strong hatred of idolatry (II Chron. 34:3). King Josiah smashed the idols to little pieces, and then he strewed the dust and ashes upon the graves of the deceased idolaters.
5. In his zeal to cleanse Judah and Jerusalem from idolatry, King Josiah burned the bones of the idolatrous priests upon their heathen altars (34:4-7).
6. By doing this, King Josiah was fulfilling a prophecy made over 300 years earlier (34:5). We read in I Kings 13:1, 2, “And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burnt upon thee” (cf. II Kings 23:14-20).

7. It should be pointed out that King Josiah did not confine his campaign against idolatry to the southern kingdom of Judah. He also tore down the idols in the northern kingdom of Israel. Bethel (II Kings 23:15) had been the chief idolatrous sanctuary for the (now defunct) northern kingdom of Israel (cf. II Kings 23:15, 19).
8. King Josiah also tore down the houses of the sodomites (II Kings 23:7). This is one of the reasons why he is considered one of the greatest kings of Judah (cf. II Kings 23:25), along side King David and King Hezekiah.
9. Notice that the sodomites built their homes close to the temple (II Kings 23:7). These sodomites were religious prostitutes. False religion has always been associated with perverted and lewd sex.
10. My wife recently read a biography of missionary Amy Carmichael. She was born in Ireland in 1867. When she was 19-years-old, she heard [Hudson Taylor](#), founder of the [China Inland Mission](#) speak about missionary life at the Keswick Convention. It was then that she knew God was calling her to be a missionary.
11. I mention Amy Carmichael because she wound up serving in India, where she rescued many young Indian girls from the wicked life of temple prostitution.
12. "Temple children" were young girls dedicated to the Hindu gods and forced into prostitution to earn money for the priests.
13. There were many temple prostitutes in King Josiah's day, and he was successful in putting an end to it (cf. Deut. 23:17, 18).
14. In shutting down the sodomites, King Josiah was obeying the Word of God. Today he would be vilified by the liberal politicians and mainstream news media. Leviticus 18:22 says, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination."
15. During the reign of King Amon, Josiah's father, and during the long reign of Manasseh, his grandfather, the temple in Jerusalem had been neglected

and abused. Therefore, King Josiah proceeded to cleanse and repair the temple (II Chron. 34:8).

16. It was while they were repairing the temple that “Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses” (34:14).
17. Hilkiah reported this wonderful discovery to Shaphan the scribe, who then carried the book to King Josiah (34:15, 16).
18. “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (Psalm 119:130).
19. Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
20. My message today is entitled, “The Word of God is Discovered.”

I. KING JOSIAH’S REPENTANCE

1. When Shaphan read the Word of God to King Josiah, the king “rent his clothes” in dismay and consternation (34:18, 19).
2. In the Bible, rending one’s clothes always indicates great emotion. Joel 2:13 says, “And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God.”
3. King Josiah was repentant. King Josiah was concerned about the wrath of God (II Chron. 34:21).
4. Are you concerned about the wrath of God? John 3:36 says, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

5. Revelation 6:16 refers to “the wrath of the Lamb.” And then the next verse says, “For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”
6. The day of God’s wrath is coming, and it is coming very soon. King Josiah was concerned about the wrath of God. Are you?
7. Second Chronicles 34:2 says King Josiah “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.”
8. Second Chronicles 34:3 says that while he was yet young (16), King Josiah “began to seek after the God of David his father.”
9. In II Chronicles 34:27, the LORD commends King Josiah for humbling himself before God.
10. King Josiah was not putting on some phony religious act. He was deeply moved, as both his words and actions demonstrate (34:21).
11. Sometimes people put on a good religious show but God knows when people are real.

II. GOD’S RESPONSE

1. King Josiah knew from reading the Word of God that the LORD’s commands had long been disregarded. Furthermore, King Josiah knew that this disobedience would surely bring down the wrath of God (34:21).
2. The Bible does not say which portion of God’s Word King Josiah read – only that it was “the law of the LORD given by Moses” (34:14). It was probably a copy of the five books written by Moses – what we call the “Pentateuch.”
3. Some Bible teachers (e.g., ISBE) believe King Josiah read from the book of Deuteronomy with all of its promises of blessings and curses (cf. Deut. 28).

4. Reading these terrible warnings would surely make a godly king like Josiah rend his clothes and weep (cf. Deut. 28:15ff).
5. God's response to King Josiah's enquiry is found in II Chron. 34:23-28. God's judgment was inevitable.

III. THE KING'S COVENANT (34:29-33)

1. King Josiah made a solemn covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments... (34:31).
2. Furthermore, the king had all that were present stand to it (34:32).
3. Pastor Sager and I wish we could get everyone at this meeting "to stand to it" but we are just preachers; we're not kings. A preacher is not a king. A king commands; a preacher exhorts and encourages.
4. When King Josiah promised God that he would obey Him "with all his heart and with all his soul" (34:31), he was doing what God wants every believer to do.
 - "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. 4:29).
 - "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:5).
 - "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. 10:12).
 - "This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Deut. 26:16).
 - "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live" (Deut. 30:6).
 - "...turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Deut. 30:10).
 - Matthew 22:37 and 38 says, "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."
5. King Josiah's reforms included keeping the Passover (35:1). In fact, 35:18 says, "And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of

Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept...”

6. Furthermore, King Josiah put away all of the witchcraft (cf. II Kings 23:24, 25). Witchcraft and all of its “New Age” variations is sweeping across America, and is being promoted by influential celebrities like Oprah Winfrey. The Bible calls all of this an “abomination” (II Kings 23:24).
7. Go into any bookstore today and you will see many books on the occult and new age mysticism. These books are from the devil.

CONCLUSION:

1. There is no happy ending to our story. King Josiah died on the battlefield in the valley of Megiddo (II Chron. 35:20-27). He was only 39 years old.
2. But the saddest part of the story is that King Josiah’s repentance and weeping, and his reforms, and his covenant with the LORD were not enough to turn back the judgment of God.
3. It was too late (cf. II Kings 23:25-27).
4. Personally I think it is too late for the United States of America. Consider the many ways our nation has defied God – apostasy in most of the churches, abortion, homosexuality, evolution taught in our schools as fact, pornography, adultery, drunkenness, drugs, etc.
5. We need leaders like King Josiah today. With leaders like we have today, our country is going down fast. But though I think it may be too late for America, it is not too late for individuals to get things right with God.
6. We may never have another national revival like we had in the days of the first and second Great Awakening but we can experience personal revival and our churches can experience revival if enough of our members get serious about the things of God (cf. II Kings 23:25).
7. In the 1920’s, Ford C. Ottman wrote a biography of evangelist J. Wilbur Chapman. Reflecting back over the history of modern revivals, Ottman made the following observation, “As we look back over these extra-ordinary religious awakenings which . . . so quickened the churches and so effectively pressed the claims of God upon the consciences of multitudes, we cannot escape the conviction that God in gracious providence was reaping a spiritual harvest before He permitted the outburst of revolutionary forces that have overwhelmed the world, impoverished almost every nation, produced economic and social chaos, and stained with dishonor the pride of Christian civilization. In the history of revivals, it has often been noted that such restoral periods are a warning of, and synchronize with, impending judgment. The harvest is gathered before the field is doomed to death.”
8. Ottman was referring to the great revivals, which took place before the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, WWI, and other wars.

9. We know the Bible teaches us that dark days are ahead. We can almost hear the hoof beats of the four horses of the Apocalypse. But as we pray and seek God's face, perhaps God will graciously bless us once more with a great revival.

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