

jenaministries – Part 4 Bible Characters

10. Two Good Kings like Never Before or After

Before we discuss the two good kings, let's get some background.

When the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt, they had judges. Judges were military and life guidance leaders. God was their king and the judges always followed God's directions. Moses was the first judge and he ruled while the Israelites wandered in the wilderness (See **The Life of Moses**). Then Joshua took them into the promised land.

Some of the judges were also prophets. Samuel was a prophet and the last judge. He appointed his sons to take his place, but they did not follow his ways. They were dishonest and perverted.

So the Israelites demanded Samuel to appoint them a king. Even though the Israelites were rejecting God as king (which was very displeasing to God), God still eventually told Samuel to go ahead and anoint Saul as their first king.

Saul was good at first. He was very instrumental in leading the Israelites in conquering land. But he disobeyed God and did what the people wanted instead of what God instructed. Consequentially, Saul died in battle and David was appointed King.

King David was a king of battles and conquering land (See **The Life of King David**). He had a special way of communicating with God and followed all of God's instructions. God found David as a man after his own heart.

David certainly wasn't perfect and had his share of sins. But he always repented and was very humble. He had such a strong faith in God even at a young age when he fought a giant, Goliath. David trusted and followed God completely all his life.

Solomon (David's son) became king at a time of peace. God gave Solomon everything a person could possibly want at a young age (See **The Life of Solomon**). Solomon had wealth, power, wisdom, & health his entire life. He didn't have to lead any battles.

He was in charge of building God's temple. Which he did. God spoke to Solomon twice warning him not to marry foreign women. But he did it anyway. These foreign women coerced Solomon into worshiping their foreign gods. So Solomon's reign ended with him committing adultery on the Lord by worshiping other gods. This was a big deal and God responded appropriately.

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God divided the one kingdom into two, Judah (Southern) and Israel (Northern). Because of the promise God made to King David, God allowed Solomon's lineage of reign over Judah. But he took the rest of the tribes out for others to reign.

Most of the kings thereafter worshiped other gods and did evil. They appointed priests from all kinds of people who were not Levites. They built idols to worship. Some of them even sacrificed their first born sons in fire to a foreign god.

There were only a few kings that did good and followed God. But two kings stood out and did exceptionally good in the eyes of the Lord. King Hezekiah and King Josiah. They were so good that God made a bold statement proclaiming there were no kings like them before or after.

The Bible states:

2 Kings 18:5 Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him.

2 Kings 23:25 Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.

The kings just before and after both Hezekiah and Josiah did evil. So they didn't do good because they were taught to or were given a good example. And the kings after them didn't learn from them or follow their good example either. See supporting scriptures below.

HEZEKIAH: Scriptures 1

Ahaz (Hezekiah's father) was so evil he even sacrificed his own son in fire for foreign gods (See **2 Kings 16:1-3**). But Hezekiah did not follow his father's evil practices (See **2 Kings 18:1-6**). Hezekiah's son Manasseh was appointed king of Judah after Hezekiah (See **2 Kings 20:21**). Manasseh did evil in the eyes of the Lord (See **2 Kings 21:1-3**). He did more evil than any before him (See **2 Kings 21:11**).

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JOSIAH: Scriptures 2

Amon (Manasseh's son & Josiah's father) succeeded Manasseh as king of Judah (See **2 Kings 21:18**). He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and followed his father's practices (See **2 Kings 21:19-22**). Amon's son Josiah succeeded him as king of Judah (see **2 Kings 21:25-26**). Despite his father and grandfather's example, Josiah did good in the eyes of the Lord (See **2 Kings 22:1-2**).

Even though God saw all the good deeds of Josiah, he was still angry and disgusted with Judah for committing detestable acts and worshipping other gods and idles. God vowed to remove Judah from his presence and reject Jerusalem (See **2 Kings 23:25-27**).

Josiah died in battle (See **2 Kings 23:29**). Josiah's son Jehoahaz succeeded him as king of Judah. Jehoahaz did evil in the eyes of the Lord (See **2 Kings 23: 31-32**). He got carried off to Egypt where he died.

After Jehoahaz's reign, the kingdom of Judah started to fall apart. Within 3 more appointed kings (who all did evil), King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon completely destroyed the temple and killed or captured the people. So God did do as he vowed and removed Judah from his presence and rejected Jerusalem.

In conclusion: There were a lot more evil kings than good ones. Really goes to show our sinful nature. Even though these people knew the miracles God had done, they still were tempted by their own pleasures. This just goes to prove that we need a savior. We just can't do it ourselves.

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Scriptures 1. Hezekiah

2 Kings 16:1-3 In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign. Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem sixteen years. Unlike David his father, he did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD his God. He followed the ways of the kings of Israel and even sacrificed his son in the fire, engaging in the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.

2 Kings 18:1-6 In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done. He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.) Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. He held fast to the LORD and did not stop following him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses.

2 Kings 20:21 Hezekiah rested with his ancestors. And Manasseh his son succeeded him as king.

2 Kings 21:1-3 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he also erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them.

2 Kings 21:11 "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.

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Scriptures 2. Josiah

2 Kings 21:18 Manasseh rested with his ancestors and was buried in his palace garden, the garden of Uzza. And Amon his son succeeded him as king.

2 Kings 21:19-22 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. His mother's name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz; she was from Jotbah. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. He followed completely the ways of his father, worshiping the idols his father had worshiped, and bowing down to them. He forsook the LORD, the God of his ancestors, and did not walk in obedience to him.

2 Kings 21:25-26 As for the other events of Amon's reign, and what he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? He was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza. And Josiah his son succeeded him as king.

2 Kings 22:1-2 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah; she was from Bozkath. He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

2 Kings 23:25-27 Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses. Nevertheless, 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. So the LORD said, "I will remove Judah also from my presence as I removed Israel, and I will reject Jerusalem, the city I chose, and this temple, about which I said, 'My Name shall be there.' "

2 Kings 23:29 While Josiah was king, Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went up to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria. King Josiah marched out to meet him in battle, but Necho faced him and killed him at Megiddo.

2 Kings 23: 30-32 Josiah's servants brought his body in a chariot from Megiddo to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and anointed him and made him king in place of his father. Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his predecessors had done.