

Sermon Follow-up | December 22, 2019 — 4th Sunday of Advent

12 Books of History — Waiting for the King: Josiah to the Exile

Focus Passage: 2 Kings 22:1–20; Matthew 1:8–11

Additional Context: 2 Kings 25:1–26

Corollary Scripture: 2 Chronicles 34:1–21

Other Passages Referenced: Deuteronomy 17:18–20; 2 Kings 24:10–17; 2 Chronicles 35:20–27

Context Helps:

- David became king 1003 BC
- Josiah became king in 640 BC
- Solomon’s temple dedicated in 959 BC (Construction began in 966 BC)
- When we read that Josiah “walked in the way of his father David” (2 Kings 22:2), we need to keep in mind that David was Josiah’s ancestor, but not his literal father. There were more than 350 years and twelve other kings between David and Josiah.
- Most Bible scholars are convinced that the lost book of the Law was at least a portion of Deuteronomy, if not the entire Torah.
- The word “syncretism” was mentioned in the sermon. Syncretism is an effort to blend or synchronize different belief systems together so that neither one is the same as it originally was.
- Info in 2 Chronicles complements and fills in some gaps.

Sermon Recap: After Solomon’s reign Israel was divided into separate regions of Israel to the north and Judah to the south—the divided monarchy. All 19 of Israel’s northern kings are said to have “done evil in the eyes of the LORD.” Only 8 of Judah’s 20 kings were considered “good” kings. Josiah was one of the very best. “He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in all the way of David his father, and he did not turn aside to the right or to the left” (2 Kings 22:2). In all of the Bible, Josiah is the only king of whom this is said. The statement points to the ideal God established about Israel’s kings in Deut 17:19–20: “... that he (the king) may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law ... that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left” In spite of his father, Amon, and his grandfather, Manasseh, being two of Judah’s most notoriously bad kings, by God’s grace, somehow Josiah had been seeking the LORD. Apparently, Josiah and the Israelites had not had the Book of the Law at hand for many years until Hilkiah the priest found it during renovations of the temple. When Josiah heard the word of the Law, he immediately humbled himself and tore his clothes in grief. He then sought out a prophetess of the LORD, Huldah, to get further direction from God. The LORD announced that Israel was under His wrath for their unfaithfulness to Him just as He had declared would happen in the Law. However, because of Josiah’s faithfulness, the king would be spared seeing the calamity that would come with the destruction and exile of Judah. As good and faithful as Josiah was, he could not change the idolatrous hearts of the people nor deliver them from the exile. Josiah pointed to Jesus who was a more faithful King, a King with the power to change and deliver people from sin and idolatry.

Contextual Notes:

Connect: Making Honest Connections with One Another

- How did God speak to you through the sermon or your Bible reading this week?
- Recall that last week’s sermon was about seeking wisdom from God. Can you share a personal experience about asking God for wisdom in the past week?

- *How did you react to the question in the sermon, “You haven’t lost the word of God, have you?”*

Grow: *Listening to and Learning from God’s Word –*

To better appreciate the setting of our focus passage, read 2 Kings 21:1–26 as well as 2 Kings 22:1–20.

1. About how old was the temple by this time? (See context notes above and add 18 years of Josiah’s reign.) In light of 2 Kings 21, in addition to its age, why else might the temple need carpenters, builders, and masons to make repairs?
2. What did King Josiah do after his secretary Shaphan read the newly-found book to him, of which he had previously been unaware? (2 Kings 22:11–13)
3. What might be some reasons the Book of the Law got set aside and lost for so many years?
4. What were some of the egregious sins of Josiah’s father Amon and his grandfather Manassah? (See 2 Kings 21. 2 Chronicles 33:10–20 gives additional information that Manassah later expressed repentance.)
5. We find the word “wrath” in 2 Kings 22:13 and 17. What were some stated reasons for God’s wrath against His own people?
6. How do the wrath of God and the gospel of Jesus relate to each other?
7. What does God promise Josiah in 2 Kings 22:20? (To see some of the details about what God was sparing Josiah from enduring and what the Israelites would face, read Deuteronomy 28:15–68.)
8. We see God’s promise to Josiah fulfilled in 2 Kings 23:28–30, and even more details are found in 2 Chronicles 35:20–27.

Serve: *Serving King Jesus and Others, By Living Out and Letting Others Know God’s Word*

1. When you examine your life in light of the promises and commandments of the Bible, does anything draw you to a reaction like Josiah’s of humbling himself, tearing his clothes, and seeking the LORD? It was

mentioned in the sermon that Hilkiah and Shaphan heard the word of the Law but Josiah was impacted by it. For us, it would not be the Law so much as the gospel and the commands for reflecting Jesus' holiness.

2. Where do you see dangers of "syncretism" (defined in context helps above) among Christians today?
3. This would be a great story to share with someone who may have "lost" the word of the LORD. Will you pray to have the opportunity share a synopsis of the sermon and 2 Kings 22 with others?

Further Resources

- Illustrations and quotes from the sermon can be found on the "Sermon Slides" link at the bottom of www.wchapel.org