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**BIB 102:Old Testament**

## **Writing Assignment 2**

The accounts of King Manasseh in 2 Kings 21 and 2 Chronicles 33:1-20 share many similarities, but also have some notable differences. The accounts both describe Manasseh's reign as one of idolatry and wickedness, but Chronicles presents a more positive picture of Manasseh's repentance and restoration. It is likely that the author of Chronicles made these changes to emphasize the importance of repentance and the possibility of forgiveness, themes that are prominent in the Chronicler's theology and style.

In both accounts, Manasseh is described as a king who did evil in the sight of the Lord. He built altars to foreign gods, worshiped the stars, and even sacrificed his own son to a false god. Both Kings and Chronicles agree that God punished Manasseh for his sins by allowing the Assyrians to capture him and take him to Babylon in chains.

However, Chronicles presents a more nuanced view of Manasseh's character and his ultimate fate. While Kings simply states that Manasseh died and was buried in his palace, Chronicles emphasizes that after his capture, Manasseh repented and prayed to God for mercy. God heard his prayer and restored him to his throne in Jerusalem. Manasseh then removed the idols from the temple, restored the altar of the Lord, and commanded the people to worship only the true God.

The differences between the two accounts suggest that the Chronicler had a different agenda than the author of Kings. The Chronicler was writing several hundred years after the events he

described, during a time when the Jewish people had returned from exile in Babylon and were rebuilding their society and religious practices. The Chronicler's focus on the importance of repentance and the possibility of forgiveness reflects the concerns of his own time and the values of the post-exilic community.

Furthermore, the Chronicler's style and theology are different from those of the author of Kings. The Chronicler is known for his interest in the role of the priesthood and the centrality of the temple in Jewish worship. He also tends to emphasize the positive aspects of the monarchy and the Davidic line, and to downplay or omit negative events or characters. These tendencies may have influenced his portrayal of Manasseh as a repentant sinner who was ultimately restored to favor with God.

In conclusion, the accounts of King Manasseh in 2 Kings 21 and 2 Chronicles 33:1-20 share many similarities, but also have significant differences. The Chronicler's emphasis on repentance and restoration reflects his own theological and stylistic concerns, and suggests that he made changes to the original story to suit his own purposes. These differences remind us of the importance of reading biblical texts in their historical and literary contexts, and of the diverse perspectives and values that shape the interpretation and retelling of ancient stories.