CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
JUNE22 2024

Scripture Story: 2 Kings 21; 22; 2 Chronicles 33.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 32.

what legacy?



Photo by Audrey Goforth

flashlight

"Born of a wicked king, beset with temptations to follow in his father's steps, and with few counselors to encourage him in the right way, Josiah nevertheless was true to the God of Israel. Warned by the errors of past generations, he chose to do right, instead of descending to the low level of sin and degradation to which his father and his grandfather had fallen" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 384).

keytext

"In his distress he sought the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. And when he prayed to him, the LORD was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God."

(2 Chronicles 33:12, 13, NIV)

what do you think?

What do you think are the most essential qualities in a leader? Rank them in order of importance (1–most important; 8–least important).

___ confidence
___ compassion
___ humility
___ selflessness
___ courage
___ honesty
___ wisdom
___ perseverance

What are the three qualities you ranked to be the most necessary in a leader? Why? Who do you know that exemplifies these qualities, and how have you seen such attributes in action?

INTO THE STORY

"The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. So the Lord brought against them the army commanders of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon. In his distress he sought the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. And when he prayed to him, the Lord was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord is God.

"Afterward he rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, west of the Gihon spring in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate and encircling the hill of Ophel; he also made it much higher. He stationed military commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah.

"He got rid of the foreign gods and removed the image from the temple of the Lord, as well as all the altars he had built on the temple hill and in Jerusalem; and he threw them out of the city. Then he restored the altar of the Lord and sacrificed fellowship offerings and thank offerings on it, and told Judah to serve the Lord, the God of Israel. The people, however, continued to sacrifice at the high places, but only to the Lord their God.

"The other events of Manasseh's reign, including his prayer to his God and the words the seers spoke to him in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, are written in the annals of the kings of Israel. His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty, as well as all his sins and unfaithfulness, and the sites where he built high places and set up Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself—all these are written in the records of the seers. Manasseh rested with his ancestors and was buried in his palace. And Amon his son succeeded him as king.

"Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon worshiped and offered sacrifices to all the idols Manasseh had made. But unlike his father Manasseh, he did not humble himself before the Lord; Amon increased his guilt.

"Amon's officials conspired against him and assassinated him in his palace. Then the people of the land killed all who had plotted against King Amon, and they made Josiah his son king in his place."

(2 Chronicles 33:10-25, NIV)

did you know?

Current research suggests that parents have a lot more influence than they realize. Not only are their kids listening, but more important, they are watching closely and modeling their lives after them. Whether you believe it or not, parents are the biggest influence in their children's lives. But at what point do you begin to assume responsibility for your relationship with God on your own?



OUT OF THE STORY

Circle and identify the three different generations of kings mentioned in this passage.

Briefly describe what the text says about the kind of people they were. (Use only the words and phrases in this passage.)
Manasseh _____
Amon _____
Josiah _____

What are some words or phrases that are repeated in this story?

_____
_____

This story is mostly about (choose three): obedience to God, influence of parents/leaders, results of sin, blessings of faithfulness, selfishness and idolatry, moral courage. Which one do you see exhibited the most among God's people today? Explain.

_____
_____
_____

Some might perceive God's punishment of Manasseh to be harsh, but the ultimate result was his repentance. Compare the religious experience of these three kings and consider how God dealt with each of them and how they responded to His promptings. How has God found ways to arrest your attention when you were growing distant from Him?

_____
_____
_____

What do you think is the most difficult challenge for a king/leader?

_____
_____

To what degree do parents shape their children's faithfulness to God?

_____
_____

Which verse do you think conveys a key lesson or point of this story?

_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" **(Romans 12:1, 2, NIV).**

"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them' " **(Ecclesiastes 12:1, NIV).**

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" **(James 4:10, NIV).**

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing" **(Matthew 23:37, NIV).**

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent" **(Revelation 3:15-19, NIV).**

further insight

"The true, joyous life of the soul is to have Christ formed within, the hope of glory."

—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 46

Sabbath

Read 1 Peter 5:6.

Read and respond to the activity in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. Which quality did you choose as a primary attribute of a leader? Why? Today's Bible passage points out that success and abundant living are the result of humility. Read this passage and write it out in your own words. Reflect on the lives of people in the Bible who followed this principle.

Sunday

Read James 4:10.

As you read the *Into the Story* section and use the questions in the *Out of the Story* section to guide your study, you will notice three kings who responded to God in three different ways. What key insights emerge in this story for you? What is the message you think God is trying to say to you in this week's lesson?

Monday

Read 2 Chronicles 33:12, 13.

Today's Bible passage is a promise that God will use any means necessary to bring His people back to a right relationship with Him. Clearly, the choice to respond to God's voice, the still small voice or the roaring wake-up call of discipline, is ours to make. Manasseh responded to an abrupt wake-up call of being captured, tortured, and ridiculed. Amon chose not to listen and respond. Are there areas of your life in which you are getting a wake-up call? What are they?

When will you begin to make this change? And to whom will you hold yourself accountable to make the changes you promised to God?

Tuesday

Read Revelation 3:15-19.

Read the quote from *Prophets and Kings* in the *Flashlight* section of this lesson. Think about your legacy of faith. How have your parents and leaders shaped your walk with God? What are some examples you want to follow? What are some patterns you need to avoid?

Examples to follow: _____

Patterns to avoid: _____

Wednesday

As you read the passages listed in the *Punch Lines* section of this week's lesson, which verse speaks most prominently to you today? Why do you think this verse is particularly relevant to you today? What can you do this week to respond actively to the message in this Scripture?

Thursday

Read Romans 12:1, 2.

In *Prophets and Kings* we are told that Josiah had "few counselors" urging him in the right direction. Do you ever feel alone in your desire to be more devoted to God? Take some time this week to find someone you admire as a spiritual leader. Ask them to share with you one spiritual insight that God has revealed to them. Also, ask them how they would like for you to pray for them so that they can continue to be faithful and filled with God's Spirit.

Spiritual Insight

Prayer Request

Friday

Read Ecclesiastes 12:1.

Reflect on the three kings referred to in this lesson and consider how God labored with each of them to different ends. Consider the many ways God has labored with you, patiently prompting you to deeper devotion. Are you listening to His voice? How are you going to respond?

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 32.

**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.