

## **It's Never Too Late**

### **2 Kings 22**

PW Emerson – 02/17/2019 – Ten:27 Ministries

We are doing a series of great moments for God from the Bible ...

Different people doing great things, examples for us.

- Jacob / Israel – wrestled with God because he was really zealous for God
- Joshua – near the end of his life, pleaded with the people to stay true to God
- Isaiah – when called to serve God, was eager to do so
- Elijah – reminds us that in the most difficult times, we're not alone

Today we're looking at Josiah.

I'm going to read from 2 Kings 22 – a number of verses

<sup>1</sup>Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years

<sup>2</sup>He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

<sup>3</sup>In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the secretary, Shaphan son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the temple of the LORD.

<sup>8</sup>Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the LORD." He gave it to Shaphan, who read it.

<sup>10</sup>Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

<sup>11</sup>When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes.

<sup>13</sup>"Go and inquire of the LORD for me and for the people and for all Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the LORD's anger that burns against us because those who have gone before us have

not obeyed the words of this book; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written there concerning us.”

<sup>17</sup>Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and aroused my anger by all the idols their hands have made, my anger will burn against this place and will not be quenched.’ <sup>18</sup>Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says concerning the words you heard: <sup>19</sup>Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people—that they would become a curse and be laid waste—and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you, declares the LORD. <sup>20</sup>Therefore I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place.’”

After King Solomon died, the nation of Israel was split in 2.

- Northern 10 tribes were known as the nation of Israel
- South 2 tribes were known as the nation of Judah

Over time both tribes fell, were conquered, by other nations.

By the time today’s piece takes place, the northern nation no longer existed.

The northern 10 tribes, Israel had been destroyed and were lost.

Scattered people survived, but the nation was never reconstituted.

Josiah was king of Judah – the southern nation.

They were coming out of captivity of the Assyrians.

During the time of captivity, they had fallen away from the Lord.

They had followed more the ways of the Assyrians.

And the temple had fallen into disrepair.

Josiah, the king, initiates a number of reforms, to get the nation back on track with God.

There are important lessons here for us because we all have times when we stray.

What's important is that we get back on track.

I YOU'RE NEVER TOO ...

What I mean by that is that

- You're never too old
- You're never too young
- You're never too plain spoken
- You're never too inexperienced
- You're never too uneducated

You're never too ANYTHING to do what is right by God.

Verse 1 & 2

<sup>1</sup>Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years

<sup>2</sup>He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

From the beginning, Josiah did what was right.

As king,

- He could have done whatever he wanted
- He could have given into pressure – people hadn't been living right for decades

He was focused on getting the people back on track for God.

He had a number of initiatives designed to get back on track.

I tell my boys all the time,

- You're not too young to do something great for God
- Don't think because you don't have a college degree you can't do something great for God
- Don't think that because you don't know the bible as well as I do that you can't do something great for God.

God makes it clear, very clear, what is right.

DO IT!

LOVE GOD!

SERVE GOD!

Dennis Prager, author and scholar said

It is no wonder that in 15 years of asking high school students throughout America whether, in an emergency situation, they would save their dog or a stranger first, most students have answered that they would not save the stranger. "I love my dog, I don't love the stranger," they always say. The feeling of love has supplanted God or religious principle as the moral guide for young people. What is right has been redefined in terms of what an individual feels.

Dennis Prager in *Good News*, July/Aug, 1993, quoted in *Christianity Today*, Oct 25, 1993, p. 73

Josiah knew that we're never unable to do what is right by God.

Josiah also knew that

## II GOD'S WORD IS A TREASURE!

<sup>8</sup>Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes.

Part of the reforms Josiah was doing included repairing the temple, the temple that Solomon had built for God.

During the repair, that found hidden the "Book of the Law"

It was quite a normal procedure for sacred writings or covenants to be placed within the foundations or walls of Temples when they were first erected.

The discovery of such an ancient record by Josiah would have caused great excitement and would have been seen as a divine seal on his reforms. But it was not its discovery that resulted in the commencement of the reforms.

Rather it was discovered because the reforms had already begun.

What it did, however, do was to give a huge support to the reforms, and help to direct them and confirm that they were pleasing to God.

What was the book of the Law?

We don't know for sure.

Many experts believe it was the bulk of the book of Deuteronomy.

The book of Deuteronomy has 2 distinct writing styles

- The bulk of it is 1 style
- The very beginning and end are another

Leading experts to think that someone added an introduction & conclusion to the Book of the Law.

Keep in mind that the book of Deuteronomy contains the Ten Commandments.

A book in the foundation would have been the covenant between God and the people – another sign that points to it containing the Ten Commandments.

The find is referred to as the “Book of the Law” and Moses was seen as the law giver – Deuteronomy was one of the books of Moses.

So Josiah hears the Book of the Law and treats it like gospel, like it came straight from the lips of God.

As I said, finding it in the temple in a wall or foundation would have been an indication to Josiah the importance given to it by those who placed it there.

Josiah saw this as a great treasure!

An 18 year old recognized God’s Word as a great treasure!

The world today is full of treasure hunters.

Years ago, the movie National Treasure was quite popular – treasure hunters like that really exist.

There are treasure hunters that scour the ocean floor for sunken Spanish galleons hoping to find sunken treasure

For years, a popular show on PBS was the Antique Road Show, highlighting people who found some great treasure in their attic!

If you’re looking for great treasure in things, that will only go so far.

And chances are, you're not going to find it.

If you want to find a guaranteed treasure, it's life with God!

And all you ever need to know for that is right here!

But we also see God's reaction to Josiah .....

### III IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REPENT

We make mistakes all time.

Sometimes we make BIG mistakes.

Politicians make mistakes and their biggest mistakes is NOT being able to admit when they are wrong!

No matter how badly you've sinned ...

No matter how many people you have hurt ...

No matter what you have done ...

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REPENT.

Verse 20            God says

Therefore I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place.

Josiah and his generation did what was right in eyes of God.  
God noticed.

Verse 19

<sup>19</sup>Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people (hearing when the Book of the Law was read out)—that they would become a curse and be laid waste—and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you, declares the LORD.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REPENT.

If we put off repentance another day, we have a day more to repent of.

Many people use mighty thin thread when mending their ways.

Daily Walk

In his book *I Surrender*, Patrick Morley writes that the church's integrity problem is in the misconception "that we can add Christ to our lives, but not subtract sin. It is a change in belief without a change in behavior." He goes on to say, "It is revival without reformation, without repentance."

Quoted by C. Swindoll, *John The Baptizer*, Bible Study Guide, p. 16.

To be right with God, we need to repent. And  
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REPENT.

## CONCLUSION

In the Antarctic summer of 1908-9, Sir Ernest Shackleton and three companions attempted to travel to the South Pole from their winter quarters. They set off with four ponies to help carry the load. Weeks later, their ponies dead, rations all but exhausted, they turned back toward their base, their goal not accomplished.

Altogether, they trekked 127 days. On the return journey, as Shackleton records in *The Heart of the Antarctic*, the time was spent talking about food -- elaborate feasts, gourmet delights, sumptuous menus. As they staggered along, suffering from dysentery, not knowing whether they would survive, every waking hour was occupied with thoughts of eating. Jesus, who also knew the ravages of food deprivation, said,

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for **RIGHTEOUSNESS**" (Matthew 5:6)" We can understand Shackleton's obsession with food, which offers a glimpse of the passion Jesus intends for our quest for righteousness.

That's what Josiah did.

And that's what we should do.