

2Kings 21:1 ¶ **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.**

2Kings 21:2 **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.**

Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king; his reign lasted 55 years—the longest of the kings of Judah. His mother's name was Hephzibah; that name has a beautiful meaning, “my delight is in her.” It's actually the future name that God gives His people Israel.

*Isaiah 62:4–5 “Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but **thou shalt be called Hephzibah**, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”*

Manasseh was an evil king that followed the idolatrous customs of the heathen nations that the LORD had cast out of Canaan to give it to the children of Israel.

2Kings 21:3 **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.**

2Kings 21:4 **And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name.**

2Kings 21:5 **And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.**

2Kings 21:6 **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.**

These verses list many of the wicked things Manasseh did.

- He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed.
- He built altars for Baal and made a grove just as Ahab had.
- He worshipped all the host of heaven and served them like those who follow astrology today.
- He built altars to his false gods in the house of the LORD—a direct slap in the face, so to speak, to the LORD since He had chosen Jerusalem as the place to identify with His name.
- He built altars to the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.
- He sacrificed his son by fire to his false god (Molech).
- He practiced magic (from the Hebrew for “observed times”).
- He made use of magic spells and fortune telling (from the Hebrew for “used enchantments”).
- He made use of mediums and conjurers (from the Hebrew for “familiar

spirits and wizards").
Manasseh did a lot of wicked things in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger.

2Kings 21:7 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:

2Kings 21:8 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.

2Kings 21:9 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.

We see from the previous verses that Manasseh did many evil things, but one of the most evil things he did to blaspheme the LORD was to set up an idol of the grove in the house of the LORD, the temple that was made specifically as a place of worship to the LORD.

Guzik makes this note about the "graven image" that other translations call Asherah: "Asherah was the Canaanite goddess of fertility, and worshipped through ritual prostitution. This means that Manasseh made the temple into an idolatrous brothel, dedicated to Asherah."

It was Solomon that had the temple built. The LORD had told both David and Solomon that He had chosen to place His name in Jerusalem and had chosen the tribe of Judah specifically out of all the tribes of Israel as a place and people to represent His name. The LORD had promised that the people of Israel would never have to move out of the land He had given them IF they would obey His commands as recorded by Moses. Sadly, they refused to obey the LORD. Manasseh even seduced the people to become more evil than the nations that the LORD had driven out of Canaan in order to give the land to the children of Israel.

I couldn't help but think of what the LORD had told Abraham about waiting to put the Amorites out of the land of Canaan.

Genesis 15:16 "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."

The LORD waited until the Amorites had become full of evil, past the possibility of repentance. Verse 9 is saying that the people of Judah were even worse than the Amorites. It seems that there comes a point when the LORD's longsuffering is exhausted and judgment is certain. I think the LORD's longsuffering is directly connected to His omniscience. I think the reason for His longsuffering with Manasseh was because He knew that he would eventually fall before Him in repentance and obedience. The more we learn about Manasseh, the more we understand that the LORD is not willing that any should perish for Him to show

such grace and mercy to such an evil king.

2Kings 21:10 ¶ And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,
2Kings 21:11 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:

2Kings 21:12 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.

2Kings 21:13 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.

2Kings 21:14 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;

2Kings 21:15 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.

The LORD warned His people through His servants the prophets—Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk and Isaiah—who were on the scene during this time. Clarke adds this historical note: “It is said that Isaiah not only prophesied in those days, but also that he was put to death by Manasseh, being asunder by a wooden saw.” This could be what the writer to Hebrews references.

Hebrews 11:32 & 37 “And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets....They were stoned, they were sawn asunder....”

The prophets boldly declared that because Manasseh had acted so wickedly and led the people to follow in his evil ways, more evil than even the Amorites, the LORD would bring terrible evil upon Jerusalem and Judah. The teeth of those who heard about it would chatter in fear (from the Hebrew for “tingle”).

The prophets declared that the LORD would stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab. In other words, He would judge Judah using the same standards. The LORD is going to clean it just as thoroughly as one would wipe a dish and turn it upside down; the people would be cast out of the land.

The LORD had chosen Israel as His portion, His inheritance among all the nations on earth.

Deuteronomy 7:6 “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.”

The Hebrew for “forsake” in verse 14 states, “to pound, smite; by implication (as if beating out, and thus expanding) to disperse.” The LORD isn’t saying that He

is renouncing the children of Israel. He is going to strike the remnant that remains in Judah and cast them out of the land for many years. He is going to deliver them to their enemies as the spoils of war. He is going to send this judgment because they have continued to persist in doing evil and provoking Him to anger ever since they left Egypt.

2Kings 21:16 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.

It is noted that Manasseh was responsible for the death of so many innocent people that he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. This is in addition to leading the people of Judah into the sin of worshipping false gods and doing living sinful lives before the LORD.

I could not help but draw a comparison to our nation. Though we cannot lay the blame at the feet of just one person, we have filled our country with the deaths of the innocent with the millions of babies that have been aborted.

The Chronicler tells us that the LORD eventually sent the Assyrians against Judah, and they took Manasseh captive to Babylon. In his affliction, he finally humbled himself before the LORD in repentance. The LORD actually brought him back to Jerusalem (though we don't know the circumstances), and Manasseh showed by his actions that he knew the LORD as his God. He fortified the city and got rid of all the strange gods, idols and altars that he had built. More importantly, he repaired the altar of the LORD and commanded the people to serve the LORD God of Israel. (see 2Chronicles 33)

I liked this observation by Guzik: "This is a wonderful example of the principle, *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it* (Proverbs 22:6). Manasseh was raised by a godly father, yet he lived in defiance of his father's faith for most of his life. Nevertheless, at the end of his days he truly repented and served God."

2Kings 21:17 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?

2Kings 21:18 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.

The historian closes his record on Manasseh by stating that more was written about all his wicked deeds in the chronicles of the kings of Judah.

When Manasseh died, he was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. His son Amon became the next king.

2Kings 21:19 ¶ 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.

2Kings 21:20 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did.

2Kings 21:21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

2Kings 21:22 And he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

Amon was 22 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 22 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Meshullemeth, daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

Amon followed the example of his father and did evil before the LORD, including serving and worshipping the idols of his father. He was disobedient to all the commands of the LORD. Unlike his father, however, he never repented of his evil.

2Kings 21:23 And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.

2Kings 21:24 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.

The servants of Amon plotted against him and killed him in his own house. When the people learned what had happened, they executed those that had conspired against the king. The people then made Amon's son Josiah the king.

2Kings 21:25 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?

2Kings 21:26 And he was buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

The historian closed his account of Amon by noting that more about him is recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. He was buried in the garden of Uzza along with his father. His son Josiah became the next king.