

II KINGS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Kings chapter 21 as we continue with our study through the Word of God. We closed last time with the death of a good king, a godly king, Hezekiah. He started out very well, but he finished a little weak. The Lord told him to get his house in order because he was going to die and he was upset and cried out to God and God gave him another 15 years to live. And in that time he let the Babylonians come in and see the wealth of the kingdom, and that would encourage them down the road to come in and plunder the Southern Kingdom of Judah. And yes, it was the judgment of God, but it was also a mistake on the part of Hezekiah to show them the wealth of the kingdom and God rebuked him because of it.

Now when Hezekiah heard that judgment was going to come, when God said through the prophet Isaiah what was going to happen, Hezekiah basically said, "Well, at least it is not going to happen in my day!" As you can see he was very self-centered instead of others-centered. When his life was on the line he prayed all night. Now, that this judgment would not affect him, he does nothing!

And during those extra 15 years he had a son by the name of Manasseh and he was a wicked man, as we will see tonight in our study. Hezekiah has died and now his son Manasseh is the king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. With that said, let's begin reading in II Kings chapter 21, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

II KINGS 21**VERSES 1-2**

1. As I have said, during those added 15 years of Hezekiah's life, Manasseh, his son was born. Of this Knapp makes these interesting remarks. "Had this good king been able to foresee the wickedness of his unworthy son, he would doubtless have no desire to recover from his sickness. Better by far die childless than beget a son such as Manasseh proved to be." As I look at this I can't help thinking, "God knows best!" You see, there is that perfect will of God and for Hezekiah, it was time for him to die. But he did not like that and he cries out to the Lord and the Lord gives him those extra 15 years, and that is the permissive will of God, not what is best, and I think many times we go for God's permissive will instead of His perfect will because we think we know what is best and in reality, His perfect will is what is best. If Hezekiah would have trusted in the Lord and if we would only trust in Him more!

You see, I wonder what would have happened if Hezekiah sought the perfect will of God for his life instead of seeking what he thought was best for himself. Let us always seek God's perfect will for our own lives for we see where God's permissive will can lead to. It is as Paul said in Romans 12:2, "**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**" Let's seek His perfect will as we live out our faith!

2. Manasseh was by far the most wicked king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. He did everything that the Lord told him not to do. He imitated the sins of the Canaanites and what the Northern Kingdom of Israel had done. And God judged both the Canaanites and the Northern Kingdom of Israel and He will judge the Southern Kingdom of Judah for their sins as well. What is amazing to me is that in those 55 years that he was their king, all the reform that his father brought into the kingdom was destroyed by Manasseh! And in these verses we have a summary of the reign of Manasseh and now we will see the specifics of his sins!

VERSES 3-8

1. When you look at the reforms that Hezekiah brought to the nation, when you look at the revival that broke out during his reign, all that comes to an end with the reign of his son as he leads the nation away from God and very quickly! And here's the thing. Reforms, spiritual revivals are not permanent. You see, the bottom line is this, if you drift away from God then that fire that was burning in you and in a nation, can quickly die out and that is what we see here in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. And we will talk more about this in a few minutes.

2. Notice what Manasseh did. He rebuilt those high places that his father had torn down. And he was not worshiping the true and living God on these high places, for he set up altars for Baal and made wooden images. It was kind of a state sponsored worship of Baal, he lead the nation down this idolatrous path.

He also worshiped the host of heaven. In other words, he brought astrological worship into the nation; following what the other nations were doing, especially the Babylonians. But that is not all he did that was evil!

Not only did he bring idol worship into the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but now he brought these false altars into the house of God, the temple of God and was corrupting the worship of God. Even the host of heaven, this astrological worship was brought into the temple of God!

And then, like the other nations, he offered his son to the god Molech, this Canaanite god. And these children were placed in the hot hands of this brazen god and burned to death and the people beat the drums to silence the screams of these children! And why was this done? To ensure prosperity!

And look at the occult practices that he brought into this nation, soothsaying, witchcraft, spiritists that were consulted; he used mediums to contact the dead. And not only that, it says that he did much more evil to provoke the Lord to anger. You would think that this would have been enough, but when you travel on this path it is amazing how far away from God you can go!

He even set up a carved image of Asherah that he made himself and placed this in the house of God, the temple of God. And understand that Asherah was a Canaanite goddess of fertility and was worshiped through ritual prostitution. And listen carefully to what Manasseh did. He made the house of God into an idolatrous brothel and it was dedicated to this fertility goddess Asherah! It is as Clarke wrote, “From the whole it is evident that Asherah was no other than Venus; the nature of whose worship is plain enough from the mention of whoremongers and prostitutes.” That was now what the temple of God was like, the place where God said He has put His name!

VERSE 9

1. Yes, Manasseh was a wicked king and he was leading the nation away from God, into idolatry but make no mistake about it, the people also were responsible for what they were doing. In fact, in II Chronicles 33:10 we are told, “**And the Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen.**” Or as The Living Bible puts this verse, “**Warnings from the Lord were ignored by both Manasseh and his people.**” God spoke to His leaders and to the people, but both rejected His warnings, His Word and they did even more evil! And Patterson and Austel had this to add to what was happening as they wrote, “How superficial had been the nation’s compliance with Hezekiah’s reforms! Without a strong spiritual leader, the sinful people quickly turned to their own evil machinations [scheming]. The judgment of God could not be far away.” And it was not that far away!

VERSES 10-15

1. When God's people, when His leaders had turned from Him, God still had a voice to Judah and it was the prophets of God who were speaking for Him. Who were these prophets that were speaking for God? They were Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk and Isaiah. And God says that His people were acting more wickedly than the Amorites, which was a serious charge. You see, the Amorites were among the Canaanite tribes that were in the land before the children of Israel came in and they were known for their violent, immoral, depraved ways! And now the Southern Kingdom of Judah was worse than the Amorites and God will judge them for their actions. In fact, this idea of whoever hears of this, both their ears will tingle is speaking of severe judgment, it will be like someone slapping you on both sides of your head and causing your ears to tingle or ring!

2. Just as the Northern Kingdom of Israel or their capital Samaria was judged by God for their wickedness, so too will the Southern Kingdom of Judah, for crossing over that line just as Samaria did. You will be wiped clean as a dish for your idolatry. And we are told that God will "**forsake**" his people and of this Russell Dilday wrote, "Forsake is a strong, forceful word used to describe the skinning of an animal. It is sometimes translated cast off." All because of their idolatry! And please understand that God is not forsaking the covenant that He made with His people, but He will judge them for their sin and the judgment will come in like a flood upon them for their idolatry!

VERSE 16

1. As you can see, Manasseh was a very wicked king. We see that idolatry was tolerated among God's people. We see then that idolatry was promoted in the land. Then idolatry was supported and funded by God's people. All this leads to the undermining of the worship of the true God. And when that happens it is then that the true worshipers of God are persecuted and murdered! And then we see the judgment of God coming upon them! Many feel that it was during the reign of Manasseh that the prophet Isaiah was sawn in two as Hebrews 11:37 says, "**They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.**" And, like I have said, many think that this is a reference to Isaiah being sawn in two. Pretty dark days and all because they turned from God, from the leaders to the common people and there was only a remnant that worshiped the true and living God and they were being persecuted and put to death for their faith!

VERSES 17-18

1. What a terrible legacy Manasseh left behind. He as a very wicked king and yet he was the son of a godly king, Hezekiah! And, as hard as this is to believe, as incredible as it may be for us to see, when things got tough we see a change in this man named Manasseh. In II Chronicles 33:11-17 we read more of what happened in his life when things got tough. We are told, **“Therefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. Now when he was in affliction, he implored the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, 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. 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. 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. 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. Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the Lord their God.”**

Manasseh repented of his sin and how do I know it was real? Because it affected his life and we see that as he took away the foreign gods and restored the true worship of God in the land. The tragedy is this, all the evil he brought into the land he was able to remove but he was not able to remove it from the hearts of the people. Yes he commanded them to worship the Lord God of Israel, but the high places remained and it was the little compromise that will lead to more compromise in the hearts of the people! Yes, there was this small revival, but it was too little, too late. Judgment was coming.

2. Now think about this. Is any person too far for God to save? Absolutely not! The most miserable sinner, the most wicked person, the most evil person can repent of their sins, turn to Christ and be completely forgiven. While, on the other hand, the nicest person, a good person in the eyes of man, apart from Christ will die in his sins! You see, sin has separated us from God and we can't do anything about it, only Jesus can and He has done the work, it is finished and we only need to receive that into our lives. And when we do, there is a change. You see, the One who saved a wretch like me does not want me to live like that anymore. He has changed me. What I use to do I no longer do, not because the Law says I can't, but because love compels me not to and by the power of God spirit I can live a life that is pleasing to Him!

Listen to how the lives of the Thessalonians were changed. In I Thessalonians 1:5-10 we are told, **“For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”** You see, as they repented of their sins, as they came to Christ, their lives were changed and others saw it. They no longer worshiped idols but the true and living God! A changed life is evidence of a changed heart.

Let me share this illustration with you and you will see what I mean. We are told, “The Romans sometimes compelled a captive to be joined face-to-face with a dead body, and to bear it about until the horrible effluvia [an invisible emanation; especially an offensive exhalation or smell. It is a by-product especially in the form of waste] destroyed the life of the living victim. Virgil describes this cruel punishment: “The living and the dead at his command were coupled face to face, and hand to hand; till choked with stench, in loathed embraces tied, the lingering wretches pined away and died.” Without Christ, we are shackled to a dead corpse - our sinfulness. Only repentance frees us from certain death, for life and death cannot coexist indefinitely.

Not too many years ago newspapers carried the story of Al Johnson, a Kansas man who came to faith in Jesus Christ. What made his story remarkable was not his conversion, but the fact that as a result of his newfound faith in Christ, he confessed to a bank robbery he had participated in when he was nineteen years old. Because the statute of limitations on the case had run out, Johnson could not be prosecuted for the offense. Still, he believed his relationship with Christ demanded a confession. And he even voluntarily repaid his share of the stolen money!

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That is what God has done for us. He has set us free from the bondage of sin and He has changed us from the inside out. What He has done on the inside of our lives overflows in what we do and what we say. We are a new creation in Christ, may we live that way!

3. And so Manasseh rested with his fathers and I think that is correct. He was able to rest because he made peace with God! Now his son Amon was on the throne and what lessons did he learn from his father? Let's read on and see!

VERSES 19-22

1. Here is the difference between Manasseh and his son Amon. In II Chronicles 33:22-23 we are told, "**But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and served them. And he did not humble himself before the Lord, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.**" You see, Manasseh repented of his sin while his son Amon did not. And we see that he reigned for only two short years, and the reason is simple, the blessings of God were not upon the reign of Amon!

VERSES 23-36

1. So we see Amon assassinated and then the people killed those who put Amon to death. What a tragic story and yet, out of this we see the son of Amon, Josiah come to the throne. Of this Russell Dilday wrote this, "The only positive contribution Amon made to the history of Judah was to produce one of the best kings to reign on the throne of Jerusalem." And as we move into II Kings chapter 22 we see the story of Josiah, this godly king who rose up out of this ungodly family!

II KINGS 22**VERSES 1-2**

1. Now he came to the throne at this young age because his father, Amon was assassinated after reigning for only two years. And, according to II Chronicles 34:3-7, we are told of Josiah, **“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. They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which were above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And so he did in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes. When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.”** In other words, at the age of sixteen Josiah began to seek the Lord and by the age of twenty he was bringing godly reform to the nation!

VERSES 3-7

1. Josiah is now 26 years old and he is burdened to see the temple, the house of God repaired. For 57 years the temple has been desecrated by his grandfather Manasseh and his father Amon, and now he wants to repair it. Truly this was the place to begin, the place of worship. If worship is not important, if it is not put first, then no true revival could ever break out. God will not honor anything placed above the worship of Him.

2. Now what I want you to notice here is that this man, Josiah was the fulfillment of a prophecy that was given some 300 years earlier back in I Kings 13:1-2, which says, **“And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the Lord, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, ‘O altar, altar! Thus says the Lord: “Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.””** You see, God through this prophet called Josiah by name some 300 years before he was born. Let’s see what this man of God will do to a nation that was in darkness!

VERSES 8-10

1. After God is worshipped, the next step is to return or rediscover the Word of God.

Tragically the temple was used to worship other gods and as a huge storage area. So the Word of God was never really lost but it was just covered up by other things and placed aside. We see that today in the church. There is so much other junk that has been brought into the church that the Word of God is covered up with all this garbage. For true revival to break out, the worship of God must be the first priority and then a love for the Word of God.

2. Now how could this have happened in Judah? It is really simple, Judah was disobedient to God, they turned away from God and thus, they were not interested in the Word of God any longer, not until now when it was rediscovered! God wanted the Word of God to be a part of their lives. We are told in Deuteronomy 17:18-20 that each king was to have a personal copy of the Law and he was to read it. In Deuteronomy 31:9-13 we are told that the Law was to be read to the nation every 7 years at the Feast of Tabernacles. The Levites, the priests who were scattered among the tribes of Israel were also to teach the Law to the people. But that was not happening until now.

3. Let me share with you some of the long periods of time between the reading of the Law of God and you will see why there was such a problem in the nation. The first known public reading of the Law is seen in Joshua 8:30-35. Then, the next time we see a public reading of the Law is during the reign of Jehoshaphat, in II Chronicles 17:7-10, almost 500 years later! And now, during the reign of Josiah, almost 250 years after Jehoshaphat, we see the Law once again appear before the people, read before the people. Were there other times when this was done? There could have been but it is not recorded and that was truly the problem, the absence of the Word of God before the people! And let me say this, throughout the history of God's people, when the Word of God is recovered, when it is taught, revival seems to break out! I wonder what would happen if we see that today?

4. Listen to what J. I. Packer wrote on revival,

Revival is the visitation of God which brings to life Christians who have been sleeping and restores a deep sense of God's near presence and holiness. Thence springs a vivid sense of sin and a profound exercise of heart in repentance, praise, and love, with an evangelistic outflow.

Each revival movement has its own distinctive features, but the pattern is the same every time.

First God comes. On New Year's Eve 1739, John Wesley, George Whitefield, and some of their friends held a "love feast" which became a watch night of prayer to see the New Year in. At about 3 a.m., Wesley wrote, "the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground." Revival always begins with a restoration of the sense of the closeness of the Holy One.

Second, the gospel is loved as never before. The sense of God's nearness creates an overwhelming awareness of one's own sins and sinfulness, and so the power of the cleansing blood of Christ is greatly appreciated.

Then repentance deepens. In the Ulster revival in the 1920s shipyard workers brought back so many stolen tools that new sheds had to be built to house the recovered property! Repentance results in restitution.

Finally, the Spirit works fast: godliness multiplies, Christians mature, converts appear. Paul was at Thessalonica for less than three weeks, but God worked quickly and Paul left a virile church behind him.

- James Packer, *Your Father Loves You*

VERSES 11-13

1. Notice the response by Josiah as he hears the Words of the Lord. He tore his clothes, which was as sign of mourning. You see, he recognized that all that has befallen the Southern Kingdom of Judah was a result of disobeying the Words of the Lord. Isn't it amazing that up to this point, Josiah never heard the Words of the Lord, and neither did the people. Now some say that the Word of God must have been heard, but if it was, why wasn't there the conviction? You see, I don't think it was heard up until this point. It was lost amongst the garbage that was placed in the temple and now it was found and read and Josiah is convicted by these words and now he understands the reasons for the problems that had come upon them. It was sin!

2. Now we see this occur in the New Testament, this conviction of sin, and there are many places but the one I want to focus on is found in Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, as Peter completed his Spirit filled message to the people, as He spoke forth the Words of God, notice what happens to them. In Acts 2:37-41, **“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”**

Do you see what happened here? As the Word of God was being taught, not skits, not dances, not puppet shows, not entertainment, when the Word of God was being taught conviction came upon them and they cried out wondering what they needed to do to be saved from the wrath that was to come! And Peter tells them that they needed to repent and receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior!

Now, what happened after they were saved? We don't have to guess because we are told, "**And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.**" Acts 2:42-43. They continued in the Word of God, they continued to be in fellowship, they shared in communion and they prayed! Today we have moved away from God's Word and we wonder why lives are not changed, that there is no conviction of sin, it is because the Word of God is not being taught! And when that happens, that fellowship in Christ is lost, communion is a ritual instead of a reality and prayer is meaningless! May we get back to the Word of God!

3. As conviction comes upon the heart of Josiah, he asks the high priest and three other men to go and inquire of the Lord to see what God would have them to do and what is in store for them.

VERSES 14-17

1. Huldah, the prophetess, tells them that judgment is coming but not in the days of Josiah. And as much as Josiah brought revival to the people, they never were able to remove themselves from the wickedness that his father and grandfather brought into the land. And as with any revival, many people jumped on the band wagon because it was a happening thing to do, it was exciting, and yet their hearts had not changed. It was more of an outward display of religiosity.

2. There are some that want God, but they don't want God to touch their lives. Just to be there but not to affect them in any way. Maybe you heard the illustration of \$3.00 worth of God. It goes like this,

I would like to buy \$3.00 worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I don't want enough of Him to make me love a black man or pick beets with a migrant. I want ecstasy, not transformation; I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3.00 worth of God, please.

- Wilbur Rees, from When I Relax I Feel Guilty by Tim Hansel

God wants all of you and you should want all of Him! And when we ask for all of Him, guess what, that is what we will get. He will affect every aspect of our lives. If you only want \$3.00 worth of God, that is exactly what you will get and there will not be a transformation but you will be conformed to this world!

3. There are many people today who are trusting in their churches to save them, trusting in this religious thing or that religious thing and as religious as these people may be, their hearts are far from God and judgment is coming! Listen carefully to what the prophet Jeremiah said, and keep in mind that he was a prophet during the time of Josiah on into the time of their captivity! In Jeremiah 7:1-14 we are told, **“The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, ‘Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, ‘Hear the word of the Lord, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the Lord!’” Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Do not trust in these lying words, saying, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these.” For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations’? Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it,” says the Lord. But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel.**

And now, because you have done all these works,' says the Lord, 'and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer, therefore I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to this place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh.'

You see, they went to temple or we would say to church and they truly believed they could live like the devil and by going to church they would get a blessing, they were saved and the Lord is saying they are not. And he wants them to look at Shiloh as an object lesson. You see, Shiloh was to be an object lesson for the nation. When they first entered the land they set up the tabernacle in Shiloh and later as the nation was divided, the Northern Kingdom of Israel ran into idolatry and God judged them for it. And Shiloh became no longer a place of worship, but a barren wasteland that remains in that condition today. But the people refused to look and listen to what God was saying. In Psalm 78:58-61 we read, **"For they provoked Him to anger with their high places, and moved Him to jealousy with their carved images. When God heard this, He was furious, and greatly abhorred Israel, So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent He had placed among men, And delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy's hand."**

God wants people to come to Him, to repent of their sins, but He will not force them. And you can see the evidence of what sin has done as you look out into this world and Jesus has come to rectify what sin has done in our lives and in this world. Thus, turn to Him or face His judgment!

VERSES 18-20

1. Notice the grace of God here towards Josiah. His heart was tender towards God. Now how was it tender towards God? First of all it was tender to the Word of God, it was open, and as God's Word was read he was convicted. Too often people can hear God's Word, they know what God wants but they harden themselves to what God is telling them to do.

Secondly, when he heard the judgment that was to come he was open to it, his heart was tender, and he understood why it was coming! Thus, God delayed His judgment until after Josiah had died!

2. We are now going to be seeing the Assyrians, who were the world dominating empire, beginning to succumb to the Babylonians. Nineveh, the capitol of Assyria fell in 612 BC and the Assyrian Empire fell in 609 BC. Thus, it is now the Babylonians that will be the world dominating empire as the Assyrians pass off the scene. God will use this pagan nation to bring His judgment upon the Southern Kingdom of Judah and we will see that as we move on in our study of II Kings.