

# Not too Late

## *The Story Manasseh*

2 Chronicles 33:1-6 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years.<sup>2</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites.<sup>3</sup> He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them.<sup>4</sup> He built altars in the temple of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, “My Name will remain in Jerusalem forever.”<sup>5</sup> In both courts of the temple of the Lord, he built altars to all the starry hosts.<sup>6</sup> He sacrificed his children in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced divination and witchcraft, sought omens, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, arousing his anger. NIV (Also: 2 Kings 21:1-6)

2 Chronicles 33:7-9 He took the image he had made and put it in God’s temple, of which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, “In this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my Name forever.”<sup>8</sup> I will not again make the feet of the Israelites leave the land I assigned to your ancestors, if only they will be careful to do everything I commanded them concerning all the laws, decrees and regulations given through Moses.”<sup>9</sup> But Manasseh led Judah and the people of Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the Lord had destroyed before the Israelites. NIV (Also: 2 Kings 21:7-9)

2 Kings 21:10-15 The Lord said through his servants the prophets:<sup>11</sup> “Manasseh king of Judah has committed these detestable sins. He has done more evil than the Amorites who preceded him and has led Judah into sin with his idols.<sup>12</sup> Therefore this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I am going to bring such disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle.<sup>13</sup> I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab. I will wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.<sup>14</sup> I will forsake the remnant of my inheritance and give them into the hands of enemies. They will be looted and plundered by all their enemies;<sup>15</sup> they have done evil in my eyes and have aroused my anger from the day their ancestors came out of Egypt until this day.” NIV

2 Kings 21:16 Moreover, Manasseh also shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end—besides the sin that he had caused Judah to commit, so that they did evil in the eyes of the Lord. NIV

2 Chronicles 33:10-13 The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention.<sup>11</sup> So the Lord brought against them the army commanders of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.<sup>12</sup> In his distress he sought the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors.<sup>13</sup> And when he prayed to him, the Lord was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord is God. NIV

2 Chronicles 33:14 Afterward he rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David... he also made it much higher. He stationed military commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah. NIV

2 Chronicles 33:15-17 He got rid of the foreign gods and removed the image from the temple of the Lord, as well as all the altars he had built on the temple hill and in Jerusalem; and he threw them out of the city.<sup>16</sup> Then he restored the altar of the Lord and sacrificed fellowship offerings and thank offerings on it, and told Judah to serve the Lord, the God of Israel.<sup>17</sup> The people, however, continued to sacrifice at the high places, but only to the Lord their God. NIV

2 Chronicles 33:18-20 The other events of Manasseh's reign, including his prayer to his God and the words the seers spoke to him in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, are written in the annals of the kings of Israel. <sup>19</sup> His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty, as well as all his sins and unfaithfulness, and the sites where he built high places and set up Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself—all these are written in the records of the seers. <sup>20</sup> Manasseh rested with his ancestors and was buried in his palace. And Amon his son succeeded him as king. NIV

### **Lessons:**

#### **God is more patient and forgiving than you think.**

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. NIV

1 Timothy 1:15-16 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I [, Paul,] am the worst. <sup>16</sup> But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. NIV

#### **Humility and repentance go a long way.**

1 Kings 21:29 “Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son.”

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. NIV

#### **Our sins still have significant consequences.**

2 Chronicles 33:21-23 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. <sup>22</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon worshiped and offered sacrifices to all the idols Manasseh had made. <sup>23</sup> But unlike his father Manasseh, he did not humble himself before the Lord; Amon increased his guilt. NIV

2 Kings 23:26 [In spite of all that King Josiah did], the Lord did not turn away from the heat of his fierce anger, which burned against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to arouse his anger. NIV

Jeremiah 15:3-4 “I will send four kinds of destroyers against them,” declares the Lord, “the sword to kill and the dogs to drag away and the birds and the wild animals to devour and destroy. <sup>4</sup> I will make them abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what Manasseh son of Hezekiah king of Judah did in Jerusalem. NIV

2 Kings 24:2-4 The Lord sent Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against [Jehoiakim] to destroy Judah, in accordance with the word of the Lord proclaimed by his servants the prophets. <sup>3</sup> Surely these things happened to Judah according to the Lord's command, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, <sup>4</sup> including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the Lord was not willing to forgive. NIV

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. NIV