

# 2 Kings 21 - Annals of Judah: Manasseh & Amon's Evil Reigns in Judah

III. The Southern kingdom from the time of the Assyrian captivity to the Babylonian captivity (2 Kings 18:1—25:30)

(2) Manasseh's reign (21:1-18)

(3) Amon's reign (21:19-26)

## 2 Kings 21

(2) Manasseh's reign (21:1-18) (Cf. 2 Chr 33:1-17)

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**1** Manasseh began to reign at the age of twelve, and he reigned for 55 years in Jerusalem. His mother was named Hephzibah.

**1** Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzibah.

- "Manasseh" - "Making Forgetful"

- When Manasseh was 12 years old he began ruling as vice-regent with his father Hezekiah (697 BC), for 11 years until Hezekiah died (686 BC), for a total of 55 years

**2** He did evil in the sight of the LORD, in accordance with the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

**2** He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

**2** He did what the LORD considered to be evil, following the despicable practices of the nations whom the LORD had expelled in full view of the people of Israel.

**2** And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

- Rather than continuing the God-honoring policies of his father Hezekiah, Manasseh reverted to those of his grandfather Ahaz and reestablished the detestable practices of the native Canaanite peoples

— He reigned longer than any Jewish king, and he was Judah's worst king spiritually; Manasseh is called "the Ahab of Judah"

3 For he rebuilt the high places which his father Hezekiah had destroyed; and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, just as Ahab king of Israel had done, and he worshiped all the heavenly lights and served them.

3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them.

3 He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed. He erected altars for Baal, crafted an Asherah, just as King Ahab of Israel had done, and worshipped and served the stars of heaven.

3 For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

- He also rebuilt the high places which had been so common in the nation until Hezekiah had purged the land of them (2 Kings 18:4)

— Manasseh re-erected altars to Baal and made a pole to represent Asherah (Cf. 21:7) as Ahab had done in Samaria (1 Kings 16:33)

4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name."

4 He built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name."

4 He also built altars in the LORD's Temple, about which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will place my Name."

4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name.

- Among his very serious sins, Manasseh built idol altars in the Temple

— This diminished the reputation of *Yahweh* considerably, as well as diverted worship from Him

5 He built altars for all the heavenly lights in the two courtyards of the house of the LORD.

5 For he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

5 He built two altars to every star in the heavens in the two courts of the LORD's Temple.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And he made his son pass through the fire, interpreted signs, practiced divination, and used mediums and spiritists. He did great evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking *Him* to anger.

6 He made his son pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and used divination, and dealt with mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD provoking *Him to anger*.

6 He made his son into a burnt offering, practiced witchcraft, used divination, and consorted with mediums and spirit-channelers. He practiced many things that the LORD considered to be evil and provoked him.

6 And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

- Manasseh also practiced human sacrifice and offered one of his own sons to the Ammonite god Molech in the Valley of Hinnom (Cf. 1 Kings 11:7,33; 2 Kings 23:10,13)

— Sorcery, divination, mediums, and spiritists were all part of Manasseh's religious system even though these were prohibited in the Mosaic Law

— The king believed that all forms of worship were better for the people than the exclusive worship of *Yahweh* prescribed in the Law

—His policies provoked the LORD to anger (Cf. 21:15; 22:13,17; 23:19,26; 24:20) and were evil (Cf. 21:2) in His eyes

7 Then he put the carved image of Asherah that he had made in the house of which the LORD had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever.

7 Then he set the carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which the LORD said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever.

7 He also erected the carved image of Asherah that he had made inside the Temple about which the LORD had spoken to David and to his son Solomon, "I will put my Name forever in this Temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all of the tribes of Israel.

7 And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

- Manasseh further desecrated the temple by placing in it the carved Asherah pole he had made (Cf. v3). By so doing he gave an idol the place that God alone deserved.

8 And I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers, if only they will take care to act in accordance with everything that I have commanded them, and with all the Law that My servant Moses commanded them."

8 And I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers, if only they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and

according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them."

8 And I will not make Israel's feet to wander anymore from the land that I have given to their ancestors, if they will only be careful to do everything that I have commanded them according to the entire Law that my servant Moses commanded them."

8 Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.

9 But they did not listen, and Manasseh encouraged them to do evil, more than the nations whom the LORD eliminated from the presence of the sons of Israel.

9 But they did not listen, and Manasseh seduced them to do evil more than the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the sons of Israel.

9 But they would not listen. Manasseh led them astray to practice more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed in the presence of the Israelis.

9 But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.

- Amazingly the people under Manasseh practiced more evil than the Canaanites before them (Cf. v15-16)

**10** Now the LORD spoke through His servants the prophets, saying,

**10** Now the LORD spoke through His servants the prophets, saying,

**10** So the LORD announced through his prophets,

**10** And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,

- Isaiah and Micah were two of the prophets that God used to warn the nation before Manasseh's reign

— We have no record of the prophets who ministered during Manasseh's reign (Cf. 2 Chr 33:10). One of them may have been Nahum, whose recorded ministry was against Assyria.

11 "Since Manasseh king of Judah has committed these abominations, having done more evil than all that the Amorites did who *were* before him, and has also misled Judah into sin with his idols,

11 "Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations, having done wickedly more than all the Amorites did who *were* before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols;

11 "Because King Manasseh of Judah has committed these despicable things, acting more sinfully than did all of the Amorites who preceded him, including making Judah sin with its idols,

11 Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath

made Judah also to sin with his idols:

- Not only did Manasseh apostatize personally, but he also led the nation in departing from God

12 therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: 'Behold, I am bringing *such a* disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears about it, both of his ears will ring.

12 therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am bringing *such* calamity on Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle.

12 therefore this is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'Look! I'm going to bring such a disaster to Jerusalem and Judah that both ears of those who hear about it will ring.

12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

13 I will stretch over Jerusalem the **line of Samaria** and the plummet of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem clean just as one wipes a bowl, wiping it and turning it upside down.

13 I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.

13 I'll stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line that is Samaria and the plumb line that is Ahab's dynasty. Then I'll wipe Jerusalem like one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down!

13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.

- "...line of Samaria" - the righteous standard that God had used to measure Samaria's fidelity to His Law and His will

— God said He would stretch the straight plumb line (symbolizing destruction) against Jerusalem and Manasseh as He had done to Samaria and the house (family or dynasty) of Ahab

14 And I will abandon **the remnant of My inheritance** and hand them over to their enemies, and they will become as plunder and spoils to all their enemies,

14 I will abandon the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies, and they will become as plunder and spoil to all their enemies;

14 I will abandon the survivors of my heritage and hand them over to their enemies. They will become war booty and spoil to all of their enemies,

14 And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies;

- "...the remnant of My inheritance" - the southern kingdom of Judah (Cf. 17:18)
- God would abandon His people temporarily, but not permanently (Cf. Deut 28:63-64)

15 because they have done evil in My sight, and have been provoking Me to anger since the day their fathers came from Egypt, even to this day!"

15 because they have done evil in My sight, and have been provoking Me to anger since the day their fathers came from Egypt, even to this day!"

15 because they have done what I consider to be evil and they have provoked me from the day their ancestors left Egypt right up to this day!"

15 Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

- This judgment would come on them for all their evil (Cf. v9,16) since their birth as a nation when God led them out of Egypt

**16** Furthermore, Manasseh shed very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin into which he misled Judah, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.

**16** Moreover, Manasseh shed very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; besides his sin with which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.

**16** In addition to this, Manasseh shed lots of innocent blood—until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another—besides his sin by which he caused Judah to sin by practicing what the LORD considered to be evil.

**16** Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.

- The innocent blood Manasseh shed included that of his own son (v6) and the sons and daughters of those who followed his examples of worship

— According to Jewish tradition Isaiah was put to death by Manasseh by being sawed in two (Heb 11:37 may refer to Isaiah)

17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did, and his sin which he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did and his sin which he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

17 The rest of Manasseh's deeds, including everything that he accomplished and the sin that he practiced, are recorded in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, are they not?

**17** Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

- The chronicler reported that Manasseh for his sins was taken captive to Babylon (2 Chr 33:11) by the king of Assyria, probably Ashurbanipal (669-626 BC). There Manasseh repented of his sins and God in His grace allowed Manasseh to return to Jerusalem after a period of captivity (2 Chr 33:12-13; Cf. 2 Chr 33:18-19). After his restoration the king cleaned up much of the idolatry in Judah (2 Chr 33:15-17). Manasseh's sins had stained Judah deeply, however, and even later reforms under Josiah could not avert God's judgment (2 Kings 23:26).

**18** And Manasseh lay down with his fathers and was **buried in the garden** of his own house, in the garden of Uzza, and his son Amon became king in his place.

**18** And Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza, and Amon his son became king in his place.

**18** Manasseh died, as did his ancestors, and he was buried in the garden at his home in the Garden of Uzza. His son Amon became king in his place.

**18** And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

- "...buried in the garden" - reflects the fact that the people esteemed him lightly

(3) Amon's reign (21:19-26) (Cf. 2 Chr 33:21-25)

**19** Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned for two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

**19** Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

**19** Amon began to reign at the age of 22, and ruled for two years in Jerusalem. His mother was named Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

**19** Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

- Amon reigned for two years (642-640 BC)

**20** He did evil in the sight of the LORD, just as his father Manasseh had done.

**20** He did evil in the sight of the LORD, as Manasseh his father had done.

**20** He practiced what the LORD considered to be evil, just as his father Manasseh had done,

**20** And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did.

- Amon did not continue the policies of his father's (Manasseh's) later rule but reverted to the syncretistic, idolatrous worship that had characterized Manasseh's earlier reign (Cf. v2-

7)

21 For he walked entirely in the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them.

21 For he walked in all the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served and worshiped them.

21 because he completely adopted his father's lifestyle, serving the same idols his father had served and worshipped.

21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

22 So he abandoned the LORD, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD.

22 So he forsook the LORD, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD.

22 As a result, he abandoned the LORD God of his ancestors and did not walk in the LORD's way.

22 And he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

23 And the servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his own house.

23 The servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his own house.

23 Later on, Amon's staff conspired against him and killed the king inside his own home.

**23** And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.

- Amon's lack of following the Lord provoked some of his officials to assassinate him

— Again, rebellion against God often leads to one's premature personal destruction (Cf. 1 John 5:16)

24 Then the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

24 Then the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place.

24 But afterward, the people of the land executed everyone who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land installed his son Josiah to be king in his place.

24 And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

- To their credit, the leaders of Judah executed the king's assassins to prevent anarchy

25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

25 Now the rest of Amon's activities that he undertook are recorded in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, are they not?

**25** Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

26 He was buried in his grave in the garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah became king in his place.

26 He was buried in his grave in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son became king in his place.

26 He was buried in his own grave in the Garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah became king in his place.

26 And he was buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

- Amon was buried with his father in the palace garden (Cf. v18)