

Summary of the Story of Josiah, the Boy King 2 Kings 22-1-23:23

The people of God were divided into two kingdoms - Israel and Judah. Israel had been captured by the Assyrians but King Hezekiah ruled over Judah. Hezekiah would die and his son **Manasseh** then reigned for 55 years. He **was the worst king Judah had**. He worshipped many idols and did many despicable things. When he died, his son Amon ruled for 2 years. He followed the same path as his father and his servants rebelled, killing him and that made his son Josiah king.

Josiah was eight years old when he became king. Despite what he had learned from his father and grandfather, **Josiah loved God**. Josiah looked at the Temple and was sad. It was broken and dirty. It was not a place to worship God. For 18 years he saved and when he turned 36, Josiah sent word to **the high priest, Hilkiah**... "Take the money I have saved and use it to repair the Temple," Josiah said. "You do not need to account how it is spent. I trust you." Hilkiah searched through the temple for all the money collected. In a far corner he found an old box. Gently he opened it and **found the Book of the Law**.

"I must tell the king," he cried. Hilkiah ran to the King. **Josiah read the Law, and tore his clothes in dismay when he heard everything there**. The kings of Judah had not followed these laws for more than 50 years. God could not overlook the idolatry of the people forever. "Go, ask God for me and for Judah, what should we do? God's wrath is great because of our sin." Josiah said. Hilkiah went and talked to Huldah, the prophetess. Huldah sternly answered them. "God says, 'Tell Josiah, I will punish this place and all who live here. They will be punished for their idol worship.'" As their faces paled, she held her hand up. "But, God is merciful. He has seen your heart and your repentance. He has seen your anguish at Judah's sins. You will die in peace. You will not see this tragedy." They brought the news back to Josiah, and he closed his eyes in prayer, "Thank you God". Josiah gathered all the leaders of Judah together and read the law to everyone. **"I swear to God and to you that I will follow God and His laws. I will follow His commands and lead His people to follow them."** Josiah swore before all of the people of Judah.