

**JOSIAH  
THE MAN WHO TORE HIS  
CLOTHES WHEN THE  
SCRIPTURES WERE READ**

2 Chronicles 34

2 Kings 22-23


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# JOSIAH'S FIRST MENTION IN SCRIPTURE

- In 930 BC, After Solomon's death, the kingdom divided between North and South, with Jeroboam leading the North (Israel) and Rehoboam leading the South (Judah).
  - Jeroboam set up golden calves in Dan and Bethel.
- 1 Kings 13:1–2; And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make offerings. <sup>2</sup> And the man cried against the altar by the word of the LORD and said, “O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who make offerings on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’ ”

# JOSIAH'S TIMELINE

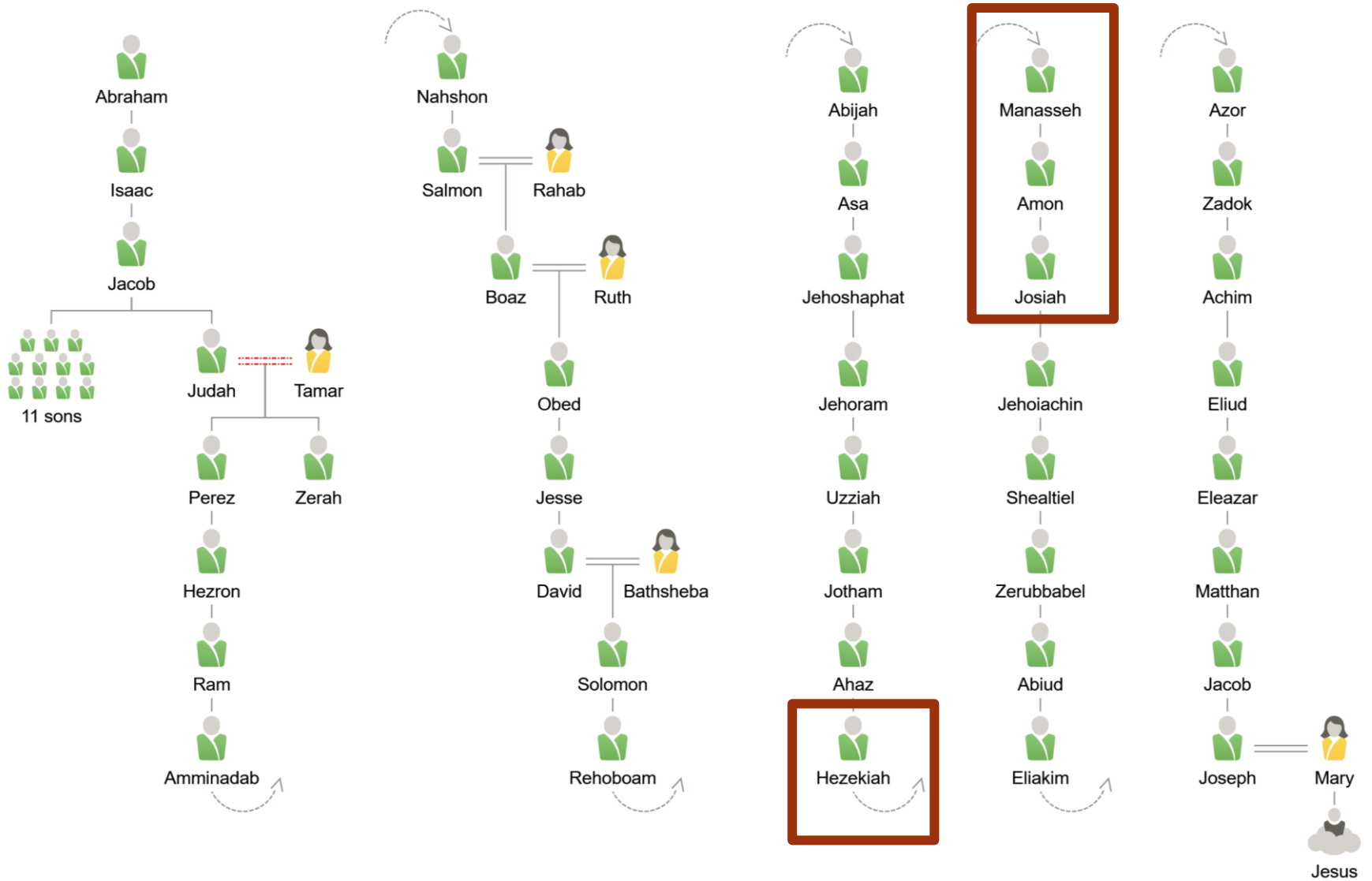
## WHEN DID HE REIGN?

800		750		700		650		600						
"A Prophet" (sent to Amaziah)		ISAIAH MICAH				NAHUM	ZEPHANIAH	HABAKKUK						
						HULDAH (a prophetess)		JEREMIAH						
						Jehoiachin								
Amaziah 796-767	Jotham 750-735	Ahaz 735-715	Manasseh 697-642		Amon 642-640	Jehoahaz 609	Jeconiah 598-597							
Azariah (Uzziah) 790-739			Hezekiah 715-686		 Josiah 640-609	Jehoiakim 609-598	Zedekiah 597-586							
Jehoahaz 814-798	Joash (Jehoash) 798-782	Zechariah 753-752	Menahem 752-742	Hoshea 732-722	<p><i>There are no more kings or prophets in the Northern Kingdom. Foreign peoples are resettled into the land.</i></p>									
	Jeroboam II 793-753		Shallum 752	Pekahiah 742-740						605—1st Captivity				
			Pekah 752-732							DANIEL				
JONAH		AMOS HOSEA		ODED		Hananiah								
						Mishael								
						Azariah								
						597—2d Captivity								
						EZEKIEL								
						Nebuchadnezzar								
						605-562								
		Tiglath-pileser I 745-727		722—Assyria takes Israel into captivity		612—Fall of Nineveh								
				Shalmaneser V 727-722		Sennacherib 705-681								

# THE TIMES OF JOSIAH

- Josiah became king at age eight and reigned in Judah from 640-609 BC.
- Josiah was born in 648 BC to the family of a sixteen-year-old father Amon, son of Manasseh, king of Judah.
  - Amon was wicked.
- Josiah's grandfather, Manasseh, was the son of Hezekiah.
  - Manasseh reversed many of the good things Hezekiah established.
- Josiah's contemporaries
  - Jeremiah began his ministry during Josiah's reign.
  - Zephaniah, Huldah, Habakkuk and possibly Nahum prophesied during this time.

# Jesus' Family Tree According to Matthew (Matthew 1:1-17)



# JOSIAH PURGES THE LAND OF IDOLATRY

- 2 Chronicles 34:1–3
- Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father; and he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. <sup>3</sup> For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet a boy, he began to seek the God of David his father, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherim, and the carved and the metal images.

# JOSIAH PURGES THE LAND OF IDOLATRY

- 2 Chronicles 34:4–7
- <sup>4</sup> And they **chopped down** the altars of the Baals in his presence, and he **cut down** the incense altars that stood above them. And he **broke in pieces** the Asherim and the carved and the metal images, and he **made dust of them** and **scattered it over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them.** <sup>5</sup> He also **burned the bones of the priests on their altars** and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> And in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, in their ruins all around, <sup>7</sup> **he broke down** the altars and **beat the Asherim and the images into powder** and **cut down** all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

# JOSIAH REPAIRS THE TEMPLE

- 2 Chronicles 34:8–13
- <sup>8</sup> Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had cleansed the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. <sup>9</sup> They came to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the money that had been brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> And they gave it to the workmen who were working in the house of the LORD. And the workmen who were working in the house of the LORD gave it for repairing and restoring the house. <sup>11</sup> They gave it to the carpenters and the builders to buy quarried stone, and timber for binders and beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had let go to ruin. <sup>12</sup> And the men did the work faithfully. Over them were set Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to have oversight. The Levites, all who were skillful with instruments of music, <sup>13</sup> were over the burden-bearers and directed all who did work in every kind of service, and some of the Levites were scribes and officials and gatekeepers.



# THE DISCOVERY OF THE BOOK OF THE LAW

- 2 Chronicles 34:14–15
- <sup>14</sup> While they were bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD given through Moses. <sup>15</sup> Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan.
- Identification of the Book of the Law of the Lord.
  - Many scholars think it was Deuteronomy.
  - Some think it was the Pentateuch (first 5 books).
- The fact that they “found” it indicates that it was lost and therefore unread.

# THE READING OF THE BOOK OF THE LAW

- 2 Chronicles 34:16–18
- <sup>16</sup> Shaphan brought the book to the king, and further reported to the king, “All that was committed to your servants they are doing. <sup>17</sup> They have emptied out the money that was found in the house of the LORD and have given it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen.” <sup>18</sup> Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read from it before the king.
- Two things reported by Shaphan
  - Financial report
  - A book was found and read from it to Josiah

# THE KING'S REACTION TO THE READING OF THE BOOK OF THE LAW

- 2 Chronicles 34:19–21
- <sup>19</sup> And when the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes. <sup>20</sup> And the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, <sup>21</sup> “Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book.”
- See also verse 27.
- Josiah's Reaction
  - He tore his clothes (19, 27).
  - He wept (v. 27)
  - He humbled himself (v. 27)

# THE MESSAGE FROM GOD THROUGH HULDAH THE PROPHETESS

- 2 Chronicles 34:22–25
- <sup>22</sup> So Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter) and spoke to her to that effect. <sup>23</sup> And she said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Tell the man who sent you to me, <sup>24</sup> Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book that was read before the king of Judah. <sup>25</sup> Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands, therefore my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched.

# THE MESSAGE FROM GOD TO JOSIAH THROUGH HULDAH THE PROPHETESS

- 2 Chronicles 34:26–28
- <sup>26</sup> But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, <sup>27</sup> because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares the LORD. <sup>28</sup> Behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place and its inhabitants.’ ” And they brought back word to the king.

# THE KING READS THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT TO THE PEOPLE

- 2 Chronicles 34:29–31
- <sup>29</sup> Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>30</sup> And the king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites, all the people both great and small. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. <sup>31</sup> And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book.

# THE KING ENFORCES THE COVENANT

- 2 Chronicles 34:32–33
- <sup>32</sup> Then he made all who were present in Jerusalem and in Benjamin join in it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.  
<sup>33</sup> And Josiah took away all the abominations from all the territory that belonged to the people of Israel and made all who were present in Israel serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

# JOSIAH'S "DE-MANASSEHIFICATION PROGRAM"

## 2 KINGS 23:4-20

1. Removing pagan vessels from temple (v. 4)
2. Deposing pagan clergy (v. 5)
3. Pulverizing the Asherah image (v. 6)
4. Wrecking the male prostitutes' temple apartments (v. 7)
5. Defiling Judah's high places, deposing their priests (vv. 8–9)
6. Desecrating Tophet, the place of child sacrifice (v. 10)
7. Removing and destroying sun worship paraphernalia (v. 11)
8. Smashing royal idolatrous altars (v. 12)
9. Eliminating Solomon's folly (Ashtoreth) (v. 13)
10. Destroying the props for fertility worship (v. 14)
11. Pulling down/defiling Jeroboam's Bethel worship center (vv. 15–16)
12. Purge throughout northern cities (vv. 19–20)



# WRATH DELAYED BUT NOT DENIED

- Josiah was a great king.
  - 2 Kings 23:25; Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him.
- Having a great king would delay but not deny God's judgement.
  - 2 Kings 23:26–27; Still the LORD did not turn from the burning of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him.  
<sup>27</sup> And the LORD said, “I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.”
- About 11 years after Josiah's death (2 Kings 23:8) King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon began the events that would lead to 70 years of captivity (2 Kings 24).

# WHY DIDN'T THE REVIVAL LAST?

- Because falling away is a progressive sin – growing from the smallest sin into outrageous abominations.
- Because a righteous leader is not enough to save a nation. The people must wholeheartedly repent.
- Because the chastening of the Lord brought about “spiritual numbness”, i.e., hard-heartedness.
- The people did not learn the meaning of 2 Chronicles 7:14.
  - “if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”