

## The Josiah Decision

By Pastor Marvin R. Barham

In **I Kings 13:1-2** The prophet Isaiah prophesies by name about a young man who would make a choice different than that of the people and time in which he lived and different than that of his father. This young man's decision would change his life and the nation in which he lived. Isaiah prophesied concerning Josiah 322 years before his birth and 348 years before the fulfillment of the prophecy. Let stop here and point out the fact that:

First, God spoke of this young man's destiny way before he even existed and He called him by name. God has a plan and a purpose for your life. He always has and will. Second, His plans for you are specific to you but are a part of His bigger plan that impacts something bigger than yourself. But you have to decide, as did Josiah, whose way will you follow, yours or Gods?

In **II Kings 22** we find the prophecy of Josiah fulfilled. Josiah tears down the idols of the land and restores the temple of God. In the process the Law of God is discovered. It is at this point that Josiah must make a decision. Will he follow the evil of his father? Will he do things his own way? Or, will he decide to honor God as God commands and no other way? We find that the Spirit of the Law of God so greatly impacts Josiah that he repents before God and commands the same of the people. He then reads the Law of God to the people and restores it to the land.

In **II Kings 23** we find where Josiah tears down the idols, honors the prophet, restores the law of God and renews the covenant with God. This is what I believe God is calling His people to in this year. He is calling us to make some tough decisions such as following and trusting Him no matter how difficult it is, no matter what the world around us says, no matter what circumstance we face. God is calling us a deeper relationship and a renewed covenant with Him in our hearts and lives. He is calling us to be like Josiah in verse 25, *"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."* I am not saying God is calling us back into the legalism of the old law, but He is calling us to a life of obedience to His Word of Truth in every area of our lives. He is calling us to tear down the idols, be free from the struggles once and for all, walk in covenant relationship, and seek His face with all we are.

### In Josiah's account I find two reasons for God's judgment upon Israel that still apply to us today:<sup>1</sup>

1. God said, "They have forsaken Me." Meaning they have left His way and chosen another.
2. "They have worshipped idols and done evil." Meaning they have chosen to love another.

Once Josiah had come to the knowledge of truth he made a decision to correct the wrongs, stand in justice and truth, and to honor and fear God. Let us look at four reasons Josiah would escape God's judgment:<sup>1</sup>

1. He had a tender heart towards God and God's law.
2. He humbled himself before God, received correction and instruction, listened to the Word of God and obeyed it.
3. He brought God a heart of true repentance and well as the fruits of repentance demonstrated in his life's attitude and actions from that point forward. You knew he had made a decision to follow God because his life proved it.
4. He cried out to God with all his heart, soul, and strength.

From this point on the people were taught the Word of God and they received it. This is always the first fundamental of revival and reformation in any nation and generation.

### There are three key elements concerning Josiah's decision that we apply to our lives' daily decisions:<sup>1</sup>

1. He did what was right in the sight of God.
2. He walked in the ways of his righteous fathers.
3. He turned not aside to the right or left. He was not two-faced, double-minded, living dual lives, or living different values and standards in his life at different times around different people.

**Your decisions will always either lead to your destruction or to the destruction of all that opposes God in you. God will only manifest Himself where only He reigns. Exodus 20:5** *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, Matthew 6:24* **No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

Look with me at **2 Timothy 3:15-17**. **15**And that from a child thou hast **known the holy scriptures**, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. **16**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for **instruction in righteousness**: **17**That the man of God may **be perfect, thoroughly furnished** unto all good works. The apostle Paul writes to young Timothy admonishing the men, women and children of the church to daily choose to walk in the ways of God. Paul points out six basic principles and qualifications to walk in the ways of God and live a life pleasing to Him daily:

1. **Know the Scripture.**<sup>1</sup> It is not enough to just listen to it once a week or to leave here able to say “I have heard a good message.” It is even more than to memorize it. To know it is to be intimate with it. To hide its precepts and principles in your heart that it might change the way you think, act, live, and choose daily.
2. **Be perfect.**<sup>1</sup> The Greek word used here is *artios* and means to be complete and jointly fitted. It means to be in Christ and Christ in you. It means to be in unity with the Spirit of Christ and walk after the Spirit and not the flesh. It means to intimately have relationship with Jesus Christ, the Word of God.
3. **Be thoroughly furnished.**<sup>1</sup> The Greek word used here is *exartizo* and means to finish or to be fully equipped. It means to continually seek God that He might complete the good work that He began in you. It means to run the race to the end without being disqualified or as Paul put it, “to finish the race worthy of having run it.” It means to put on the whole armor of God as we are told in **Ephesians 6:12-18**, from putting on the helmet of salvation to having your feet covered with the preparation of the gospel of peace.
4. **Be inspired by the Holy Spirit.**<sup>1</sup> Meaning to daily live and walk in the Spirit of the Lord able to hear, know, obey and be the voice of God to all mankind. It means for your life to daily be a living sacrifice of the flesh and exhibiting to others the personality of God, the fruits and the gifts of the Spirit of a living God.
5. **Be one through whom God makes Himself known.**<sup>1</sup> Be instant in season and out. Be ready always to be a vessel unto honor, ready for the Master, prepared for every good work. It means to be one who is seeking for God to make Himself known to him, that God may be known to others through him or her. **Ezekial 3:17** *17*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. **Jeremiah 15:19** *19*Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.
6. **Qualified to act in God’s stead.**<sup>1</sup> Always have plenty of oil in your lamp. Be a vessel God can use when He is ready, not when you are. Be a vessel that God can operate through without having to get rid of all the junk first. Be a man or woman of integrity that the Word of the Lord may not be questioned because of your good being spoken evil of. **Judges 13:6** *6*Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name:

Not since the fall of man had any people experienced a more favorable beginning than Israel at the beginning of the dispensation of Law. They saw the power of God in signs and wonders in Egypt and the wilderness. God made personal appearances to them and spoke with an audible voice. There were visible manifestations of His presence day and night. God took sickness from Israel, gave them the riches of Egypt, gave them revelations and complete code of laws; made covenants with them and their children; and gave them the gospel.<sup>1</sup> Yet, still they chose more often to not follow the way of God but the path of destruction. **Proverbs 12:28** tells us, “*In the way of **righteousness** is life: and in the **pathway** thereof there is no death.*” God is calling us to make a choice to be a people who walk the way of an ancient path – a path that was before anything else existed – the pathway of righteousness.

**Matthew 7:13-14** *13*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: **14**Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Which path will you choose? Will it be the pathway to life or to destruction? It is not simply a question of salvation but of Lordship of your life. It is a question of who you will live for each and every day; who you will serve with your heart and soul; who is the final authority in how you live, who you are, and what you are to be.

<sup>1</sup> (Dakes Annotated Reference Bible; Finis Jennings Dake; Dake Publishing; Lawrenceville, GA; 2001)