

BIBLE BRIEFING

“Teen Spirit”

Second Kings 22:1-13

2 Kings 22:1 Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.

2 Kings 22:2 And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

2 Kings 22:3 Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the LORD, saying:

2 Kings 22:4 "Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been brought into the house of the LORD, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people.

2 Kings 22:5 And let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the LORD; let them give it to those who *are* in the house of the LORD doing the work, to repair the damages of the house -

2 Kings 22:6 to carpenters and builders and masons - and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

2 Kings 22:7 However there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully."

2 Kings 22:8 Then Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

2 Kings 22:9 So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD."

2 Kings 22:10 Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

2 Kings 22:11 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes.

2 Kings 22:12 Then the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying,

2 Kings 22:13 "Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

It's important we constantly remind ourselves of two things:

1. The saints in the Bible are men and women of like passions with us. They are ordinary, everyday, average believers.
2. God is no respecter of persons. He can do in, with, and through us everything He's done in, with, and through previous saints.

Josiah was a remarkable king. But he was also no different than you or I. He will lead a revival among his people. How'd he do it? Let's see.

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Second Chronicles provides a commentary on what it means when it says Josiah **did what was right in the sight of the Lord:**

2 Chronicles 34:3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images.

2 Chronicles 34:4 They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which *were* above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered *it* on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them.

2 Chronicles 34:5 He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 34:6 And *so he did* in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes.

2 Chronicles 34:7 When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

At age sixteen Josiah sought the Lord. He was saved. It was the foundation upon which revival would come to the nation.

As parents we need to concentrate on bringing our kids to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Then we want to mold and shape their thinking according to biblical values and views.

Josiah was on-fire during his teen years. I've noticed that Christian parents dread the teen years. They tell others, **including their teens**, how much they dread the teen years. It is not profitable.

Then there is the always dangerous 'generation gap.' There is a spiritual version of the generation gap in which Christian parents can actually be too rigid in some areas. It's amazing how lenient we can be towards the things our kids partake of in the world and then turn right around and totally shut them down if they want to worship the Lord in a slightly different manner.

One more observation. I'm not sure exactly how to categorize it. Over the years I've noticed that Christian parents are very lax about their teens being involved in Youth Group. There are dozens of potential reasons why. I think it's sad and spiritually dangerous. For one thing it establishes that there are other activities more important than fellowship and Bible study.

These are a few reasons why America has produced a generation of Christian young people who don't know *what* or *why* they believe. They are getting drawn away from God in college – even in some popular Christian colleges.

Josh McDowell published a book just recently titled, *The Last Generation*. It's not about us being in the end times as the last generation before the Rapture. It's about his own observations that Christian teens don't know what or why they believe. The title is a warning that they could be the last generation of Christians in America since they don't know what to pass on to their own children.

Back to Josiah... From age sixteen until he was twenty he led an aggressive reform against idolatry. He ground the idols into powder and scattered the ashes on the graves of those who worshipped them. *He wasn't messing around.*

Josiah was king so he had a lot of authority and power. But he should serve to remind us that our young adults are a source of spiritual vigor and zeal. We need to tap in to refresh ourselves. We need to raise them up and let them minister. Sure, experience and maturity are good. But a lot of believers who think they are mature

are just old. It's the presence and power of the Holy Spirit we should be interested in at any age.

Eight years later, at age twenty-six, Josiah turned his attention toward the Temple.

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We note in passing that they did not require an accounting of the donations. *Not a good idea in every day practice!* There's nothing wrong with good accounting methods.

It does remind us that it is possible to find faithful servants who, once raised-up, can be entrusted with the stewardship of God's resources. Within very general guidelines they should be set free to serve the Lord. If you have to give detailed job descriptions or micro-manage **then you've got the wrong people**. They are not gifted in the way the task requires. If you have to assist those who think they are assisting you then something is wrong.

The focus in these years of Josiah's life was the repair of the Temple. How said that the people had let it deteriorate. Sure it was only a physical thing and God is ultimately interested in what is spiritual. But that should not be an excuse to slack-off.

God is a great designer, a superb architect, an amazing artist. He works with all kinds of materials and colors to produce things of stunning, breath-taking beauty. Since we are made in His image we ought to do the same.

If nothing else things should be neat and orderly; clean and kept. I'm blessed by the building the Lord led us into. Though very adequate, we have vastly improved upon it. It's a testimony to the Lord.

This point can also apply to your serving the Lord as His temple. It's possible to slack-off in your area of service. To be unprepared. To not devote enough time and attention to its oversight. A lot of ministry in the Church ends up in a maintenance capacity. It's still going, but with no real vision or power.

Us old men fall into this more than the young men. It's one more reason why we need them around.

While working in the Temple a startling discovery was made:

[2 Kings 22:8](#) Then Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

The book of the Law was either the first five books or just Deuteronomy. It had been completely lost to the nation. It wasn't being read or taught.

Think of it: Right in the house of God they had misplaced the Word of God. It happens in the Church in every generation. There is always some new attack within the Church against reading and teaching just the Bible. Today it is coming from many fronts:

1. Psychology in the Church is a misplacement of the Word.
2. The Emerging Church movement wants you to close your Bible to open your mind to God. They want to hide the Word away under some rubbish.

Misplacing the Word is like wanting to know someone but deciding you don't ever want them to talk to you. It's absurd. Yet, when it is suggested by Christians and professing Christians in the Church, it seems so plausible.

The best way to not misplace God's Word is to give it its proper place. We must continue to read and then teach and preach the Bible verse-by-verse, chapter-by-chapter, book-by-book.

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Here is another amazing thought: **Josiah had never really read or heard the Bible!** I get a big kick out of people who have been Christians a long time, sometimes for decades, who get excited about hearing the Bible systematically taught for the first time. It's amazing (and a little sad) to think you can spend your whole life in Church and never be exposed to parts or even most of the Bible.

Josiah was moved by what he heard. He reacted appropriately. We need to ask ourselves if we are still, or ever, moved by the Word of God.

There is a kind of over-exposure that takes place. Not that you can ever get too much of the Bible. But you get to a point where you have no personal expectation it will move you. It becomes more an intellectual pursuit than a matter of intimacy.

Josiah went on to establish the worship of God according to the things written in the Law. He influenced others to worship God correctly. He wasn't interested in every new movement and philosophy that came on the scene. He knew that the Word was a solid and true foundation.

He followed the Lord all his days upon the earth. He finished well. We've looked at young men and old men. If you're one of the old men you should want to finish well. By 'finish' we're not talking about retirement. It might be OK to retire from your career but not from being conformed into the image of your Lord.

If anything you should retire **to** serve the Lord more!

Conclusion

We might be the last generation. Let's make sure it's because we have hastened the Lord's return and not because we've lost our kids to secular pursuits.

