

# The Kings of Israel

Manasseh – 2 Chronicles 33:1 – 20



## Sermon Discussion Guide

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### STUDY NOTES

#### **Reign of evil (33:1 – 20).**

According to the chronicler, Manasseh was no less evil for having repented. However, 2 Kings 21:1 – 18 leaves out his repentance altogether.

Regardless, the outcome is the longest evil reign in Judah's history.

**Hook in his nose (33:11).** It takes a ring in his nose and bars in front of his face for Manasseh to call upon God, who always responds to sincere repentance.

#### **Took Manasseh prisoner . . . took him to Babylon (33:11).**

Babylon was the preferred province of Assyria – a fine exile for an evil king.

#### **Buried in his palace (33:20).**

Manasseh's burial plot is not among the kings. He remains outside of God's favor even in death. Five kings (Ahaz, Jehoram, Joash, Uzziah and Manasseh) had this kind of burial.

1. What popular cultural trends seem to go against God's standard of what is right?

### Read 2 Chronicles 33:1 – 20.

2. What direction did Manasseh take the nation spiritually? (33:2)
3. What evil acts did Manasseh commit personally? (33:6)
4. How did Manasseh respond to warnings from the Lord? (33:10)
5. What happened to Manasseh while he was being punished? (33:12 – 13)
6. How did the Lord answer Manasseh's prayer? (33:13)

King Manasseh's evil sickens us, and we wonder how God could ever forgive him. Not only did he intentionally offend God by desecrating Solomon's temple with idols, but he also worshiped pagan gods and even sacrificed his own children to them.

God showed justice to Manasseh in warning and punishing him. He showed mercy in responding to Manasseh's heartfelt repentance by forgiving and restoring him. Given the nature of Manasseh's rebellion, we are not surprised by God's punishment – defeat and exile at the hands of the Assyrians. But Manasseh's repentance and God's forgiveness are unexpected. Manasseh's life was changed. He was given a new start.

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## STUDY NOTES

### **Continued to sacrifice (33:17).**

Although the people worshiped God alone, they worshiped him the wrong way. God had told them to make their sacrifices only in certain places

(Deuteronomy 12:13 – 14).

This kept them from changing their way of worship and protected them against the dangerous influence of pagan religious practices.

Unfortunately, the people continued to use these places of worship, not realizing that (1) they were adopting practices God opposed, and (2) these places were against God's law. They were mixing pagan beliefs with worship of God. Blending religious ideas with worship of God. Blending religious ideas leads to confusion about who God really is. We must take care that subtle secular influences do not distort our worship practices.

7. What does the forgiveness of someone as evil as Manasseh tell us about God?
  
8. In what ways did the people fail to follow the Lord's instructions for worship completely? Why do you think they did so?
  
9. What is the danger of not following the Lord's commands precisely?
  
10. What do you want to remember about Manasseh and the way God changed him?

How would you want to be remembered and the way God has or is changing you?

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*

1 John 1:9