

Manasseh

In today's lesson, we're going to look in the book of II Chronicles, Chapter 33. We want to look at the most wicked man in the Bible. In verse 1 of II Chronicles Chapter 33, it says: *Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: ²But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.*

Some students of the Bible believe that Manasseh is the most wicked man to be found in scripture. "Manasseh" means making to forget. He was the worst king of Judah. In just a few moments now, we're going to look into the things that he did that many Bible scholars believe made him the wickedest man found in the Bible.

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In II Chronicles Chapter 33, you read about this man Manassah in verses 1-19. First of all, what makes him such a wicked person? How do we see him as a wicked person? First of all,

his sins. According to verse 2, he *did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.*

And then, we see in verses 3-5, he was an idolator. Verse 3 says he built again the high places. Verse 3 also says he reared up altars for Baalim. Verse 3 says he made groves. Verse 3 says he worshipped all the host of heaven and served them. And on and on the list goes.

There are a couple more things I'm going to mention here. Notice that he was worshipping things that were not true. He was worshipping trees; he was worshipping the stars and the things that we look up and we see in the heavens as an astrologer would look up; and he was worshipping these things instead of worshipping the true God.

Then we see that he built altars in the house of the Lord. He desecrated the house of God, according to verse 4. Verse 5 says, *And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD,* desecrating the sacred place that God had said, "This is where you will worship Me," and Manasseh, we see, was worshipping anything and anyone other than the true Lord.

We also see that he was an idolator. He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord and this was one of the worst things that we look at here. Of course, not serving God and serving other so-called gods is bad enough, but in verse 6, it tells us that he murdered his children. It says there, *⁶And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom.* He offered his own children as a sacrifice to the pagan god Molech.

The pagan sacrifice could have involved his children by either passing between the two

fires as an act of dedication to Molech or an act of actually passing through the fire as a human sacrifice to this pagan god Molech. This was paganism and it was forbidden by God in Leviticus 18:21. It says, *And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.*

So we see in that verse, Leviticus 18:21, that he had actually gone against everything that God said don't do. We also see that he practiced magic and witchcraft in verse 6. If everything else wasn't bad enough, he practiced magic and witchcraft. It says he observed times. In other words, he watched for certain signs instead of seeking God's will, and he used enchantments, according to this verse, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, a demon spirit, and with wizards.

It's not bad enough that he caused his children to pass through the fire to kill them; it wasn't bad enough that he was trying to serve other gods which were not real but he was going against the true God, but we see that he turned to the witchcraft. He turned to familiar spirits, the demon spirits of the devil, and to wizards. According to Deuteronomy 18:9-12, this was strictly forbidden by God.

We've already seen that he desecrated the house of God. He built altars there. In verse 7, it says, *And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God.* He kept going on and on, worse and worse, more wicked.

Then we see that he caused his people to sin. In verse 9, it says, *So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen.* These people were supposed to be the people of God, and yet, he had turned them into the people of the devil.

They were doing things that were worse than the heathen.

And then, that's not all. According to II Kings 21:16, he shed innocent blood. It says there, *Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.* He was a wicked person. He was a wicked man, and as I've said earlier, some believe he was the most wicked person that we find in the Bible, but I've got news for you. And it was good news for him, and it's good news for some of the people listening today, I'm sure.

As we look at him and we see the most wicked person in the Bible, we also see that his salvation came about in spite of the fact that he was such a notoriously wicked man, we believe that the Bible makes it clear that he was saved from his sins. In verse 10, it says that the Lord spoke to him, and then again in verse 18. In verse 10 of II Chronicles 33:10, it says, *And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.*

Now notice verse 18: *Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God... speaking of God our Father today... and his prayer unto his God, and the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel.* Many believe that he spoke to God, he asked His forgiveness, and God saved him.

Notice in verses 11-12 how that the LORD afflicted him. It says: *Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.*

This tells us that he was in affliction. You don't go against God and get away with it. We get saved after living a life of sin, but that sin

takes its course in our lives. There's a price that is paid in the physical body many times, and we see that Manasseh paid the price here.

In II Chronicles 33:12-13, the Bible says, *And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers*, and verse 13 says he prayed unto Him. I believe the Lord saved him. The Lord saved him. He besought the Lord in verse 12, and it says he humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers and, in verse 13, he prayed unto him. Verse 13 says the Lord heard his supplication. Verse 13 says, *Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.*

Well, there's good news today. Manasseh was the wickedest man that we find in the Bible, but we also see that his salvation came about. Then, after his salvation, he served God. After God saved Manasseh he became a changed man. He began to serve the Lord diligently. In verse 13, he was brought back by the Lord to Jerusalem into his kingdom.

Verse 14 says he built a wall without the city of David and, also in verse 15, he put away idolatry. Verse 16, he repaired the altar of the Lord. Verse 16, he sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings.

Thank God, no matter how wicked a person is, no matter how wicked we become, there is good news for you from God. The most wicked man in the Bible was saved. The chief of sinners was saved and you can be saved today.

Paul said he was the chief of sinners. Paul the apostle murdered Christians and then he found God. He found the Lord. The Lord came into his heart and Paul became a new creature in Christ.

And you can become a new creature today by calling upon the name of the Lord. *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* God loves you so much that He sent His Son to die for you. It makes no difference how wicked you have been. God can save you today if you'll call upon the name of the Lord. Turn from your sin. Ask God's forgiveness and He'll save you today for Christ's sake.

And if you are saved and you're not living for Him, shame on you. God wants to use you. He wants you in his service. He wants you to be telling others about His love, the love that He showed through His Son, Jesus Christ, by sending Him to this lost and dying world. He came to seek and to save those who were lost, and if you are saved today, you need to be serving Him with all of your might.

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Tune in next time and we'll be looking at another section of Scripture. I pray today that you do know the Lord as your Savior. I pray that you've trusted Him today. I pray that you're serving Him as a saved person if you've been saved before. If you are saved, I pray that you are serving God to your fullest and that one day you'll hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Until the next time when you hear me say, "It's a good life," may the Lord bless you richly in my prayer.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.