

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS**

**LESSON 13A**

**THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS**

**CHAPTER 22**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter begins with Josiah who became king of Judah at the age of eight. His father was Amon, his grandfather was Manasseh and his great-grandfather was Hezekiah. Except for his great-grandfather, Hezekiah, who was a good and exemplary king, Manasseh and Amon were bad kings for they ruled Judah not according to the ways of the LORD. Though Manasseh and Amon were not good examples to him, Josiah became the best king in the history of Judah. His great-grandfather Hezekiah was already a great king, but Josiah surpassed him. Even Jeremiah the prophet used him as an example for other rulers to follow (Jeremiah 22:11-17). The old adage "like father, like son" does not hold true in the case of Josiah. It would be interesting to learn how he became such a godly king. This chapter should be diligently studied for they contain many lessons and truths which are still relevant today. The parallel passage in 2

Chronicles Chapters 34 provides additional details on Josiah.

This chapter gives a summary of Josiah's reign and the initial reforms which he carried out.

**OUTLINE**

1. Josiah orders the repair of the Temple (vv.1-7);
2. The discovery of the Book of the Law and the effect of its content on Josiah (vv.8-13);
3. Josiah seeks Huldah, the Prophetess to interpret the Words of the Book of Law. (vv.14-20).

**COMMENTARY**

**Josiah Orders the Repair of the  
Temple – 22:1-7**

The Judeans made Josiah their king when his father Amon died. Josiah, at 8 years old, was too young to reign. Like Joash, he had Hilkiah the high priest and Shaphan the scribe to counsel and guide him. One must not forget that the care of his mother, Jedidah (the name means "beloved"). She must have been a godly woman who nurtured Josiah in the fear of the LORD. Josiah grew in an environment which was hostile to everything that has to do with the worship of the LORD (YAHWEH). His father and his grand-father would have been bad influence on him. Yet he did not grow up to be like them. Jedidah surely was responsible for Josiah's upbringing and certainly enlisted the help of

Hilkiah and Shaphan to overcome the influence of his wicked father. It was God's Providence that in the midst of wickedness, there would always be a remnant few who would be undefiled and loyal to the LORD God. The divine writer summarises Josiah's reign of thirty-one years with the words "he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD". He added that Josiah "walked in the way of David". This was said of his great-grandfather, Hezekiah. It was indeed a very high honour. Moreover, the accolade that Josiah "turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" is a reference to Deuteronomy 17:20 which depicts the ideal king: *That his heart (i.e. the king's) be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left.*" These introductory remarks indicated what a godly king he would be. He was God-fearing and loyal to the LORD; he walked in the ways of his forefather King David, a man after the heart of God; and he was wholeheartedly and uncompromisingly committed to obey the Word of God. This is the start and measure of any king and for that matter any Christian leader today too.

Josiah started his godly rule at a tender age of ten. In his twelfth year, he began his spiritual cleansing. The list of his purging of Judah is found in 2 Chronicles 34. *2 Chronicles 34:3-8* explains, "*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. And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strowed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about. And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem. Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God."*

For 18 years he was under the tutelage of the high priest and the scribe At the age of 26, he sent Shaphan, the scribe to Hilkiah, the high priest to look into the Temple collection and to pay the workers repairing the Temple so that the renovation work could be expedited. Repairs to the Temple which had been started by King Joash (2 Kings 12:6) had not been completed till then. Josiah saw the state of things and commanded that the repairs to the Temple be expeditiously completed – first things first.

### **The Discovery of the Book of the Law and the Effect of its Contents on Josiah – 22: 8-13**

In the course of repairing the Temple, Hilkiah found “the book of the law” (22:8). The Scripture scroll had been forgotten for about 75 years—55 years of Manasseh’s reign, another 2 years of Amon’s, plus the 18 years from the time Josiah acceded to the throne till its discovery. Other copies of the Book of the Law possibly had been destroyed. The obvious reason why this copy was lost was because it had been neglected. A spiritual lesson can be learned here: whenever something is disregarded, it will gradually be forgotten. Man may destroy God’s Book, but He will preserve at least one copy. So, the discovery of the book was providential rather than accidental.

The discovered Scripture scroll definitely included the Book of Deuteronomy and the passage read to King Josiah by Shaphan the scribe was probably Chapters 28-30. In these chapters God declares that if His people keep His commandments, He promises that blessings will come upon them (Deuteronomy 28:1-2). But if they disobey His commandments, God warns them that curses would come upon them (Deuteronomy 28:15).

The reading of the Word of God spoke to the heart of young King Josiah. He was convicted of his sins and the sins of the people as evidenced by his tearing of his clothes. His heart was so stirred that he ordered Hilkiah, Shaphan, his son

Ahikam, and two others, Achbor and Asahiah to “enquire of the LORD” concerning the words of the book for him and all the people of Judah. This means that they were told to find a godly interpreter who could explain the meaning of the words. In a spirit of repentance, Josiah confessed that the wrath of the LORD was great upon them because his forefathers had not kept the words of the book (v.13). So the delegation led by Hilkiah went to Huldah, the prophetess, who was well-known for her gifts.

### **Huldah’s Prophecies Concerning Judah – 22:14-20**

God spoke through Huldah. She prophesied that the LORD would cause all that were written in the book which was read to the king to happen to the land and the people because they had forsaken the LORD and worshipped and served other gods (22:17). Concerning King Josiah, she had a message for him. Josiah would be “gathered in thy grave in peace” (22:20). Some interpret this phrase to mean that Josiah would die a natural death, but this understanding was incorrect because Josiah was killed in battle against Egypt (23:29). In fact, Huldah gave the meaning of the phrase: Josiah would be spared from the devastation and desolation that would come upon the nation and the people. This promise was given to Josiah because he humbled himself before the LORD; he repented by renting his clothes and wept. But concerning the land and the Judeans, the LORD would remove them just as He did to Israel, the northern kingdom.

Huldah’s prophecies were actually a confirmation of what had already been declared by the unnamed prophet in 2 Kings 21:10-16. This was a confirmation that the LORD would surely bring this disaster upon Judah, Jerusalem and the people.

**PRACTICAL VALUE**

Josiah’s prompt response to the Word of the LORD teaches a necessary and important lesson. He was not only convicted in his heart and mind of his own sins but also the sins of the people when the Book of the Law of God was read to him. He humbled himself and repented. He took one more practical step by purging the nation of all the idolatrous worship and practices. And he did it uncompromisingly and totally. Many of us are quick to say that we know and love the God whom we believe in, but we must also be quick to follow the example of Josiah by taking firm and practical action to show our sincerity. As James says (2:26): *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

Another valuable lesson which we learn concerning God’s dealings with man is that He leads us step by step. It is only when Josiah began to seek after the LORD and started to repair the Temple that the Book of the Law was discovered. As a result, Josiah carried out the religious reforms which were right in the eyes of the LORD. God does not show His will to us when we have not done what we already know we should. Many Christians always ask what God’s will

is for them. They should ask and examine themselves first whether they have been obedient to what they already know about God’s Word. AMEN

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**MONDAY:** 2 Kings 22:1-7; John 7:17

**TUESDAY:** 2 Kings 22:8-20; Psalm 119:161-168.

**WEDNESDAY:** 2 Kings 22:1-20;

**THURSDAY:** 2 Kings 23:1-20;

**FRIDAY:** 2 Kings 23:1-20;

**Discussion Questions**

1. What was the impetus that drove Josiah to zealously carry out his reforms? How can this be applied to the leaders of the church today?

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2. If God were to summarise your life now what would the statement be

like? Would it be the same as Josiah or Manasseh's?

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3. Josiah was godly since he was a child. Is it not possible for our children to be godly too today? How can this be done? Give suggestions.

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5. What does it mean to react by renting the clothes after hearing the Word of God? Have you had this experience before? Should this be a common experience today?

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4. The reconstruction of the temple was done with no need for the reckoning of the money given and used. The reason given was that they were faithful. What is faithfulness? How important is faithfulness in the life of the Christian and church leaders?

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6. Why was the judgement that God passed on Judah during the reign of Manasseh not reversed even after the reformation of Josiah in Judah was carried out and the people repented but the repentance of the Ninevites in Jonah's time prevented the judgement of God from occurring?

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