

Last week we talked about King Hezekiah. King Hezekiah was a good king. After Hezekiah died, his son became king. His son was only 12 years old and his name was Manasseh. Manasseh was king for 55 years. That was longer than any other king of Israel or Judah. (2 Kings 21:1)

King Manasseh was a very wicked king. Remember that Hezekiah had gotten rid of a lot of the idols. King Manasseh set them up again. He even set up idols in the Temple of the Lord. (2 Kings 21:4) King Manasseh was the worst king that Judah had ever known.

Because Manasseh was so bad, God said a judgment would come upon him. (2 Kings 21:12) King Manasseh was taken to Babylon by the Assyrian army. Manasseh knew he had done bad things. While he was in Babylon, Manasseh prayed to God for forgiveness. Even though King Manasseh had done many bad things, God heard his prayers and helped him to return to Jerusalem. King Manasseh took the idols out of the house of the Lord and threw them out of the city.

Manasseh had a son named Amon. When Manasseh died, Amon became king. King Amon was twenty-five years old when he became king. King Amon did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not serve the Lord. He worshipped idols. He was king for only two years. (2 Kings 21:19) His servants killed him in his own house.

King Amon had a son named Josiah. Josiah was only eight years old when his father was murdered. When Amon died, the people made Josiah king at the age of 8 years.

Josiah was a very good king. He chose to do what was right with God. He did not change from the ways of the Lord. He walked in the ways of the Lord like David had done.

When Josiah was 20 years old, he started doing a great religious work in Jerusalem. He started tearing down altars where people were worshipping idols. He got rid of idols that his father had worshipped.

When King Josiah was 26 years old, he started to work on repairing the Temple of the Lord. The Temple needed a lot of work because the wicked kings did not take care of it. Some of the wicked kings were not concerned about the Temple because they worshipped idols. Some of the repairs were needed because the kings had destroyed things in the Temple.

While working on the Temple, something happened that made Josiah become even closer to God. While they were working, a “Book of Law” was found in the Temple. The “Book of Law” was a copy of the Law of Moses. Hilkiah, the high priest, found the book and gave it to Shaphan, the scribe. Shaphan read the book.

Shaphan took the “Book of Law” to King Josiah and read it to him. (2 Kings 22:10) King Josiah had never seen the “Book of Law”. After hearing it, Josiah knew they should worship only God. He also learned what God did to those who did not follow His Law. Josiah was very upset that he had not known more about God’s Law. And he was very sad that the people had not been keeping the law of God.