

## **JOSIAH: PURGER OF THE LAND**

2 Chron.34:1-8 records three important dates and events of the reformation of King Josiah.

- 8<sup>th</sup> year of reign (age 16) – Seeker of God
- 12<sup>th</sup> year of reign (age 20) – Purger of the Land
- 18<sup>th</sup> year of reign (age 26) – Repairer of Temple

The order of these dates and events were important to King Josiah becoming one of the great Judean king reformers.

<p><b>This lesson will study SEVEN aspects of Josiah: Purger of the Land.</b></p>
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### **1. In the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the reign, King Josiah began purging the Promise Land of idolatry (2 Chron.34:1-8).**

In the 18<sup>th</sup> year of his reign while repairing the Temple, the book of Deuteronomy was discovered which led to a greater purging of the nation of idolatry (2 Kings 22:3, 8, 13-17, 20; 2 Kings 23).

The reason for the renewed interest in purging the land of idolatry is because the book of Deuteronomy contains the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle of divine discipline to the priest-nation of Israel (Deut.28).

Some biblical scholars believe that the lost book was the Torah (first five books of the OT). The 5<sup>th</sup> cycle of divine discipline is found in two books of the torah (Lev.26 and Deut.28).

“Some interpreters hold that this refers to a copy of the entire Pentateuch, while others understand it as a copy of part or all of Deuteronomy alone (see Deut.31:24, 26; 2 Chron.34:14).” (NIV, 2 Kings 22:8)

### **2. Although Josiah was made aware of the coming of the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle, he worked even the harder to bring the priest-nation back to God. This is known as Josiah’s great reformation (2 Kings 22:13-20).**

“The king felt that the precepts, not the purposes, of God must be his rule of conduct. Thus although he was assured by Huldah of the certainty of the destruction to come upon Jerusalem, Josiah did not in the least relax the energy of his efforts to reform it. He acted in the spirit of that important distinction that ‘duty is ours; events are God’s’ (2 Kings 22:16).” (All the Kings and Queens of Bible by Herbert Lockyer, pg.140)

King Josiah was told that he would not go through the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle of divine discipline because his heart was responsive and humble to God’s word (2 Kings 22:18-20).

### **3. Josiah’s reformation swept all of Judah (south kingdom) and much of Israel (north kingdom) (2 Kings 23:4, 15-20; 2 Chron.34:5-7).**

“Josiah’s jealous exertions were not confined to his own particular domain of Judah. He exerted similar authority over the cities of Israel which were subject to Assyria.” (Lockyer, pg.141)

### **4. Josiah’s reformation (640-609) was prophesied about 321 years earlier during Jeroboam’s reign (930-909) (1 Kings 13:1-6; 2 Kings 23:15-20).**

“So he burned the bones of idolatrous priests upon Jeroboam’s altar at Bethel. It is somewhat remarkable that it had been divinely predicted that he would accomplish this task some 350 years before (1 Kings 13:2; 2 Kings 23:15,20), and he could not have been ignorant of such a prophecy.” (Lockyer, pg.141)

*The man of God from Judah to Bethel is worth reading (1 Kings 13).* “By the word of the Lord a man of God came from Judah to Bethel, as Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make an offering. He cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord: ‘O altar, altar! This is what the Lord says: ‘A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who now make an offering here, and human bones will be burned on you.’” (1 Kings 13:2-3; 2 Chron.34:4-5)

“A prophetic announcement of the rule of King Josiah, who came to the throne in Judah nearly 300 years after the division of the kingdoms.” (NIV, 1 Kings 13:2)

**5. Josiah reform was against cosmos diabolicus national policies of idolatry (2 Chron.34:4).**

Idols symbolized national slavery like the American flag symbolizes national freedom (Gal.4:8-9).

“Josiah removed all the detestable idols from all the territory belonging to the Israelites and he had all who were present in Israel serve the Lord their God. As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the Lord, the God of their fathers.” (2 Chron.34:33)

**6. Idolatry is assailing divine attributes to natural agencies and worshipping them as gods.**

Idolatry was forbidden by Mosiac Law (Deut.4:15-31). It was the intent of the First Commandment (Deut.5:8-10).

“For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.” (Psa.96:5) (Psa.115:4-8)

“We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many ‘gods’ and many ‘lords’), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom we live.” (1 Cor.8:4-6)

Jesus Christ is the only visible image of the invisible God (Col.1:15-17)

**7. Repentance and belief in gospel of Jesus Christ are required for those leaving idolatry for Christianity (Rom.1:16-28; Acts 14:15; 17:29-30; 19:25-27; 20:21; 26:20; 1 Cor.6:9-11; 12:2; Col.3:5-8; 2 Cor.6:16).**

“They tell how you turned from to god from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.” (1 Thess.1:9-10)

**“DEAR CHILDREN, KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS.” (1 John 5:21)**