

2 Kings 21 - The Recipe for Revival

Good morning and thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to 2 Kings 21? We're closing in on the finish line in this book, as this morning we're studying chapters 21 and 22.

Let's take a moment and remind ourselves of how we got to where we are in Hebrew History. With Solomon's son, Rehoboam, the nation of Israel split... The northern ten tribes formed the nation, Israel... the southern two tribes took the name of the prominent tribe, Judah.

This period of the Divided Kingdom lasted 350 years. During this time, 20 different kings ruled over the southern kingdom of Judah. Only 8 of those kings were righteous.

Yet the northern kingdom of Israel fared worse - 19 kings reigned and they were all evil kings. And God's judgment came upon Israel about 130 years before it fell upon Judah. God was patient with both kingdoms, but eventually sin must be judged.

For Israel judgment came at the hands of the Assyrians. In 722 BC, Israel's capital of Samaria was sacked, and the northern 10 tribes were scattered. For Judah, God's instrument of judgment won't be Assyria, but rather Babylon.

Last week we saw King Hezekiah show off all his treasures to the Babylonians, and Isaiah declared that Babylon will one day overtake Judah.

These last 5 chapters to close out 2 kings look at the final half-century - and last five kings - of the southern kingdom of Judah.

The title of this mornings message is The Recipe for Revival
Let's pray

We pick up the scene with King Hezekiah now dead, and his son named Manasseh reigns in Judah

1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. This means that Manasseh was born in the last fifteen years of Hezekiah's life, the additional fifteen years that Hezekiah prayed for. 2-3

2 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. 3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a wooden image,[fn] as Ahab king of Israel had done; and he worshiped all the host of heaven[fn] and served them.

What king Ahab was to Israel, Manasseh was to Judah. Both of them drove their nations to national idolatry.

4-5

4 He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, “In Jerusalem I will put My name.” 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. The Temple in Jerusalem was the one place the Hebrews knew they could meet with God. Yet Manasseh turned the house of the living God into a museum of idols. And it gets even worse...

6 Also he made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. Manasseh invoked Satanic powers to do his bidding.

7-8

7 He even set a carved image of Asherah^[fn] that he had made, in the house of which the LORD had said to David and to Solomon his son, “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; 8 and I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers—only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them.” Manasseh worshiped a lewd, fertility goddess in the very place where God had promised to give life to His people. The worship of Asherah meant they were even practicing ritualistic prostitution in the house of the Lord.

And here’s what’s perhaps even more shocking. The nation allowed their king to do this...

9 But they paid no attention, and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. Tradition tells us that Manasseh was so evil, he was the one who ordered the prophet Isaiah sawn in two.

Not only were God's people unfaithful to Him, but verse 9 tells us they sinned even more than the Canaanites before them had sinned. These are the darkest days in Judah's history...

10-12 God begins to issue his decree of judgment...

10 And the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets, saying, 11 "Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols), 12 therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. These are critical verses.

Because as you read the OT books of Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Isaiah, God spoke so plainly and loudly to His people that their words would echo even after they passed from the scene. God warned the nation over and over and over again, but they would not listen.

The Lord continues

13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. As polluted as they were, God's people deserved to be utterly wiped out. Instead, God declares He would wipe them up.

14-16

14 So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, 15 because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.’ ”

16 Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD. Manasseh killed innocent people, the citizens were persecuted by the state sponsored idolatry. What is idolatry? Worshiping anything else other than God.

Now I want you to ponder what we just read, the progression of the nation we've just seen.

First, idolatry was tolerated among God's people.

Then idolatry was promoted.

Then idolatry was supported and funded.

Then the worship of the true God is undermined and the worshippers of the true God are persecuted and murdered.

Then the judgment of God comes soon afterward.

17-18

17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh—all that he did, and the sin that he committed—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 18 So Manasseh rested with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Then his son Amon reigned in his place. What a wicked king.

Now this is a wonderful example of why we need to read all of the Bible, because 2 Kings 21 here summarizes Manasseh, but 2 Chronicles 33 tells us about the end of Manasseh's life. We know he died right? But guess how he lived out his final years-ready for this?

2 Chronicles 33 10 And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. 11 Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, [fn] bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. 12 Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, 13 and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

14 After this he built a wall outside the City of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate; and it enclosed Ophel, and he raised it to a very great height. Then he put military captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. 15 He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. 16 He also repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.

What a merciful God we have!!!!

There is not a single person who is too far gone that God is not longing to rescue!!

Even though Manasseh repented, his son refused to walk in the way of the Lord. 19-22

19 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. 20 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. 21 So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked; and he served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. 22 He forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD. Amon sinned just like his dad Manasseh had sinned, without having the repentance that Manasseh had.

Speaking of Amon, **2 Chronicles 33 23 And he did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.**

Lets finish the chapter...

23 Then the servants of Amon conspired against him, and killed the king in his own house. 24 But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place. 25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 26 And he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza. Then Josiah his son reigned in his place.

Now, we zoom in to look at one of the greatest kings in Judah's history, Josiah, and how God used Josiah to bring a spiritual revival to a nation in darkness.

Chapter 22

1-2

1 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. 2 And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. We're given additional insight into Josiah in **2 Chronicles 34:3** **For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images.** 8 years old as king + 8 years of reigning made him 16. At sixteen years-old Josiah got serious about following God.

I want to take a moment and speak to our youth here. You can spare yourself so many heartaches and heartbreaks by giving God your whole heart and follow Him at a young age! How many of us in this room regret not fully following the Lord at a young age!

See, if you wait until your 30 to follow God - you've wasted some of your best years and given God just a part of your life. Start at a young age and you give God your whole life to use!!

3-7

3 Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the LORD, saying: 4 "Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been

brought into the house of the LORD, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. 5 And let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the LORD; let them give it to those who are in the house of the LORD doing the work, to repair the damages of the house— 6 to carpenters and builders and masons—and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. 7 However there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully.” Josiah had ordered the temple to under-go a renovation. And so now Josiah sends a delegation to the High Priest Hilkiah to check on the work...

According to Jeremiah 1, the prophet Jeremiah was the son of this particular priest Hilkiah. Jeremiah began his ministry during the reign of King Josiah.

8 Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

This was an incredible discovery. Manasseh had ordered the destruction of the Law. There were priests who had never read – or even seen the Law of God. Some folks feared it was lost forever. But during the repairs on the Temple – there in a dark, cobwebbed corner – under a mound of debris – Hilkiah found a copy of the sacred Scriptures.

It reminds me of Jesus’ words in **Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.”**

The Bible is indestructible. Over and over through the centuries God has assured the survival of His Word. And Manasseh was not the only evil ruler who's tried to stamp it out.

In 303 AD the Roman Emperor, Diocletian, a fierce opponent of Christianity ordered the destruction of all Bibles. Not only did his decree prove unsuccessful, but his successor, Constantine, a convert to Christianity, used money collected during the reign of Diocletian to commission 50 new copies of the Scriptures.

SHOW PIC In 1776 the French philosopher Voltaire said that the Bible would be extinct in 100 years. Yet within 50 years of his death, his own house was used as a storehouse for bibles and his own printing presses were used to print Bibles!! **CLOSE PIC**

It's wisely been said, "The Bible is an anvil that has broken many hammers." God not only oversaw the Bible's inspiration, but also its preservation.

The prophet Jeremiah also mentions the rediscovery of the Law... and describes its impact on him personally.

**Jeremiah 15:16 Your words were found, and I ate them,
And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart;
For I am called by Your name,
O LORD God of hosts.**

From time to time I get asked, why don't we spend more time worshiping? Or why don't I spend more time talking about current events? Or why not address the hot button topics that we all face

like covid, vaccines, or politics? Why not dedicate time against sex trafficking, abortion, or the legalization of drugs?

And listen, these are valid questions because each of these are important topics. And I know there are lots of churches that do spend significant time on them, and that's great-if that's what the Lord has called that ministry to do, then by all means, do it.

But what the Lord has charged me to do, is to declare His word to you. My calling from God echoes that of Pauls in **Acts 20:22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself,[fn] so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. 25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.** This is my calling, this is the primary purpose of CCC. To unapologetically declare the WHOLE COUNSEL of God!

Why is it so important to emphasize God's word?

**Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward Your holy temple,
And praise Your name
For Your lovingkindness and Your truth;
For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.**

And as we're about to see, spiritual revival always begins with the rediscovery of God's Word.

9-10

9 So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD." 10 Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. Imagine, for the first time the king learns of God's will for His people. Josiah must've hung on every word.

It's amazing how blessed we are to have so many copies of God's word at our fingertips. We tend to take it for granted don't we?

SHOW VIDEO

11 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes. Josiah realized how far short of God's Law the people were living – and how near they were to judgment. The light of God's Word had uncovered the nation's sin.

12-13

12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor[fn] the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, 13 "Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the

words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.” Josiah knew that the kingdom of Judah deserved judgment from God. He couldn’t hear the word of God and respond to the Spirit of God without seriously confronting the sin of his kingdom.

This is why people resist the word of God. Because it shows us how far we fall short! **John 3 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”**

There is no measuring ourselves to others-it’s not ‘well I didn’t kill anyone’, or ‘i never robbed anyone’, ‘i’m not the bad’. No, other people are not the measuring stick of that which is good. God is the measuring stick-and He is perfect! So then I realize that I’m not perfect and I need a savior!!

14-17

14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. 15 Then she said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to Me, 16 “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I

will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read— 17 because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.’ ” ’ God’s word is true, even in its promises of judgment. See God’s faithfulness is demonstrated not only by His mercy upon those who repent, but also by His just judgment against those who refuse to bow to Him.

But God is now about to tell Josiah that His judgment will not come in the days of Josiah

18-20

18 But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Concerning the words which you have heard— 19 because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you,” says the LORD. 20 “Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place.” ’ ” So they brought back word to the king.” In other words, the nation has gone too far to be spared God’s judgment – the warnings will come to pass. But because King Josiah was humble and tender toward God – and repented of his own sin and the sin of the nation – judgment will not come in his day.

This was God's mercy to Josiah. His own godliness and tender heart couldn't stop the eventual judgment of God, but it could delay it.

Our nation is in desperate need of revival. Idol worship abounds all around us, but today it's not in the form of bowing down to statues. Today it's all about self. But here's the problem-the more we focus on self, the more miserable we become! For some the idol is money, or possessions or sports.

How do we recover from such a daunting position? It's the word of God. We can't just point our finger and yell 'hey get in the Bible'. No because application must take place doesn't it?

James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

See our tendency as Christians is to wag our finger at this lost world, to complain about them. But is there a chance that we need revival? Are we DOING what God asks us to do?

Matthew 5:38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' [fn] 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

Matthew 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor [fn] and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who

hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,[fn]

Matthew 6 31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 28 19 Go therefore[fn] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.[fn]

Mark 8:35 “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.