

INTRODUCTION

- All of us have people whom we imitate and look up to. (*Illustration*: “I want to be like Mike.”)
- The best examples are those who look like Jesus.
- II Kings, introduces a person, a young king, whom the Bible holds forth as a good example to follow.
 - II Kings 22:2 says this of him, “And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.”
 - II Kings 23:25 says, “And like unto him was there no king before him that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.”
- Name = Josiah; became king at age 8.
- Yet, he is put forth as a model that we should strive to exemplify. Why? Because, in spite of lots of problems tempting him to do wrong, Josiah chose to do right. Thus, he both lived in a daily state of a revived heart, and he led others into a relationship of revival with God.
- We’ll look at both the problems he faced and then the choices he made, that renewed a revival within him and his nation.

I. The Problems He Faced**A. Family Problems (II Kings 21:1-22:1)**

- Josiah’s family had a history of problems
- Josiah came from a dysfunctional family

1. Josiah’s Grandfather—Manasseh (21:1-18)

- Josiah’s grandfather (Manasseh) had a good and godly father = Hezekiah (Josiah’s great grandfather) → II Kings 18:3, 5 – “And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD ...[and] he trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him.”
- Manasseh didn’t learn a thing = II Kings 21:2 “And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.”
 - Ruled 55 years in wickedness

- Idol worship, witchcraft, child-sacrifice, murder (II Kings 21:16 – “Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.”)
- Led others to do sin = II Kings 21:9 – “Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel.”
- Eventually repented, but had too much to undo.
- Didn’t teach his son right.

2. Josiah’s Father—Amon (21:19-26)

- II Kings 21:20 – “And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh did.” = “Like father, like son.”
- II Kings 21:22 – He “forsook” God.
- He did everything his father had done, except he never repented.
- His servants assassinated him
- These murderers made Josiah king

3. Josiah Himself (22:1)

- Two previous generations of bad examples, and now, he has to rule the nation.
- Another problem = he was only 8 years old; second youngest ruler of Judah (II Kings 11:21 – the other was 7)
- No help learning from father; no father to guide and help him; he was on his own

B. Societal Problems (II Kings 21, 23)

- There were major problems in his nation and problems with peer-pressure

1. Idolatry (23:4-6, 8-16, 19, 20, 24)

- Because of Josiah’s ancestors, idolatry ran rampant in Israel
 - II Kings 23 → A long list of all the idols = Polytheistic (II Kings 23:5— “[They worshiped] to Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven”)
 - Even idols in house of God (II Ki. 21:4)
 - Included child sacrifices to Molech

Application: Examples of idols of teens

2. Violence (21:23, 24)

- Manasseh, Judah's king, was a murderer → Amon was murdered by servants → Servants were murdered by everyone else = violence was common
- Similar to Judges 21:25—"In those days...every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

3. Immorality (23:7)

- II Kings 23:7—"The houses of the sodomites...were by the house of the Lord."
 - Notice where they made their home—out in public, mixed with religion

Application: Josiah's problems = our problems; what did Josiah do in the face of those problems—flee, join them, coward away, speak out, ignore? No!

II. The Solution He Found

- Josiah faced great problems
- He responded rightly—didn't run, cower, ignore; didn't "If you can't beat them join them."
- II Chronicles 34:3—"In the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after... God." = At age 16, he got serious about his God.
- "Seek after" = diligently inquire after → he searched for God as one would for a treasure; he wanted God bad enough, that he diligently searched for Him and did whatever God wanted him to do.
- Josiah refused to allow the problems around him to be an excuse to why revival wasn't the regular experience of his heart. God and His assessment was bigger to him than his society, and so he chose to maintain a sensitivity to God and enjoy the renewal of revival each day.
- How did he seek God?

A. Established Godly Friends (II Kings 22:3-14)

- His close friends, his advisors = Shaphan the scribe, Hilkiah the priest, Huldah the prophetess → His friends were those who had dedicated themselves to seek God, too
 - Told Josiah what he needed to hear
 - Helped him know what God wanted them to do
 - Joined him in seeking the Lord

Illustration: Parrot's "bad company"

Application: Who are your friends?

- Friends are cheap; true friends are rare. Do you settle for the ones who flatter, make you feel good, etc.
- BAD → 2 Samuel 13:3—But Amnon had a friend...
 - Amnon wanted to do something that God had forbidden (Lev. 18:11). But he had not done it yet (v. 2).
 - But his "shrewd" (literally, "wise," but worldly wise) friend (v. 3) helped provide an opportunity for Amnon to gratify his flesh.
 - As a result, Amnon disobeyed God, lied, and selfishly hurt an innocent person (vv. 6-14).
 - His sin did not satisfy him as he thought it would when he listened to his friend (v. 15).
 - As a result of listening to his friend, Amnon eventually (v. 23) paid immensely for his sin (vv. 23-29).
 - What happened to Jonadab? He innocently befriended and comforted David. He "burnt" Amnon, but he himself got away clean.
- GOOD → Proverbs 13:20; Psalm 16, 101

B. Ended Wicked Practices (II Ki. 23:4-20, 24; 22:3-7)

- II Kings 23:4-24 = List of all the wickedness that Josiah ended; 15 of the 21 verses start with "And" = Josiah got on a role → "He did this, and then he did this, and then..."
- What did he do? He broke down idols, ground them into powder, and scattered the dust; he burned some idols; he cut down and burned the groves of idol worship; he burned the bones of dead pagan priests; he killed all the idolatrous priests, wizards, and mediums.

Illustration: Josiah was like the Indiana Jones, Arnold Swarzenegger, "Double O, 7 [007]"; Cheered on by all the "religious fanatics" who kept the tallies; would have been eaten alive by the liberal media for his intolerance

Application: Seeking God = Psalm 97:10—"Ye that love the LORD, hate evil." = take it personally as something that will hurt you and God; be tenacious and aggressive in your pursuit of holiness and accompanying cleansing from wickedness.

C. Elevated God's Word (II Kings 22:8-23:4; 23:21-23)

- It was found in the temple as construction was underway (neglected and lost for years, but when sin was purged, it became a necessary asset) → shown and read to the king; he realized how much the nation and himself had disobeyed the Word of God → Josiah then elevated the Word of God to a position of priority; the Word of God replaced the wickedness of the godless
- Psalm 1:1, 2—"Blessed is the man...[whose] delight is in the law of the LORD." How do we show our delight in or elevation of God's Word?

1. Read the Word (22:10, 11; 23:1, 2)

2. Repented of his Sin (22:11-13, 19; 23:3)

Illustration: Art critic, having forgotten his glasses, criticizing his own reflection in a mirror

- Sometimes when we point the finger at others, we don't realize we're looking in a mirror at the very problems that we have. Josiah took ownership of His own sin and repented when confronted by God's Word. He was transparent and thorough.
- Psalm 119:9—"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

3. Responded in Obedience (23:1-4, 21-23)

CONCLUSION

- Sum up message—Josiah is an example we should follow, for despite the problems he faced, he daily renewed revival in his life and others. How? He "turned to the Lord with all his heart" (II Kings 23:25) and "began to seek after...God" (II Chronicles 34:3)—he simply got serious about God every day.