

Manasseh

Son of Hezekiah and Hephzibah, began his reign in Jerusalem at the age of twelve and reigned fifty-five years, [2 Kings 21:1; 2 Chronicles 33:1].

Part of this reign could have been as co-regent with his father [696-686BC] and as sole ruler [686-642BC].

Manasseh's reign was a time of religious retrogression in Judah following the example of his grandfather Ahaziah than his father.

Even a brief outline of Manasseh's evil sickens the reader and we wonder how the Creator God could ever forgive him.

2 Kings 21:2-9 [New King James] *“And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a wooden image, as Ahab king of Israel had done; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, ‘In Jerusalem I will put My name.’ And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. Also he made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. He even set a carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which the LORD had said to David and to Solomon his son, ‘In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; and I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers, only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them.’ But they paid no attention, and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.”*

Listed among these sins of Manasseh are occult practices, sorcery and divination and the consulting of mediums and spiritists. These acts were strictly forbidden by God, [**Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:9-13**] because they demonstrate a lack of faith in the Creator God, involve sinful actions and open the door to demonic influences.

Today, many books, television shows and games emphasise fortune-telling, séances and other occult practices.

Never allow the desire to know the future or the belief that superstition is harmless lead you into condoning occult practices. They are counterfeits of God's power and have their root in a system of beliefs that worship Satan, totally opposed to the true Creator God.

Asherah was a Canaanite mother-goddess, a mistress of Baal. Her images were made of wood. In **Exodus 34:13** and **Deuteronomy 12:3**, the Israelites were expressly forbidden to associate with Asherah practices in any way.

Child sacrifice is a vile act of pagan idolatry, an act against both God and people. Could abortion on demand be a modern version of this pagan act? [Please download and study our article on this website under heading 'Abortion'.]

2 Kings 21:10-16 [New King James] *“And the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets, saying, ‘Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols), therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of*

Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.” Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.”

Such blatant sins require severe correction from the Creator God.

2 Chronicles 33:10-11 [New King James] *“And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon.”*

Between 652 and 648BC the city of Babylon rebelled against Assyria. The rebellion was crushed but Assyria may have suspected that Manasseh supported it. That may explain why Manasseh was taken to Babylon for trial rather than to the Assyrian capital of Nineveh.

2 Chronicles 33:12-13 [New King James] *“Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.”*

Responding to Manasseh’s heartfelt repentance God extended mercy towards him by forgiving him and restoring him to king of Judah.

2 Chronicles 33:14-17 [New King James] *“After this he built a wall outside the City of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate; and it enclosed Ophel, and he raised it to a very great height. Then he put military captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. He also repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the LORD their God.”*

Manasseh’s life was changed, he was given a new start.

Have you ever, like Manasseh, come to your senses in the middle of a trial and cried out to God for help?

Only your confession of your sins to God and an attitude of humble repentance, with a prayer for a new attitude, can stand between you and God’s complete forgiveness, however great has been your sin.

Psalms 51:1-17 [New King James] *“Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight, that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing*

aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, these, O God, You will not despise.”

This prayer of King David after his adultery with Bathsheba and murder by proxy of Uriah is a good outline as to how we should pray to our Creator God.

On the death of Manasseh his son Amon succeeded him as king of Judah.