



Lesson 147

Manasseh's Wicked Legacy

Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: 2 Kings 21:1-18; 2 Chronicles 33:1-20 • Setting: circa 697 – 642 BC, in Jerusalem • Main Characters: God and Manasseh • Plot: Manasseh was a wicked king of Judah whose wickedness surpassed all others and brought swift judgment against Judah. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key word(s): “they would not _____” (2 Ch. 33:10) • Climax: 2 Kings 21:12 <i>Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.</i> |
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Unsurpassed Wickedness

1. (2 Ki. 21:1-7) After Hezekiah's death, his son Manasseh began to reign. His reign was characterized by grievous sin – so much so that Manasseh is described as surpassing the Amorites in his wickedness (2 Ki. 21:11). His sinful practices included:
 - (a) Restoring the high places that _____ had torn down
 - (b) Rebuilding the altar of Baal and made a grove (an Asherah) just like _____
 - (c) Pursuing _____ and star-worship
 - (d) Desecrating the temple with pagan _____
 - (e) Sacrificing his _____ to idols
 - (f) Practicing _____ in many forms

2. The grievousness of Manasseh's sin reached its climax in his converting the temple of the LORD into a pagan worship center. The temple of the LORD was sacred because God had said to David and Solomon that, “*In this _____, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever*” (cf. 2 Sam. 7:13; 1 Ki. 9:3). The peace and perpetuity of the Davidic Dynasty was stipulated on the continued faithfulness of the kings of Judah and symbolized by the purity of the worship of God in the temple of Jerusalem.

Unheeded Warnings

3. God had warned the nation of Israel of the sins of apostasy, yet the Hebrews paid no heed to the warnings which came in two forms:
 - (a) The _____ word: “*Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. But they hearkened not...*” (2 Kings 21:8–9)
 - (b) The _____ word: “*And the Lord spake by his servants the prophets...*” (2 Ki. 21:10) “*And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.*” (2 Ch. 33:10)

4. (2 Ki. 21:11-16) The prophets issued warnings of coming judgment saying that God had promised to “stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab” meaning that the same _____ of righteousness (God's Word) by which Samaria was judged and condemned would be the same standard which would strike down Judah.

Too Little Too Late

5. (2 Ch. 33:11) God's judgment came upon Manasseh in the form of Assyrian oppression. Manasseh was captured in battle and imprisoned in Babylon.
- (a) (2 Ch. 33:12-13) In his humiliated state, Manasseh called out to the LORD and _____ of his rank wickedness.
- (b) God had mercy on the captive king, forgave his sin and restored him to Jerusalem. Manasseh _____ on the LORD God.
6. (2 Ch. 33:14-17) After his return to Jerusalem, Manasseh cleansed the city and the temple of his pagan idols and re-instituted the true worship of the LORD. But his decades of gross paganism had left its mark on his people. Despite Manasseh's amazing conversion, the people of Judah continued in their spiritual _____.

Application

7. To many people, "fire and brimstone" preaching is distasteful, but the Bible shows that preaching that warns of sin and its consequences is one of many ways that God expresses his mercy and longsuffering. Preaching against sin, if done biblically and in love, is an act of mercy, not hate. God had mercy on Manasseh and Judah by sending them _____ to warn against sin.
8. Manasseh's repentance was good and right, but unfortunately it came decades too late.
- (a) Many people think they can postpone conversion and "sow wild oats" until they tire of their sin and find righteous living more tolerable. But the truth is, they may find that their years invested in wickedness produced irreparable damage in their life and the lives of those around them. God forgives the truly repentant, but repentance does not _____ the natural consequences of sin. How important is the charge, "*Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, Call ye upon him while he is near.*" (Isa. 55:6)
- (b) Manasseh came to know the truth the hard way. Matthew Henry notes, "He might have known it at a less expense if he would have given due attention and credit to the word written and _____: but it was better to pay thus dearly for the knowledge of God than to perish in ignorance and unbelief."¹

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): "hearken" • 1. a) Hezekiah; b) Ahab; c) astrology; d) altars; e) children; f) witchcraft • 2. house • 3. a) written; b) proclaimed • 4. standard • 5. a) repented; b) believed • 6. rebellion • 7. prophets • 8. a) erase; b) preached

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

¹ Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.