

Stay with the Lord Jesus from Generation to Generation

(By Rev. Anthony Menzel, September 27, 2020)

Word I felt from the Lord to communicate to God's people:

“Don't want them to stop being with me;
Don't want them to leave me...”

The stories of the kings of Israel repeatedly show how people would be with God for awhile and then turn away from Him...

This lack of faithfulness kept God from blessing the Israelites the way He wanted to:

Ephesians 3:20-21

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, **21** to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The Lord Jesus wants to bless us even more than what we can ask or think...

However, we are the ones who generally get in the way of Him blessing us:

Deuteronomy 28:1-22

28 “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. **2** And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God:

3 “Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the country.

4 “Blessed *shall be* the [a]fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

5 “Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

6 “Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed *shall you be* when you go out.

7 “The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

8 “The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

9 “The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways. **10** Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you. **11** And the Lord will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the Lord [b]swore to your fathers to give you. **12** The Lord will open to you His good [c]treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. **13** And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you [d]heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*. **14** So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, *to the right or the left*, to go after other gods to serve them.

Curses on Disobedience

15 “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

16 “Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the country.

17 “Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

18 “Cursed *shall be* the [e]fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

19 “Cursed *shall you be* when you come in, and cursed *shall you be* when you go out.

20 “The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. **21** The Lord will make the [f]plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. **22** The Lord will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching,[g] and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish.

Today I want to primarily study the life of one of the good kings of Israel so that we can learn from his story...

2 Kings 22

22 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. **2** And he did *what was* right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law

3 Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the Lord, saying:

4 "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been brought into the house of the Lord, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. **5** And let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the Lord; let them give it to those who *are* in the house of the Lord doing the work, to repair the damages of the house— **6** to carpenters and builders and masons—and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. **7** However there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully."

8 Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

V.3 It took Josiah 18 years to find God's Word.

9 So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "Your servants have [a]gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the Lord." **10** Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

11 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes.

V.11 We touch Jesus Christ's heart when we take His Word seriously.

12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, [b]Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, **13** “Go, inquire of the Lord for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great *is* the wrath of the Lord that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”

V. 12-13 Part of taking God’s Word seriously is seeking His guidance about how to implement His Word in our lives.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. **15** Then she said to them, “Thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to Me, **16** “Thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read— **17** because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.’ ” ’ **18** But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, in this manner you shall speak to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God of Israel: “*Concerning* the words which you have heard— **19** because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard *you*,” says the Lord. **20** “Surely, therefore, I will [c]gather you to your fathers, and you shall [d]be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place.” ’ ” So they brought back word to the king.

This is another confirmation that women can be in the ministry: Huldah was a married woman like Deborah who was a prophetess...

The priests went to her to get a word from the Lord...

Josiah shows how one person can bless a whole nation:

The nation was going to be protected as long as Josiah lived...

This also shows us that we should try to find faults, particularly about minor items, in the lives of leaders who are trying to serve well...

2 Kings 23

23 Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. **2** The king went up to the house of the Lord with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord.

3 Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to follow the Lord and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all *his* heart and all *his* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant. **4** And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the articles that were made for Baal, for [a]Asherah, and for all [b]the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. **5** Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the [c]constellations, and to all the host of heaven. **6** And he brought out the wooden[d] image from the house of the Lord, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground *it* to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. **7** Then he tore down the *ritual* [e]booths of the [f]perverted persons that *were* in the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image. **8** And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which *were* at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* to the left of the city gate. **9** Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled Topheth, which *is* in the Valley of the [g]Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. **11** Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had

[h]dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who was in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. **12** The altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron. **13** Then the king defiled the [i]high places that were east of Jerusalem, which were on the [j]south of [k]the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon. **14** And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

15 Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the [l]high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image.

So God basically used Josiah to bring spiritual awakening to Israel: The Israelites' worship of God had been mixed with demonic influences... It reminds me of the syncretism that exists in some Catholic circles... For example, worshipping saints or practicing santería are examples of mixing God's doctrine with false teachings...

Due to Josiah's influence, the worship of the whole nation was purified...

((16 As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. **17** Then he said, "What gravestone is this that I see?"

So the men of the city told him, "*It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel.*"

18 And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

19 Now Josiah also took away all the [m]shrines of the [n]high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to

provoke [o]the Lord to anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel.)))

20 He executed all the priests of the [p]high places who were there, on the altars, and burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

V. 20 I believe that in large measure, the New Testament reveals God's mercy, the unmerited favor He shows us, while the Old Testament reveals God's holiness...

The United States is a democracy and not a theocracy...

Our laws are based on Judeo-Christian principles, but our laws generally do not permit executing people for following false religious teachings, unless following these teachings involve criminal acts like human sacrifice...

However, what Josiah's execution of the false priests teaches me is that it is a very serious matter to lead people away from God...

Our God-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-

is a holy God, and we should not try to play games with Him...

21 Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as *it is* written in this Book of the Covenant." **22** Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. **23** But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the Lord in Jerusalem.

Josiah not only did away with sinful practices; but He also instituted new positive reforms...

It is really important to remember that serving the Lord Jesus is not just about eliminating bad things from our lives; it is also about developing good habits...

Please keep a finger in 2 Kings 23 while we go to Galatians 5...

Galatians 5:19-23

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: [d]adultery, [e]fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, **20** idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, **21** envy, [f]murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** [g]gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Back to 2 Kings 23...

24 Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. **25** Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did *any* arise like him.

It sounds like Josiah was even better than his forefather, King David...

Impending Judgment on Judah

26 Nevertheless the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. **27** And the Lord said, "I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, 'My name shall be there.' "

We see that just like someone can bless a nation and a generation, someone can also curse them...

Manasseh was Josiah's grandfather, which also shows that at some point in our lives, we have to stop blaming our ancestors, recognize that the Lord Jesus is greater than past hurts and negative influences, and take responsibility for our actions, just like Josiah did....

2 Kings 21

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. **2** And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. **3** For he rebuilt the [a]high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a [b]wooden image, as Ahab king of Israel had done; and he worshiped all [c]the host of heaven and served them. **4** He also built

altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, “In Jerusalem I will put My name.” **5** And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. **6** Also he made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke *Him* to anger. **7** He even set a carved image of [d]Asherah that he had made, in the [e]house of which the Lord had said to David and to Solomon his son, “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; **8** and I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers—only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them.” **9** But they paid no attention, and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 And the Lord spoke by His servants the prophets, saying, **11** “Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who *were* before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols), **12** therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Behold, *I* am bringing *such* calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. **13** And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as *one* wipes a dish, wiping *it* and turning *it* upside down. **14** So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, **15** because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.’ ”

16 Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord.

17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh—all that he did, and the sin that he committed—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? **18** So Manasseh [f]rested with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Then his son Amon reigned in his place.

Amon’s Reign and Death

19 Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name *was* Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. **20** And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father

Manasseh had done. **21** So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked; and he served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. **22** He forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord.

23 Then the servants of Amon conspired against him, and killed the king in his own house. **24** But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, *are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?* **26** And he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza. Then Josiah his son reigned in his place.

It's very sad to see how Manasseh destroyed all that Hezekiah had done to bring spiritual awakening to Israel...

That's the main point of this message...

Our lives have to be coherent...

We can't stop being with the Lord Jesus...

Matthew 24:13

13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

And our walk with Him should not just be about maintaining the relationship we have with Him; it should be about getting closer and closer to Him and wanting Him more and more...

2 Corinthians 3:18

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as [b]by the Spirit of the Lord.

Josiah's life has some happy aspects, but there are also some very sad aspects...

2 Kings 23

Josiah Dies in Battle

28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?* **29** In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went [q]to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River

Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And *Pharaoh Necho* killed him at Megiddo when he confronted him.

Even though he was so faithful to the Lord, Josiah died in battle...

God did not protect his body in that battle...

He was only 39 when he died...

Thus, we should not take any blessing for granted...

We should be grateful for each day of life, especially those days when we have peace and protection of our bodies as well as our spirits and souls...

30 Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. **32** And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. **33** Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. **34** Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And *Pharaoh* took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and [r]he died there.

It's also very sad that Josiah's son did not follow in Josiah's footsteps...

That's why it's so important to transfer our faith to the next generation...

Perhaps part of the issue is that Josiah was not very mature when he had Jehoshaphat...

39-23=16...It appears that Josiah got his first wife pregnant when he was only 15, long before he started instituting religious reforms at the age of 26...

Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah

35 So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give *it* to Pharaoh Necho. **36** Jehoiakim was twenty-five

years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. **37** And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.

The lack of inter generational transfer of faith is even more evident when we consider Jehoiakim...

Josiah had him with a different woman at essentially the same time he has Jehoahaz...

Thus, we see how important it is for us to stay with the Lord Jesus not only individually but also as a society...