

APRIL 26

Read 2 Kings 21–23

CHAPTER 21

MANASSEH *was* twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hephzibah.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I 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 And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wiz-

ards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke *him* to anger.

7 And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe 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 hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 ¶ And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,

11 Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, *and* hath done wickedly

above all that the Amorites did, which *were* before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols:

12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I *am* bringing *such* evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as *a man* wipeth a dish, wiping *it*, and turning *it* upside down.

14 And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies;

15 Because they have done *that which was* evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

16 Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin where-with he made Judah to sin, in doing *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.

17 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of

Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

18 And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

19 ¶ Amon *was* twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

20 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did.

21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

22 And he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

23 ¶ And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.

24 And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

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 sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER 22

JOSIAH *was* eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath.

2 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.

3 ¶ And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,

4 Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people:

5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them

give it to the doers of the work which *is* in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

7 Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.

8 ¶ And Hilkiah the high priest said unto 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.

9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

11. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

12 And the king commanded

Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

15 ¶ And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto

other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

18 But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *As touching* the words which thou hast heard;

19 Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard *thee*, saith the LORD.

20 Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

CHAPTER 23

AND the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men

of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.

3 ¶ And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all *their* heart and all *their* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

4. And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel.

5 And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places

round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.

6 And he brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped *it* small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.

7 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that *were* by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the grove.

8 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that *were* in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.

9 Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled Topheth,

which *is* in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

11 And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathanmelech the chamberlain, which *was* in the suburbs, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 And the altars that *were* on the top of 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, did the king beat down, and brake *them* down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

13 And the high places that *were* before Jerusalem, which *were* on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

14 And he brake in pieces the images, and cut down the groves,

and filled their places with the bones of men.

15 ¶ Moreover the altar that *was* at Bethel, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, *and* stamped *it* small to powder, and burned the grove.

16 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned *them* upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

17 Then he said, What title *is* that that I see? And the men of the city told him, *It is* the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel.

18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.

19 And all the houses also of the high places that *were* in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of

Israel had made to provoke *the LORD* to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel.

20 And he slew all the priests of the high places that *were* there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

21 ¶ And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as *it is* written in the book of this covenant.

22 Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem.

24 ¶ Moreover the *workers with* familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25. 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.

26 ¶ Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.

27 And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of 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.

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 Pharaohnechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him.

30 And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre.

And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

31 ¶ Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

32 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

33 And Pharaohnechoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

34 And Pharaohnechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in

the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there.

35 And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaohnechoh.

36 ¶ Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.

37 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

Chapter 21 records the reign of Manasseh. Historians have calculated that Manasseh ruled jointly with godly Hezekiah for at least ten years. How strange that godly Hezekiah should reign but 29 years, while ungodly Manasseh reigned 55 years. But God was giving His people just what they wanted and deserved. No sooner was Hezekiah off the scene than Manasseh's true character was revealed. He built up what Hezekiah tore down and tore down what Hezekiah had built up. Manasseh even carried his idolatry right into the courts of the Temple. He rebelled against his godly father's example and against the law of the Lord.

Verses 10-15 record the removal of Manasseh. He was captured by the Assyrian captains and taken to Babylon. He later repented of his sins and when he was restored to the throne he immediately began to

repair the damage he had done. He fortified Jerusalem against the enemy; he removed the idols and the strange altars; and he sought to lead the nation back to the Lord. Following the death of Manasseh, his son Amon reigned as king for two years. He was also a wicked king, and was slain in a conspiracy and buried near his father.

The assassination of Amon brought Josiah to the throne at the young age of eight years. Because of godly influence in his early life, Josiah began to seek the Lord at age 16. Then, at age twenty, he began to purify the city and the land of the idolatry of Manasseh and Amon. Josiah's ultimate goal was to restore the Temple and bring the nation back to the Lord, but he knew that he would have to destroy the old sins before he could establish new obedience.

During Josiah's day there was peace and blessing, but God did not withdraw His original promise of

judgment because of the sins of Manasseh. Josiah, the king who attempted to restore the nation of Israel back to God, was assassinated and will best be remembered as a king who wanted his people to know that they had been “bought with a price.”

PROVERB FOR TODAY

“Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him” (Proverbs 26:27).

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

Spend this month reviewing the previous 13 lessons. For today, review Memory Verse Assignment 11 (found on page 11).

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

MICHELLE GODHIGH

HYMN FOR TODAY

BECAUSE HE LIVES
by Gloria Gaither, 1942-
and William J. Gaither, 1936-

Christ’s resurrection is our guarantee of at least two basic truths: First, He has the power to give His life to us and to bring us ultimately to glory to reign with Him forever. And second, His resurrection makes it possible for Him to live in our hearts and to be an integral part of our daily living.

For the past two decades the music of Gloria and Bill Gaither has greatly enriched evangelical hymnody. But the song that has especially highlighted the Gaithers’ ministry is one that reflects their own philosophy—the resurrection principle in the daily routines of life—“Because He Lives.” Bill Gaither recalls the circumstances that prompted the writing of this favorite:

“We wrote ‘Because He Lives’ after a period of time when we had had a kind of dry spell and hadn’t written any songs for a while...Also at the end of the 1960’s, our country was going through some great turmoil with the height of the drug culture, and the whole ‘God is Dead’ theory was running wild in our country. Also it was the peak of the Vietnam war. During that time our little son was born—at least Gloria was expecting him. I can remember at the time we thought, ‘Brother, this is really a poor time to bring a child into the world.’ At times we were even quite discouraged by the whole thing. And then Benji did

come. We had two little girls whom we love very much, but this was our first son, and so that lyric came to us, ‘How sweet to hold our new-born baby and feel the pride and joy he gives, but better still the calm assurance that this child can face uncertain days because Christ lives.’ And it gave us the courage to say, ‘Because Christ lives we can face tomorrow’ and keep our heads high.”

*God sent His Son—they called Him Jesus;
He came to love, heal and forgive;
He lived and died to buy my pardon;
an empty grave is there to prove my Saviour lives.*

*How sweet to hold a new-born baby
and feel the pride and joy he gives;
but greater still the calm assurance:
This child can face uncertain days because Christ lives.*

*And then one day I’ll cross the river;
I’ll fight life’s final war with pain;
and then, as death gives way to victory,
I’ll see the lights of glory—and I’ll know He lives.*

Chorus:
*Because He lives I can face tomorrow,
because He lives all fear is gone;
because I know He holds the future
and life is worth the living—just because He lives.*

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL DAY

Whenever Jack Hyles comes to any Memorial Day, he thinks of an article he read many years ago during World War II. The article was concerning three hundred servicemen who had been killed in action and whose bodies were being shipped to Boston Harbor. He thought as he read it, how he would love to go to Boston and walk on the deck of the ship from boy to boy and say to each one, “Thank you, George. Thank you, Bill. Thank you, John. Thank you, Pete. Thank you, Jack, for dying for me.” As he thinks of this, Dr. Hyles thinks of boys with whom he ran as a child who were killed in World War II. There was Felix Ezzell, the first baseman on their ball team. There was Raymond Randlett, who lived three blocks from Dr. Hyles. There was Alvin Sandefur, the pitcher. There was Jackie Daniels, who was in his class. Yes, there were others. For years they have been in eternity because they paid the supreme sacrifice for our freedom. May we thank God today for the lives of those who died that we might live.

1954
THE NATIONWIDE TEST OF SALK POLIO
VACCINE BEGAN.

This is a day to remember. The people who lived during that time anxiously awaited such a test. Now the big day had come! What a blessing this has been! Pray for our scientists today who seek a cure for cancer, emphysema, and other dread diseases. Thank God for the many inventions and discoveries that our generation has found for diseases that once were the scourge of our country and our world.

ON THIS DATE IN
AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

1904
THE BIRTH OF WILLIAM “COUNT” BASIE,
Musician (1904-1984).

1968
STUDENTS SEIZED ADMINISTRATION BUILD-
ING AT OHIO STATE.

MEMORY VERSE ASSIGNMENT 11 (for review):

Please spend time reviewing these memory verses. If you have been completing the assignments in the TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING, then you already have spent a week memorizing the Scriptures below. Now it's time to review!

RESULT OF GOD'S SACRIFICE

Man now can be:

Redeemed.

() Ephesians 1:7

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Reconciled.

() Colossians 1:20

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Righteous.

() Romans 5:19 (Phil. 3:9)

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Forgiven.

() Acts 13:38

Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.

Justified.

() Acts 13:39

And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.