

**Finding Your Story in HIStory:**  
**Kings and Kingdoms Will All Pass Away**  
**2 Kings 22:1-13**

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**Text Introduction:** We are attempting in this series of messages to give an idea of the story of God. Here is a story that begins in creation. Creation gives indication that God created us for relationship. But, as we have learned, our sin has broken that relationship. We do not fully understand what God is doing in history until we see that God pursues us to restore that relationship. So, we have been considering the major mile posts that show us that history. I hope what you are understanding with me is that whether we are talking about Adam and Eve, Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, Moses, Joshua, or the whole nation of Israel, we see a similar cycle of relationship, rebellion, and a pursuit to restore that relationship.

Last week we saw that Israel's rebellion caused them to want to be like all the other nations. Their desire to be like all of the other nations caused them to demand a king. God allowed them to have a king—first Saul, then David. Through David and David's son Solomon, Israel became a world power. But, Israel learns what subsequent generations have learned time and time again—"Kings and kingdoms will all pass away." Then what?

After Solomon, there is a battle for the throne between Solomon's two sons. The result is a divided kingdom—ten tribes would be called Israel; the two remaining tribes would be called Judah. The result of this divided kingdom is continued rebellion against God. With each king, the nation moves farther and farther away from God.

God warned continually that Israel/Judah would not continue to live in the Promised Land if they disobeyed. God was patient through many generations with Israel. Finally, in 2 Kings, Israel falls at the hands of the Assyrians, and Judah falls at the hands of the Babylonians. Many are taken to live in exile. The dates of these falls are generally given as c. 721 B.C. for Israel and c. 588/587 B.C. for Judah.

Chapters 1-17 of 2 Kings tell us of the fall of Israel. Chapters 18-25 tell the story of the fall of Judah and subsequent exile at the hands of the Babylonians. The one difference (in Judah's fall and Israel's fall) that makes these chapters a bit more pleasant to read is the characters of Hezekiah and Josiah. Each of these men was more devoted to God, detested the pagan worship, and demanding reform which led to brief revival in Judah. It's to Josiah's story that I would like to turn to today.

**Text:** <sup>1</sup> Josiah was eight years old when he became king and reigned 31 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah; she was from Bozkath. <sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the LORD's sight and walked in all the ways of his ancestor David; he did not turn to the right or the left.

<sup>3</sup> In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent the court secretary Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, to the LORD's temple, saying, <sup>4</sup> "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest so that he may total up the money brought into the LORD's temple—the money the doorkeepers have collected from the people. <sup>5</sup> It is to be put into the hands of those doing the work—those who oversee the LORD's temple. They in turn are to give it to the workmen in the LORD's temple to repair the damage. <sup>6</sup> They are to give it to the carpenters, builders, and masons to buy timber and quarried stone to repair the temple. <sup>7</sup> But no

accounting is to be required from them for the money put into their hands since they work with integrity.”

<sup>8</sup> Hilkiah the high priest told Shaphan the court secretary, “I have found the book of the law in the LORD’s temple,” and he gave the book to Shaphan, who read it.

<sup>9</sup> Then Shaphan the court secretary went to the king and reported, “Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the temple and have put it into the hand of those doing the work—those who oversee the LORD’s temple.” <sup>10</sup> Then Shaphan the court secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book,” and Shaphan read it in the presence of the king.

<sup>11</sup> When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. <sup>12</sup> Then he commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the court secretary, and the king’s servant Asaiah: <sup>13</sup> “Go and inquire of the LORD for me, the people, and all Judah about the instruction in this book that has been found. For great is the LORD’s wrath that is kindled against us because our ancestors have not obeyed the words of this book in order to do everything written about us.”

### **Introduction:**

King Josiah had an unusual resume, don’t you think? The very first thing that we learn about Josiah is that he was eight years old when he became king. Verse 2 gives us a summary statement about his entire life. “And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.” That is a summary statement to underscore that so far as Israel’s history is concerned, Josiah is at the top of the list, especially in regards to his spiritual influence upon the kingdom. A few weeks ago, we said about Ruth that she was a bright spot in an otherwise dark time. The same is true of Josiah.

I want to underscore two principles from Josiah’s reign that are foundational to our story in HStory.

### **In any generation, rebellion begins with the neglect of the word of God.**

The text tells us that King Josiah, now 26 years old, commands some repairs to the house of God. The King sent some men with money to pay for the repairs. While there, the High Priest tells them that he had discovered the lost Book of the Law—the Torah—the first five books of our Bible. The High Priest sends the Book back with the king’s men to deliver to Josiah. How did they ever lose the Book of the Law? I believe the answer is in one word: neglect.

Notice, that according to this text, it is possible to have a house of worship, leaders of worship, people gathering for the purpose of worship, but neglect the person to which we are to direct that worship—God and subsequently to neglect the word of God.

How does neglect of the word of God happen? Little by little! Even in this text, there is a clue of how neglect happens. The business of finding the Book of the law is secondary in the secretary’s report. Neglect is sure to happen when the Word of God is not primary. Little by little through the generations, the word of God was lost.

The first step in forgetting the word of God is neglecting the word of God today.

I heard a story about a man who was about to send his son off into the world to study at a university. The man knew that the secular educators of the day would soon attack the fundamental Christian beliefs that he had tried to teach his son. He knew that one of the first things professors might attack would be the miracles of the Bible. Believing that the Biblical account of Jonah would be first attacked, he forewarned his son, "Don't let them take Jonah out of your Bible." With that caution, he sent his son to the university. Upon completion of his degree and further post-graduate study, the son returned home for a brief visit. Thinking about his prior admonitions the father asked, "Son, Is Jonah still in your Bible?" Mockingly, the son answered no and added that it was not in his father's Bible either. The father, anxious to prove his son wrong, turned the pages and to his horror discovered that someone had cut the pages of Jonah clean out of his Bible. The son confessed that eight years ago, before leaving for college, he had been the one who had put the scissors to his father's Bible. The son asked his father, "What's the difference in liberal education taking Jonah out of my Bible and neglect taking Jonah away from you?"

**In any generation, revival begins with obedience to the word of God.**

Josiah hears the word of God, but he also acts upon the word of God.

Conviction leads to action!

Josiah was convicted that God's word was true. He was scared actually of the consequences of disobedience. That's not necessarily bad. That conviction led to action. Josiah took away those things that should have been taken away and added those things that were missing.

The famed preacher C.H. Spurgeon said, "I would recommend you either believe God up to the hilt, or else not to believe at all. Believe this book of God, every letter of it, or else reject it. There is no logical standing place between the two. Be satisfied with nothing less than a faith that swims in the deeps of divine revelation; a faith that paddles about the edge of the water is poor faith at best. It is little better than a dry-land faith, and is not good for much."

The truth is: Kings and kingdoms will all pass away. Even Josiah's reform would not last in the next generation. But, what is your story going to read? Neglect or obedience to the word of God.