

Theme: Finding grace in the grip of judgment. Though Judah’s judgment is certain, the hope/promise of grace is presented. Grace is much stronger than sin.

Background: Hezekiah was one of the best kings of Judah. Manasseh was one of the worst.

Introduction: The impact of zealous, ungodly leadership.

I. Manasseh’s (Evil) Passion (2 Kings 21:1-8)

A. A love affair with idolatry

1. A 55 year reign
2. No stone unturned
 - Dismantling everything his father built to serve the LORD
 - Reestablishing everything his father “cleansed”

B. A zealous pursuit

1. Zealous for ungodly worship
 - Committed and sincere
 - Sincerely *wrong*

NOTE: Absolutes must be grounded in something other than our own desires.

2. Zealous for the rejection of the LORD
 - Silencing all opposition

II. Manasseh’s Lasting Legacy (9-16)

A. Leading Judah astray

1. Judah forsakes the LORD
2. Worse than the people they drove out
3. Compared to the house of Ahab (See Jeremiah 15:3-4)
4. Turning the bowl upside down (What a picture! Kids didn’t finish something they didn’t like. Dug around in it so you can’t serve it to anyone. To the trash – upside down – wiped out! Then – it would have been devoured by the animals!)

B. Judgment falls on Judah – Judgment begins – Sealing their judgment!

1. Emptying the bowl
2. Handing them over to their enemies (14)
3. Past the point of no return
 - a. Guilt is cumulative and corporate! (9)
 - b. Judgment is affirmed (19-24)
 - Amon rules two years before the coup
 - The “people of the land” preserve the line of David

III. Manasseh’s Deliverance (2 Chronicles 33:9-13)

A. Judgment begins

1. Jerusalem is captured

NOTE: Without the Lord’s protection, Jerusalem is easy prey
2. Manasseh is taken captive – Hook (in his nose?) and chains (bondage)

NOTE: It’s a foretaste of judgment, of what is to come

B. Manasseh **repents!!!**

1. Recognizing God's hand (of judgment)
 - Literally "the Lord distressed him"
 - Humbled himself *greatly!*

2. Entreating the Lord!

NOTE: The Lord uses painful situations/circumstances to bless his servants.

C. Redemption

1. For Manasseh
 - Returns to Jerusalem (deliverance)
 - Removes false god's/idols – and the idolatry he built
 - Restores what he had desecrated
2. But not for Judah
 - a. Judgment is inevitable now NOTE: Though Manasseh is "redeemed" the consequences of his works – his sin – remain.
 - The faithful will be carried with them
 - b. Personal repentance is still possible
 - They can still call upon the Lord
 - They can still be redeemed and reconciled to God

That hope is grounded in...

IV. A Greater Deliverance – In a Perfect Deliverer

A. The Messiah's passion

1. To do all the will of God; perfect obedience
2. To offer pure, acceptable worship
 - Zeal for God's house consumed him (See John 2:17)

3. The cross of sacrifice and salvation

NOTE: God's covenant promises and faithfulness was the only reason that Manasseh could come again to the living God!

4. For the children of Abraham
 - His *spiritual* descendants (Justified by faith) (See Genesis 15:6; Romans 3:21,22)

B. The Messiah's legacy

1. Faithfulness
2. Redemption
3. Life!

V. Conclusion – 2 Kings 21 sounds all too modern

- A. Leaders actions/decisions have consequences for those who are under them.
- B. Our leaders are servants of God whether they acknowledge that or not
- C. We have shed much "innocent blood". Have we passed a point of no return?
- D. The hope of the gospel still stands – and must be declared. Salvation is of the LORD!
- E. We live as "...children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, holding fast to the Word of life