



Manasseh
Filled The Temple
With Idols

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Overview

MANASSEH DESECRATED SOLOMON'S TEMPLE WITH IDOLS

Manasseh's story is told in 2 Kings 21:1-18 and 2 Chron. 32:33-33:20. He is also mentioned in Jeremiah 15:4.

Even a brief outline of King Manasseh's evil sickens us, and we wonder how God could ever forgive him. Not only did he intentionally offend God by desecrating Solomon's temple with idols, but he also worshiped pagan gods and even sacrificed his children to them! Child sacrifice is a vile act of pagan idolatry, an act against both God and people. Such blatant sins require severe correction.

God showed justice to Manasseh in warning and punishing him. He showed mercy in responding to Manasseh's heartfelt repentance by forgiving and restoring him. Given the nature of Manasseh's rebellion, we are not surprised by God's punishment—defeat and exile at the hands of the Assyrians. But Manasseh's repentance and God's forgiveness are unexpected. Manasseh's life was changed. He was given a new start.

History of Manasseh, King of Judah

2 Chron. 33:1-20

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years.

He did what was evil in the Lord's sight, imitating the detestable practices of the pagan nations whom the Lord had driven from the land ahead of the Israelites.

He rebuilt the pagan shrines his father Hezekiah had destroyed. He constructed altars for the images of Baal and set up Asherah poles. He also bowed before all the stars of heaven and worshiped them.

He even built pagan altars in the Temple of the Lord, the place where the Lord had said his name should be honored forever. He put these altars for the stars of heaven in both courtyards of the Lord's Temple.

Manasseh even sacrificed his own sons in the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom. He practiced sorcery, divination, and witchcraft, and he consulted with mediums and psychics. He did much that was evil in the Lord's sight, arousing his anger.

Manasseh even took a carved idol he had made and set it up in God's Temple, the very place where God had told David and his son Solomon: "My name will be honored here forever in this Temple and in Jerusalem—the city I have chosen from among all the other tribes of Israel.

If the Israelites will obey my commands—all the instructions, laws, and regulations given through Moses—I will not send them into exile from this land that I gave their ancestors."

But Manasseh led the people of Judah and Jerusalem to do even more evil than the pagan nations whom the Lord had destroyed when the Israelites entered the land.

The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they ignored all his warnings. So the Lord sent the Assyrian armies, and they took Manasseh prisoner. They put a ring through his nose, bound him in bronze chains, and led him away to Babylon.

But while in deep distress, Manasseh sought the Lord his God and cried out humbly to the God of his ancestors. And when he prayed, the Lord listened to him and was moved by his request for help. So the Lord let Manasseh return to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Manasseh had finally realized that the Lord alone is God!

It was after this that Manasseh rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, from west of the Gihon Spring in the Kidron Valley to the Fish Gate, and continuing around the hill of Ophel, where it was built very high. And he stationed his military officers in all of the fortified cities of Judah.

Manasseh also removed the foreign gods from the hills and the idol from the Lord's Temple. He tore down all the altars he had built on the hill where the Temple stood and all the altars that were in Jerusalem, and he dumped them outside the city.

Then he restored the altar of the Lord and sacrificed peace offerings and thanksgiving offerings on it. He also encouraged the people of Judah to worship the Lord, the God of Israel.

However, the people still sacrificed at the pagan shrines, but only to the Lord their God.

The rest of the events of Manasseh's reign, his prayer to God, and the words the seers spoke to him in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, are recorded in The Book of the Kings of Israel.

Manasseh's prayer, the account of the way God answered him, and an account of all his sins and unfaithfulness are recorded in The Record of the Seers. It includes a list of the locations where he built pagan shrines and set up Asherah poles and idols before he repented.

When Manasseh died, he was buried at his palace. Then his son Amon became the next king.

Scriptural Review

Manasseh's Repentance

2 Chronicles 33:1-20

We have seen Manasseh's wickedness; here we have his repentance, and a memorable instance it is of the riches of God's pardoning mercy, and the power of his renewing grace.

Deprived of his liberty, separated from his evil counsellors and companions, without any prospect but of ending his days in a wretched prison, Manasseh thought upon what had passed; he began to cry for mercy and deliverance.

He confessed his sins, condemned himself, and was humbled before God, loathing himself as a monster of impiety and wickedness. Yet he hoped to be pardoned through the abundant mercy of the Lord. Then Manasseh knew that Jehovah was God, able to deliver.

He knew him as a God of salvation; he learned to fear, trust in, love, and obey him. From this time he bore a new character, and walked in newness of life.

Who can tell what tortures of conscience, what pangs of grief, what fears of wrath, what agonizing remorse he endured, when he looked back on his many years of apostacy and rebellion against God; on his having led thousands into sin and perdition; and on his blood-guiltiness in the persecution of a number of God's children?

And who can complain that the way of heaven is blocked up, when he sees such a sinner enter? Say the worst against thyself, here is one as bad who finds the way to repentance. Deny not to thyself that which God hath not denied to thee; it is not thy sin, but thy impenitence, that bars heaven against thee.

Life Application

How far has God gone to get your attention? Have you ever, like Manasseh, come to your senses and cried out to God for help? Only your repentance and a prayer for a new attitude stand between you and Gods complete forgiveness.

God will go a long way to get someone's attention. Forgiveness is limited not by the amount of sin, but by our willingness to repent

Key verses:

“In his distress he sought favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. 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 Chron. 33:12-13).

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*.

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Matthew Henry Concise Bible Commentary

