
Day 204 - July 23

Judah after Israel's Fall (725-585 BCE)

From Manasseh to Josiah

Readings: *2 Kings 21:17-26; 22:1-2; 23:25-27; 2 Chronicles 33:18-25; 34:1-2*

Reflections:

- The story of Judah continues as we return to 2 Kings 21 and 2 Chronicles 33. Manasseh dies and Amon his son becomes king of Judah. Amon is proud and does not humble himself before God and is ultimately assassinated. The nation then kills Amon's assassins and makes a young boy, just eight years old, king. In this we see a number of incredible things. First, that the nation is so completely messed up that there is simply no one with a good heart to lead the nation. In the story of "what doesn't work" we have learned that no leader can replace God. Every leader is fatally flawed in their character and we have witnessed that over and over and over again. It is only God who is worthy of our undivided loyalty. All leaders must walk humbly in the knowledge that they are dangerous people apart from the grace of God working through their weakness and humility. Second, we see that God can work powerfully through children. He delights in children. Imagine if a large church had as their senior board a team of eight or ten eight-year-olds leading the church. Would you attend that church? Here was a whole nation being led by one eight-year-old. If you know any good hearted, humble eight-year-old children, you know that they have a very strict conscience and a natural humility. When the nation was so messed up, it is interesting that God chose to work through one of the least of these: "He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in the all the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left. Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did – with all his heart and with his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses." What an awesome testimony for this child king!
- Although Josiah's heart is right, the nation still remains rebellious to God and continues in their commitment to idolatry. As a result they remain under God's judgment as well: "I will reject Jerusalem, the city I chose, and this temple, about which I said, 'there shall my Name be.'" As we will see, God will one day create a new temple for his Name and for the nations of the world to come meet with him. It will not be a building but a

community of people who live in unity and carry his message of truth and grace into our broken world.