

STUDY GUIDE: HILKIAH'S DISCOVERY

Quiz: Short-Answer Questions

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 complete sentences, drawing your answers from the provided source materials.

1. What was the historical context that led to the need for temple restoration during Josiah's reign?
2. Who was King Josiah, and at what age did he begin his reign and the temple repairs?
3. Describe the key individuals and their roles in the discovery and presentation of the Book of the Law.
4. How did King Josiah react upon hearing the words of the Book of the Law for the first time?
5. What command did Josiah give to his officials after his initial reaction to the book's contents?
6. Who was Huldah, and why did the king's delegation seek her out?
7. What was the core message from the Lord that Huldah delivered regarding King Josiah?
8. According to the Pastor's Notes, what are the three main aspects of Josiah's reform covered in the historical accounts?
9. How do the accounts of Josiah's reign in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles differ in their emphasis and organization?
10. What conditions does the "Listening to God" section identify as necessary for a person to receive God's Word attentively?

Answer Key

1. Following the reign of King Hezekiah, the Jerusalem temple fell into neglect, particularly during the long reign of King Manasseh (696–642 BC), Josiah's grandfather. This period of disrepair necessitated the restoration project that Josiah undertook, which became a climactic reform of his rule.
2. Josiah was the son of Amon and the grandson of Manasseh. He ascended to the throne of Judah at eight years old and reigned from 640–609 BC. In the eighteenth year of his reign, at the age of twenty-six, he directed his attention to the repair of the temple.
3. Hilkiyah, the priest, found the Book of the Law in the temple. He delivered it to Shaphan, the scribe, who then carried the book to King Josiah and read its contents aloud to him.
4. Upon hearing the words of the law, King Josiah had a strong emotional and physical reaction. The text states that he "rent his clothes" as an expression of grief and distress over what he heard.

5. Josiah commanded a delegation, including Hilkiah, Ahikam, Abdon, Shaphan, and Asaiah, to "enquire of the Lord" for him and the people of Israel and Judah. He was concerned about the great wrath of the Lord because their ancestors had not followed what was written in the book.
6. Huldah was a prophetess, the wife of Shallum, who was the keeper of the wardrobe. The king's delegation went to her in Jerusalem to inquire of the Lord, seeking a prophetic word in response to the discovery of the book.
7. Huldah relayed that the Lord had heard Josiah because his heart was tender and he had humbled himself before God upon hearing the words of the book. As a result, God promised Josiah that the judgment foretold in the book would not come during his lifetime.
8. The three aspects of Josiah's reform are: (1) the removal of foreign cults, (2) the discovery of the Book of the Law and the subsequent covenant renewal, and (3) the celebration of the Passover.
9. The account in 2 Kings emphasizes the removal of foreign cults and organizes the material geographically, starting from the temple. The account in Chronicles greatly expands on the Passover celebration and arranges the incidents chronologically, noting that the reform began six years before the book was found.
10. To receive God's Word attentively, a person must have spiritual "ears" prepared to "hear." This requires a heart that is willing to repent of sin, submit to God's word, and seek Him above all else.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Consider the following prompts for deeper reflection and study. Formulate a comprehensive response to each, drawing upon all provided source materials.

1. Analyze the progression of events from the discovery of the Book of the Law to Huldah's prophecy. Discuss the significance of each participant's role (Hilkiah, Shaphan, Josiah, Huldah) in this narrative.
2. Using the details provided in the Pastor's Notes, compare and contrast the literary and theological emphases of the accounts of Josiah's reign in 2 Kings versus 2 Chronicles.
3. The lesson frames Josiah's actions as a "reform." In what ways does this event represent a return to core values and principles that had been neglected, according to the source texts?
4. The "Listening to God" section describes the disposition required to hear God's words, a disposition exemplified by Josiah. How did Josiah's actions in 2 Chronicles 34 demonstrate a "tender heart" and a "humble attitude"?
5. The discovery of the Book of the Law is paralleled with the 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Based on the lesson's context, discuss the impact that uncovering "lost" sacred texts can have on a community's understanding and practice of their faith.

Glossary of Key Terms

Term / Name	Definition
Abdon	The son of Micah; one of the officials King Josiah commanded to inquire of the Lord.
Ahikam	The son of Shaphan; one of the officials King Josiah commanded to inquire of the Lord.
Amon	Son of Manasseh and father of Josiah. He was assassinated two years into his reign as king of Judah.
Asaiah	A servant of King Josiah's who was commanded to inquire of the Lord.
Book of the Law	The ancient scroll found by Hilkiah the priest in the house of the Lord during its repair. Its reading prompted King Josiah's reforms.
Dead Sea Scrolls	Seven ancient scrolls discovered in a cave near the Dead Sea in 1947. Their discovery significantly expanded knowledge of the time period when Jesus lived.
Hasrah	The grandfather of Shallum and great-grandfather-in-law of Huldah the prophetess.
Hezekiah	A king of Judah who reigned from 715–685 BC. Following his reign, the temple fell into disrepair.
Hilkiah	The priest who discovered the Book of the Law in the temple during its restoration under King Josiah.
Huldah	A prophetess who lived in Jerusalem. She was consulted by King Josiah's delegation to provide a prophetic word from the Lord concerning the Book of the Law.
Jehoiakim	An individual mentioned in the "Thought to Remember" as a contrasting example to Josiah, implying a negative response to God's word.
Joash	A previous king whose temple repairs and payment methods are cited in the Pastor's Notes as comparable to Josiah's project.
Josiah	King of Judah from 640–609 BC, who ascended the throne at age eight. His reign is known for significant religious reforms, including the restoration of the temple.
Manasseh	King of Judah from 696–642 BC and grandfather of Josiah. His long reign was a period during which the Jerusalem temple fell into neglect.
Reform	A central theme of the lesson, described as the process of returning to core values or principles that have been neglected or forgotten.
Shallum	The husband of Huldah the prophetess and keeper of the wardrobe.
Shaphan	The scribe who received the Book of the Law from Hilkiah and read it before King Josiah.
Tikvath	The father of Shallum and father-in-law of Huldah the prophetess.