CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
JUNE29 2024

Scripture Story: 2 Kings 22; 23; 2 Chronicles 34.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 33.

cleaning house



Photo by Audrey Goforth

keytext

"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."

(2 Kings 22:2, NIV)

flashlight

"Thus Josiah, from his earliest manhood, had endeavored to take advantage of his position as king to exalt the principles of God's holy law. And now, while Shaphan the scribe was reading to him out of the book of the law, the king discerned in this volume a treasure of knowledge, a powerful ally, in the work of reform he so much desired to see wrought in the land. He resolved to walk in the light of its counsels, and also to do all in his power to acquaint his people with its teachings and to lead them, if possible, to cultivate reverence and love for the law of heaven" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 398).

what do you think?

Check the response that fits your attitude about God's Word the most; then explain why.

____ I fail to read the Bible or apply it to my life because (or my Bible collects dust because) . . .
____ I'm so busy I don't have the time it takes to study.
____ I don't know how to study the Bible in-depth.
____ I forget to integrate the Bible into my life each day.
____ I believe that Bible study is crucial.
____ I read my Bible daily and I seek to apply in practice what I learn.
____ I enjoy studying the Bible with others regularly.
____ I consider it my responsibility not only to believe and apply what I learn from the Bible but also to share with others the treasures of God's Word.

How do you think your response compares to your peers?

did you know?

The king sought further to establish the faith of Judah in the God of their fathers by holding a great Passover feast, in harmony with the provisions made in the book of the law. Preparation was made by those having the sacred services in charge, and on the great day of the feast, offerings were freely made. '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.' 2 Kings 23:22. But the zeal of Josiah, acceptable though it was to God, could not atone for the sins of past generations; nor could the piety displayed by the king's followers effect a change of heart in many who stubbornly refused to turn from idolatry to the worship of the true God."—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 405

INTO THE STORY

"Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah; she was from Bozkath. 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.

"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. He said: 'Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him get ready the money that has been brought into the temple of the LORD, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people. Have them entrust it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the temple. And have these men pay the workers who repair the temple of the LORD—the carpenters, the builders and the masons. Also have them purchase timber and dressed stone to repair the temple. But they need not account for the money entrusted to them, because they are honest in their dealings.'

"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. Then Shaphan the secretary went to the king and reported to him: 'Your officials have paid out the money that was in the temple of the LORD and have entrusted it to the workers and supervisors at the temple.' 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.

"When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes. He gave these orders to Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Akbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah the king's attendant: '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.' "

(2 Kings 22:1-13, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Circle and identify all of the characters/people mentioned in this story. Who are they and what is their contribution to the story?

Underline what you think the key phrase, sentence, or verse is in this passage. Explain why you think this passage of Scripture is central.

What truths about people emerge from this story? What truths about God are made clear to you?

_____

_____

What other story or event in Scripture does this passage remind you of, and why?

_____

_____

It is possible that for almost 100 years the Book of the Law had not been read or even spoken of by the king or the people. Imagine this scene and describe some of the emotions you think the king and the people listening were experiencing.

In this story, is there . . .

an example to follow? _____
a prayer to pray? _____
a sin to confess? _____
a challenge to embrace? _____
a promise to claim? _____
a truth to believe? _____
an action to take? _____

Do you think Israel slipped into idolatry because they lost the Book, or did they lose or set the Book aside because they deliberately chose idolatry? Explain.

_____

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What do you think enabled Josiah, at such a young age, to be able to make such a difference in Israel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

punch lines

"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" **(Joshua 1:8, NIV).**

"I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart" **(Psalm 40:8, NIV).**

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law" **(Psalm 119:18, NIV).**

"Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me and teach me your law" **(Psalm 119:29, NIV).**

"I long for your salvation, LORD, and your law gives me delight" **(Psalm 119:174, NIV).**

"Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble" **(Psalm 119:165, NIV).**

"This is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome" **(1 John 5:3, NIV).**

"Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left" **(Joshua 23:6, NIV).**

further insight

"God speaks to us in His word. Here we have in clearer lines the revelation of His character, of His dealings with men, and the great work of redemption.

. . .

"Fill the whole heart with the words of God."—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pp. 87, 88

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read Psalm 119:18, 29, 165, 174.

Respond to the exercise in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. Based on today's Bible passages, compare David's passion for God's law to the people in Josiah's time. How do you think David would have reacted to discovering the dust-covered Book of the Law buried deep in a storage closet?

How could you overcome obstacles that prevent you from studying God's Word?

Sunday

Read 1 John 5:3.

As you read *Into the Story*, answer the questions in the *Out of the Story* section and try to imagine what this story would look like if it happened today. What message do you think God has for you in this passage?

When Josiah tried to start a reformation he began with a cleaning of the Temple to get the people back into the presence of the Lord. What kind of housecleaning can you do spiritually this week to get into God's presence? Think of some specific activities you could do to make room for God's Word in your life.

Monday

Read 2 Kings 22:2.

The *Key Text* for this week is a brief but powerful statement about Josiah: "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" (2 Kings 22:2, NIV). A reference is made to David (a great-, great-, great-, etc. grandfather) instead of Amon, Josiah's dad. Why do you think Josiah called David his father instead of Amon? What relative in your family do you take after most? How?

Tuesday

Read Joshua 23:6.

Read the quote from *Prophets and Kings* in the *Flashlight* section and remember that Josiah was perhaps younger than you. What do you think was Josiah's greatest challenge: his perceived youth or the problem of how ignorant people were of God's law of love? Explain.

Whom do you know that possesses great leadership qualities at a young age? Affirm them this week and remind them of Josiah's mark on Israel.

Wednesday

Read the *Punch Lines* verses and choose the one that speaks to you the most. Rewrite it in your own words. Pray this week to encounter someone who is seeking to know God but is not sure where to begin. Be ready to share some of the beautiful passages about how God's Word can transform hearts and lives.

Thursday

Read Joshua 1:8.

Place your Bible on a chair in the middle of your room so it is in the way and not put away this week. If you deliberately place God's Word in your path you will think about reading it more often than if it were on a shelf or in a drawer. What do you think some of your thoughts will be as you walk past it?

Friday

Read 1 Timothy 4:12; Deuteronomy 7:9.

Josiah was told by the prophetess that even a full-blown repentance would not stop the calamity that would soon come upon Israel. He was also told that because of his faithfulness he would not have to witness the sadness of that day. Still, Josiah pressed on with determination to lead Israel to a place where they would be sensitive to God's Word. If they had listened, what might this story look like today?

With whom can you partner for encouragement in order to be more faithful to God in your life, as well as to encourage faithfulness in your home and church?

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 33.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.