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We continue our *Revival in America* series with a deep dive into the life of King Josiah:

“And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying, Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest, that he may sum (make an account of) the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house...” (2 Kings 22:3-5).

Bible scholars believe this passage of Scripture refers to the year when the Temple repair work was completed. Not long afterwards, Josiah would implement a great spiritual “Reformation”. This was also when a copy of the Law was discovered, which would bring to fruition all the works of King Josiah prophesied by the unnamed prophet of God some 300 years before Josiah’s birth. I shared this in the June newsletter (see Part 6).

A copy of the law was brought to Josiah and read to him. He was deeply convicted and move by God. This was in about the eighth year of Josiah’s reign, when he was about 16 years old.

Some theologians believe Jeremiah and Josiah were just boys together at this time and that Jeremiah may have played a part in Josiah’s conversion. The Scriptures lay out this possibility:

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“The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiyah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign” (Jeremiah 1:1-2).

Another passage confirms the closeness of Josiah and Jeremiah:

“From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me (Jeremiah), and I have spoken unto you (Judah), rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened” (Jeremiah 25:3).

It is obvious Josiah and Jeremiah were contemporaries. It is apparent both Josiah and Jeremiah were in tandem during this time fulfilling the will and plans of Jehovah. I also believe Hilkiyah the priest in **2 Kings 22** is the same priest spoken of in **Jeremiah. 1:1**, which would make Hilkiyah the father of Jeremiah.

Please note: God is forever faithful and consistent and He speaks very early and very clearly before He ever begets or permits divine judgment upon His people or a nation. It is evident Judah was ripe for divine judgment. However, because of Josiah and his obedience to the Word of God, God would not suffer judgment until after the passing of Josiah.

I believe with all my heart America also is ripe for divine judgment. Scripture show us God is faithful to warn his people of their impending judgment:

“Moreover all the chief of the

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priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy (no healing)” (2 Chronicles 36:14-16).

From the 13th year of Josiah’s reign until the captivity of King Zedekiah was approximately 40 years. Zedekiah would be the last king in Judah before divine judgment fell upon Judah. Zedekiah would reign just 11 years before Nebuchadnezzar would ultimately assassinate his sons and bring him into Babylonian captivity.

By the way, the number 11 in biblical numerology means judgment and disorder. Zedekiah’s 11 years of spiritual disorder and sinful leadership of Judah brought God’s judgment. Nebuchadnezzar would ultimately put out Zedekiah’s eyes and take him back to Babylon and hold him there until his death. Zedekiah was placed in chains and died in Babylonian captivity:

“But the Chaldeans’ army pursued after them (Zedekiah and his sons), and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment

upon him. Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon" (Jeremiah 39:5-7).

Jeremiah had previously prophesied that Zedekiah would see Nebuchadnezzar eye to eye and speak to him mouth to mouth:

"And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes; And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper" (Jeremiah 32:4-5).

Though Jeremiah prophesied Zedekiah would be taken to Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel also prophesied Zedekiah would be taken to Babylon and adds one amazing detail that Zedekiah would not see it:

"My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there" (Ezekiel 12:13).

All of God's prophecies are true. Not one word shall fail. Zedekiah was taken to Babylon and he died there, but he did not see Babylon because his eyes had been put out. Though Zedekiah would be blinded and die in Babylon, he was previously warned by Jeremiah to humble himself under the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and if he did so he would live; however Zedekiah would not take heed to the Word of the Lord. Because of his disobedience, he suffered a very tragic end along with his sons. Pride and arrogance caused Zedekiah to suffer needlessly because he stiffened his

neck, hardened his heart, and refused to heed the Word of the Lord:

"Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD. And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel" (2 Chronicles 36:11-13).

I fear for America today because we fail daily to heed the Word of our Lord.

Zedekiah failed miserably and he refused to humble himself according to God's Word. I am convinced, had Zedekiah hearkened to the prophet of God, he would not have been made blind and both he and his sons would not have lost their lives. However, because of his disobedience and flagrant opposition to God's Word, he not only suffered death but his sons also suffered death. To disobey the Word of God always brings calamity to the disobedient.

Tragically, the last thing Zedekiah saw was his sons being assassinated then the Babylonians put out his eyes. The last thing Zedekiah ever witnessed visually was the murder of his sons. What a horror to witness the death of your sons and then be made a blind man. In the end, Zedekiah would die in Babylonian captivity.

Zedekiah's rebellion and disobedience not only caused irreparable harm to his own life but also in the lives of his sons and the nation of Judah. May we all take heed to never handle the Word of God with disrespect or with contempt!

The great tragedy in everything that took place concerning Josiah's Reformation was, even though he

restored Judah according to the Word of God, tore down the sodomite houses, and destroyed the idolatrous altars, along with all of the idolatrous priests, the judgment of Almighty God would still fall upon Judah and Israel after his passing.

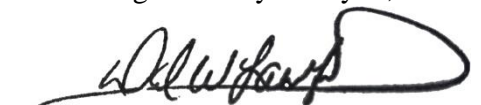
Because Josiah took heed to the Word of God when it was read to him God delayed divine judgment until after Josiah passed. This tells me if we the church, the body of Christ will humble ourselves, pray, and seek the face of God, He can also delay judgment on America; but if the church and the nation will not capitulate, I believe judgment is certain.

America has been supernaturally blessed: one of the greatest industrious nations ever, one of profuse advancement in technology and prosperity, and yet we live lives of sin, filth, and degradation. This cannot continue much longer. The perversity of our nation, the wickedness of our political leaders, and the failure in proclaiming the Word of God without compromise will soon demand a day of accountability.

Make no mistake about it, the day will come when the mercy of God will no longer exist and America must give an account of her filth and sins.

May I humbly thank you for your faithful love and financial support. Many of you have been very generous and loving to this ministry and for that we are very grateful. It is my desire to always be mindful of God's goodness and you are a reflection of the goodness of our Lord. May He watch over you and yours in the coming days and answer all your humble prayers.

Serving faithfully with you,



David W. Lankford
Pastor / Evangelist