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Manasseh King of Judah

King Manasseh as counted in 2Kings 21 and 2Chronicles 33:1-20 was the worst, perhaps the evilest king in all of Israel. Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-five years. While in power, Manasseh did so much evil in the eyes of the Lord that he and the whole nation suffered for rebelling against God. In this essay, I will be comparing and contrasting the two accounts in 2Kings 21 and 2Chronicles 33:1-20 and what I learned from the life of Manasseh.

2Kings 21 compares to 2Chronicles 33:1-20 because both incidents talk about the rise and fall of King Manasseh. As king, Manasseh followed detestable practices. He rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah destroyed and reversed the policies that were formed. Manasseh practiced and worshipped other idols, promoted human sacrifice, and sorcery. In NIV, 2Kings 21:6, “He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced divination, sought omens, and consulted mediums and spirits. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, arousing in his anger.” This compares to NIV 2Chronicles 33:6 where it says, “He sacrificed his children in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced divination and witchcraft, sought omens and spirits. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, arousing his anger.” Our God is a jealous God, he forbids His people to idolize or worship any foreign gods and images that do not represent Him.

2Chron 33: 1-20 differs from 2Kings 21 because Manasseh finally sought the favor in God and humbled himself. In 2Chron 33:10, “The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention.” 2Chron 33:12-13, “In his distress he sought favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors 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.” This means that God finally got through to Manasseh and was merciful to him once he prayed before God asking for forgiveness, allowing Manasseh to return to Jerusalem. He then restored the altar of the Lord sacrificed his offerings to serve God. As opposed to 2Kings 21, the author of Kings does not express Manasseh’s plea for forgiveness. Instead, it focuses on how Manasseh led the people of Israel astray, allowing them to disobey God. God was furious with the sin they have committed and wiped out the whole of Israel. Manasseh was buried in his palace garden.

After reading both accounts of king Manasseh, I learned that I should fear God and always listen to his commands because making a mockery of Him, leading others astray, and deliberately committing detestable sins will only lead to punishable measures. In 2Kings 21:12-14, the Lord says, "I am going to bring such disaster to on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. I will stretch out over Jerusalem and the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb lines used against the house of Ahab. I will wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. I will forsake the remnant of my inheritance and give them into the hands of the enemies. They will be looted and plundered by all their enemies." This scripture expresses how angry God is by the disobedience of the Israelites and Manasseh. He wanted to make an example of them and show why he is God, and no one can come before nor against Him.

God wants our wholehearted devotion. King Manasseh was evil, and he received negative results in leading the nation and his kingdom astray. The major lesson I learned from both scriptures was that obedience to the law brought blessings and prosperity, while being disobedient to Gods lawful commands brought curses of the covenant. I will apply this in my daily life by not idolizing anyone or anything that is not of God the way Manasseh was prohibited by the Law of Moses to not worship high places and sacrificial altars.