II Kings 21

Review…

- **I Kings 20 – The Failure of Hezekiah…**
  - Hezekiah was sick – Isaiah came to him and told him he was going to die…
    - Hezekiah was to set his house in order - make arrangements for a successor…
      - But Hezekiah turned his face to the wall – prayed – and wept bitterly…
      - He argued that he had always followed the Lord with a loyal heart – done what was right…
      - Hezekiah did not understand – death was not a punishment – it was the finish line!
    - God heard the prayer of Hezekiah – and gave him another 15 years…
      - As a sign to prove God would heal – God set the sundial back 10 degrees…
      - Yet it was during those 15 years his son Manasseh was born…
      - Manasseh who was the most wicked king ever to reign in Judah!
  - Ambassadors from Babylon came to congratulate Hezekiah for getting better…
    - But God used Babylon to test the heart of King Hezekiah…
    - Would Hezekiah give glory to the Lord – and be proud and take credit for what God had done!
    - Hezekiah showed the ambassadors from Babylon EVERYTHING in HIS kingdom…
    - So Isaiah confronted and asked the King – and Hezekiah repented…
    - Not a perfect King – but a forgiven one – the best ever to reign over Judah after David!

Wicked King Manasseh… (*3 things*)

- **1st – The Idolatry of Manasseh… vs. 1-9** Read: II Kings 21:1-9
  - 1st – Manasseh was the 14th King of Judah – and reigned for 55 years (*longest of any King*)… vs. 1
    - He was 12 years old when he became King of Judah…
      - Meaning he was born 3 years after God extended the life of Hezekiah by 15 years…
      - Hezekiah had the unique position of knowing he had exactly 12 years to prepare his son…
      - 12 years to teach him about the Lord – prepare him to be a Godly man!
    - God has given Dads the responsibility for their kids…
      - **Ephesians 6:4** – Fathers do not provoke your children…
        - So often Dad's want to lay down the Law for their children…
        - When I was about 4 - I was grounded and told I could not go outside...
        - But I saw an ice cream truck passing by - so I broke my little piggy bank...
        - And snuck outside and bought myself some delicious ice-cream...
        - It is easy to tell a child what to do and what not to do – force them to do what is right...
        - But by laying down the Law – we provoke our children - inspire them to rebel…
        - The Law only stirs in us the desire for sin – sin that leads to judgment/death...
        - Why is it the moment we are given a 'rule' / 'law' we want to disobey it…
        - Because we are sinners – and the Law 'stirs' up our sinful desires…

- Children do not need LOTS of rules - they need to learn about Jesus!
- That does not mean fathers should not disciple their kids...
  - **Proverbs 22:15** – "Sin is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him."
  - Children who have no discipline – as they get older tend to become troubled youth…
  - Children need to learn the consequences of actions – learn obedience…
  - But make sure when you have to disciple your children - do it in love!

- **Ephesians 6:4** – Fathers train up your children… (*Present/Active/Imperative*)
  - We understand the need to teach our kids about life...
  - We show them how to use a hammer / how to swim / how to burp...
  - But it is also the responsibility of the Dad to teach the kids about Jesus!
  - Too often fathers forget that they are to be the spiritual leaders of their homes…
  - Take the time to read the Bible with your children / pray with them...
  - If we do not teach our kids to have a relationship with Jesus - who will!
  - Do not miss the most important ministry God has given to you - your family!
  - **III John 4** – "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."
- Yet Manasseh turned out to be a VERY wicked King…
  - Likely a result of bad influences that came after the death of Hezekiah…
  - A good warning to parents – be careful who you let your children hand around with…
  - You can teach them all about Jesus – but they will ultimately follow their peers…
  - People will either draw you closer to - or father away from Jesus...
  - Encourage your kids to have godly friends - those who encourage them walk in the Lord!
  - **I Corinthians 15:33** - "...bad company corrupts good character."

- 2nd – Manasseh undid the religious reforms of his Father… vs. 2-8
  - He rebuilt the High Places his father had destroyed…
    - He placed altars to the 'host of heaven' (*sun / moon / stars*) in the Temple courtyard…
    - Rebuilding the altars of Baal / and Asherah (*Venus*) – as King Ahab had done!
    - He could not have been more different from his Father if he had tried…
    - Almost as if Manasseh had something against God – wanted to make a point...
    - Perhaps angry because God had taken his dad from him at a young age
    - When life seems to be unfair – it is easy to want to shake our fists and blame God…
    - He is in control after all – so therefore He is to blame for the troubles in our lives…
    - The problem is if we blame God – then we miss out on what God is doing…
    - Because EVERYTHING that God allows is ultimately going to be for good!
  - Manasseh made his sons pass through the fire - sacrificed to Molech – God of pleasure…
    - He practiced soothsaying – 'observing times' – he followed horoscopes…
    - He used witchcraft – sorcery / pharmakeia - **Galatians 5:20** – the use of drugs…
    - He consulted spiritists – 'familiar spirits' – séances to speak to the dead…
    - He met with mediums - wizards – think palm readers / tea leaves / crystal balls…
    - All of these things were specifically forbidden by the Law - **Deuteronomy 18:9-14**
    - The world has not changed much – all of these things are still around today…
    - And they all have one thing in common – looking for answers someone else other than God…

- When people run to pleasure or drugs to try and find fulfillment in life
- Or when people put their trust in horoscopes / séances / palm readers…
- What they are saying is God does not have the answers – they are rejecting Jesus!

▪ Worst of all – Manasseh put an idol of Asherah inside the Temple…

- The place where God told David and Solomon He would put His name forever…
- And where God promised to establish Israel – that they would never go into captivity…
- As long as they obeyed the commands of God – the Laws of Moses…
- The suggestion is this was the last straw – the judgment of God was coming…
- When the filth of the world made it into the Temple of the Lord – the end was close!
- God has called the church to be set apart for Him - we are not to be like the world...
- If we look and act just like the world - why would they want to hear about Jesus!
- The world gambles / drinks / parties - all they have is momentary pleasure...
- If we are doing the same things - how are we any different from the world!
- When the filth of the world makes it into the church – the judgment of God is close!
- **I Peter 4:17** - "For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God…"

○ 3rd – Manasseh and Judah paid no attention to the Lord… vs. 9

▪ God never stopped reaching out to Manasseh and Judah – but they would not hear…

- **II Chronicles 33:10** – "The LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen."
- Their sin had hardened their hearts to the Lord – so they did not want to hear!
- In the end they became more evil than the nations God had removed before them!
- There is no middle ground in life – if we are not drawing closer to Jesus – we drift away...
- Friendship with the world is a slippery slope – you quickly slide down...
- If we are wondering where our walk with the Lord is – we need to examine ourselves...
- **II Corinthians 13:5** - "Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine..."
- Do we live in willful sin - ignoring the conviction of the Holy Spirit in our lives...
- If we are acting like (*or worse*) than the world around us - where is Jesus!

▪ Manasseh went so far as to kill those stood up for God…

- Jewish tradition tells us King Manasseh sawed Isaiah in two with a wooden saw!
- **Hebrews 11:37** – "They were stoned, they were sawn in two…"
- It is dangerous to confront people about their sin - they get upset...
- At the very least they will try and avoid us - because we are reminding them of their sin...
- They might get VERY upset yell at us – because they want to silence us!
- But we are called to confront others in spite of how they react to us...
- Our motive is love - we want to see them clean / forgiven - **Ephesians 4:15**
- Not that we can make people turn back to Jesus - but we can warn them…
- We might think it is kinder not to confront someone who is sinning...
- But the truth is leaving someone in their sin - is condemning them to hell...
- Not that we are not saddened when we see the hurt our words might cause...
- But we rejoice to see them repent - restoring their relationship to Jesus!
- **Hebrews 3:13 -** "Exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

- **2nd – The fall of Manasseh… vs. 10-18** Read: II Kings 21:10-18
  - 1st – God sent prophets – Hosea / Joel / Nahum / Habakkuk / and Isaiah… vs. 10-16

- Manasseh had done horrible abominations – more than the Amorites…
  - The Amorites were one of the oldest Canaanite nations – **Genesis 15:16**
  - They were also one of the most wicked – yet Manasseh was worse…
  - He had shed much innocent blood – filling Jerusalem from one end to the other…
  - More than that – he also led Judah into his sin / encouraged them to rebel!
  - God does not play around when it comes to stumbling His children...
  - He is a VERY protective Father - and will deal with anyone who threatens His kids!
- As a result God was going to being calamity on Jerusalem…
  - So terrible that whoever heard about it – their ears would tingle (*ring in fear*)…
  - The measuring line of Samaria – Jerusalem would be taken captive like Samaria was…
  - The plummet of Ahab – just like Ahab the people of Judah would be wiped out…
  - Wiping a dish – this could be translated wiping out the writing on a tablet…
  - God was saying He would wipe out the name of those who had rejected Him!
  - He would forsake them – because they had rebelled since the days of Egypt!
  - Danger of unrepentant sin – blotted out of the book of life - **Exodus 32:33 / Revelation 3:5**
- There is a lot of debate over 'if' we can loose our salvation / name blotted out…
  - Manasseh is a great example of just how patient God is with us…
  - He is willing to go to extreme lengths to try and get our name IN the Book of Life!
  - The fact is God WANTS us to go to heaven – and never stops fighting for us…
  - But if continually reject Him – refuse to obey Him – refuse to believe Him…
  - We will be the ones who take our name out of the Book of life!

○ 2nd - The Repentance of Manasseh - **II Chronicles 33:11-17**

- The captains of Assyria came and took Manasseh bound in bronze (*judgment*) to Babylon…
  - Now when he was in affliction – Manasseh called out on the Lord – not surprising…
  - **II Chronicles 33:19** – the prayer is recorded in the saying of Horzi (*non-Biblical*)…
  - The Prayer is recorded in an Apocryphal additional to **II Chronicles**…
  - And the Lord heard Him – surprising – but it was because he humbled himself…
  - **II Chronicles 33:13** – "Then Manasseh knew that the LORD *was* God."
  - Then God brought Manasseh back to Jerusalem and restored him as King…
  - And Manasseh removed all the idols / and commanded Judah to serve the Lord only!
- In spite of being an evil King – with innumerable sins…
  - When Manasseh came to the Lord in Humility – he found forgiveness….
  - No one is beyond the reach of grace - anyone can be saved!
  - It does not matter whether you think you are a good person – or not so good...
  - Jesus gift of salvation is available to absolutely anyone who will receive it...
  - No sinner is beyond His reach - no sin so great He cannot forgive it...
  - That is why Jesus came to die on the cross - so we might have eternal life!
  - **Romans 10:13** – "Whomever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

○ 3rd - Train up a child…

- Manasseh is a great story for parents of wayward children…
- We recognize that our kids are a gift from the Lord - and we want them to follow the Lord…

- So we give them the foundation - but ultimately they have to make their own choices…
- And they very well may make poor choices – choose the hard road in life…
- But the hope is they Lord will humble them – and they will fall back on that foundation!
- Like Manasseh - no matter how far gone they may seem to be – there is ALWAYS hope!
- **Proverbs 22:6** – "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it."

- **3RD – LED BY EXAMPLE – KING AMON… VS. 19-26** READ: II KINGS 21:19-26
  - 1st – Amon was 22 years old when he became the 15th King of Judah… vs. 19-22
    - He only reigned for 2 years – because he was a wicked King…
    - He following in the example of his father Manasseh – worshiping idols and serving them!
    - We might look at Manasseh and think – he did not pay much of price for all his sin…
    - But in truth he paid a HUGE price – it costs him sin son…
    - Because Amon learned the bad lessons from his Father – and missed the good one!
    - **II Chronicles 33:23** – "Amon did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more…"
    - Dads need to be the example to their children of how to follow the Lord...
    - Our children are watching – learning – what example do we give to them...
    - Our kids are like sponges – soaking up every word / like mirrors – reflecting everything we do!
  - 2nd - As a result the servants of Amon conspired against him and killed him… vs. 23-26
    - But then the people of the Land executed those who had killed Amon…
    - And they took his son Josiah and made him the 16th – and last good King of Judah
    - We do not have the best 'judgment' when it comes to punishing 'sinners'…
    - Likely as not we will be 'overly harsh' with our 'treatment' of them…
    - Instead God will be the one to judge – He alone can fairly judge the actions of men…
    - He commands us to love our enemies – hopefully drawing them to Jesus!
    - **Romans 12:19** - "Never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God..."