

2 Kings 21

Verses 1 - 6

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned for fifty-five years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hephzibah. ² He did evil in the sight of the Lord, in accordance with the abominations of the nations whom the Lord dispossessed before the sons of Israel. ³ For he rebuilt the high places which his father Hezekiah had destroyed; and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, just as Ahab king of Israel had done, and he worshiped all the heavenly lights and served them. ⁴ And he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name." ⁵ He built altars for all the heavenly lights in the two courtyards of the house of the Lord. ⁶ And he made his son pass through the fire, interpreted signs, practiced divination, and used mediums and spiritists. He did great evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking *Him* to anger.

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned for fifty-five years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hephzibah.

See chart 2105

Southern Kings					
	King	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
10	Jotham	750/740	731	16	10 years
11	Ahaz	743/731	715	16	12 years
12	Hezekiah	728/715	686	29	13 years
13	Manasseh	696/686	642	55	10 years
14	Amon	642	640	2	
15	Josiah	640	609	31	
16	Jehoahaz	609	609	3 months	
17	Jehoiakim	609	598	11	
18	Jehoiachin	598	597	3 months	
19	Zedekiah	597	586	11	

Since Manasseh was only 12 when he became king he must have been born 3 years after Hezekiah was given another 15 years. The 55 year reign of Manasseh was the longest in Judah's history.

² He did evil in the sight of the Lord, in accordance with the abominations of the nations whom the Lord dispossessed before the sons of Israel.

His sinful ways included the following:

1. He rebuilt the high places which his father Hezekiah had destroyed.
2. He erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah.
3. He worshiped all the heavenly lights and served them.
4. He built altars in the house of the Lord.
5. He made his son pass through the fire.
6. He interpreted signs, practiced divination, and used mediums and spiritists.

Verses 7 - 9

⁷ Then he put the carved image of Asherah that he had made in the house of which the Lord had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. ⁸ And I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers, if only they will take care to act in accordance with everything that I have commanded them, and with all the Law that My servant Moses commanded them." ⁹ But they did not listen, and Manasseh encouraged them to do evil, more than the nations whom the Lord eliminated from the presence of the sons of Israel.

⁷ Then he put the carved image of Asherah that he had made in the house of which the Lord had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever.

This sin was the result of other deviations from the law. Consider the following:

1. The kings of Israel began worshipping false gods.
2. Then King Ahaz put an altar beside God's true altar.
This took place in 2 Kings 16 about 50 years ago.
3. Now Manasseh puts an image of a false god in the temple.

⁸ And I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers, if only they will take care to act in accordance with everything that I have commanded them, and with all the Law that My servant Moses commanded them."

The two most important words in this sentence are **IF ONLY**. The basis of Israel being blessed and remaining in the land of Canaan was their willingness to obey the law of God. God had punished them many times throughout their history for their sin but He only removed them from Canaan 3 times.

1. The Northern Kingdom in 722 BC using the Assyrians.
2. The Southern Kingdom in 586 BC by the Babylonians.
3. The Jewish nation in 70 AD by the Romans.

This happened because the people of Israel as a "whole" had rejected God and the covenant that He had established with them. Their rejection of God led to the rejection of the Law of Moses and the rejection of the one that Moses wrote about.

See John 5:46-47

⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

⁹ But they did not listen, and Manasseh encouraged them to do evil, more than the nations whom the Lord eliminated from the presence of the sons of Israel.

There are several important issues here.

1. The people rebelled against God by not listening.
2. Numerous kings encouraged them to do evil (by their actions).
3. Israel became worse than the people that God had evicted from Canaan.

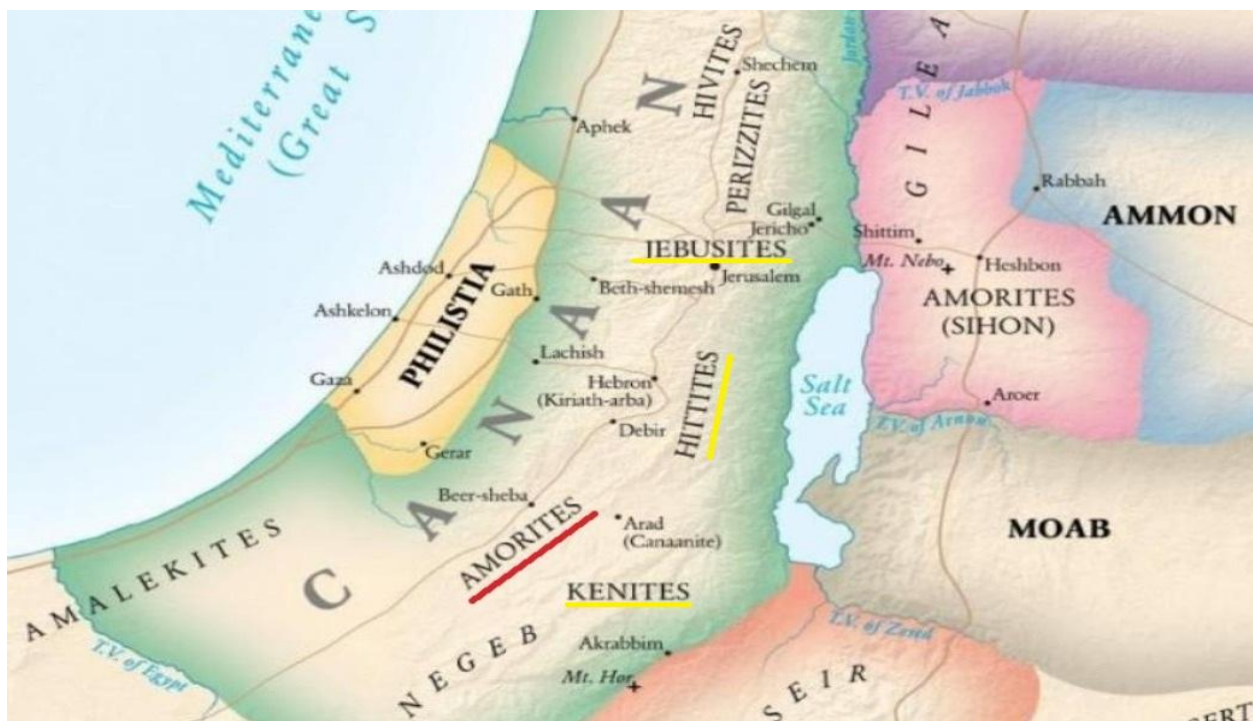
Verses 10 - 15

¹⁰ Now the Lord spoke through His servants the prophets, saying, ¹¹ “Since Manasseh king of Judah has committed these abominations, having done more evil than all that the Amorites did who were before him, and has also misled Judah into sin with his idols, ¹² therefore this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: ‘Behold, I am bringing *such* a disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears about it, both of his ears will ring. ¹³ I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem clean just as one wipes a bowl, wiping it and turning it upside down. ¹⁴ And I will abandon the remnant of My inheritance and hand them over to their enemies, and they will become as plunder and spoils to all their enemies, ¹⁵ because they have done evil in My sight, and have been provoking Me to anger since the day their fathers came from Egypt, even to this day.’”

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The Amorites controlled the land of Judah prior to the time of Joshua.

See map 2110



It is not clear why God chose to mention the Amorites and not the Hittites, Jebusites or Kenites but it may have been that the Amorites were the dominate tribe or they were more evil than the other nations in southern Canaan.

¹² therefore this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: ‘Behold, I am bringing such a disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears about it, both of his ears will ring.

Just hearing about the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah will be painful.

¹³ I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem clean just as one wipes a bowl, wiping it and turning it upside down.

Just as Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, was destroyed and the people deported, in the same manor Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom, will be destroyed and the people taken into captivity.

**¹⁴ And I will abandon the remnant of My inheritance and hand them over to their enemies, and they will become as plunder and spoils to all their enemies,
¹⁵ because they have done evil in My sight, and have been provoking Me to anger since the day their fathers came from Egypt, even to this day.’”**

When this event takes place God will have had suffered the insults of Israel for 860 years, from the exodus in 1446 BC to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. They had rebelled against God in the wilderness, during the period of the Judges and when they were under the authority of kings.

Verses 16 - 18

¹⁶ Furthermore, Manasseh shed very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin into which he misled Judah, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord. ¹⁷ Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did, and his sin which he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ¹⁸ And Manasseh lay down with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza, and his son Amon became king in his place.

¹⁶ Furthermore, Manasseh shed very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin into which he misled Judah, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord.

According to Josephus there was a bloody persecution of the righteous in Jerusalem. He slew all the righteous men among the Hebrews and he did not spare the prophets, for every day he slew some of them, until Jerusalem was overflowed with blood.

However, all of this had to be Jewish tradition because Josephus did not live and write until the 1st century AD.

According to some other Jewish tradition, the prophet Isaiah was executed by Manasseh by being sawn in two. Again, this is not the inspired word of God.

¹⁸ And Manasseh lay down with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza, and his son Amon became king in his place.

Before we move on there is an important text in 2nd Chronicles that is not included here in 2nd Kings. Manasseh had a change of heart and repented of his sin before he died.

See 2 Chronicles 33:10-17

¹⁰ So the Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention.

¹¹ Therefore the Lord brought the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria against them, and they captured Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze chains, and led him to Babylon. ¹² When he was in distress, he appeased the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. ¹³ When he prayed to Him, He was moved by him and heard his pleading, and brought him back to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord alone is God.

¹⁴ Now after this he built the outer wall of the city of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, up to the entrance of the Fish Gate; and he encircled the Ophel *with it* and made it very high. Then he put army commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah. ¹⁵ He also removed the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the Lord, as well as all the altars which he had built on the mountain of the house of the Lord and in Jerusalem, and he threw *them* outside the city. ¹⁶ He set up the altar of the Lord and sacrificed peace offerings and thanksgiving offerings on it; and he ordered Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. ¹⁷ However, the people still sacrificed on the high places, *although* only to the Lord their God.

These verses bring up a number of questions:

1. Why did the author of Kings not report this important event?
2. How long was the king gone?
3. Did someone rule in his absence?

Verses 19 - 22

¹⁹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned for two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. ²⁰ He did evil in the sight of the Lord, just as his father Manasseh had done. ²¹ For he walked entirely in the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. ²² So he abandoned the Lord, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord.

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See chart 2115

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²⁰ He did evil in the sight of the Lord, just as his father Manasseh had done. ²¹ For he walked entirely in the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. ²² So he abandoned the Lord, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord.

It was true that his father, Manasseh, was an evil king during most of his life but it seems odd that the writer of 2nd kings did not acknowledge that near the end of his reign Manasseh repented of his sins and ordered the people of Judah to serve the Lord.

Verses 23 - 26

²³ And the servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his own house. ²⁴ Then the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place. ²⁵ Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²⁶ He was buried in his grave in the garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah became king in his place.

²³ And the servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his own house. ²⁴ Then the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

Two wrongs don't make a right. When a kingdom accepts anarchy it will not be long before they come to an end.