

**September 1, 2021**

## **Josiah's Repairs**

Six years after starting the process of purging the land and cleansing the people, Josiah recognizes the need to repair the house of the Lord. Read **II Chronicles 34:8-13**. At the age of twenty-six, Josiah is now in the eighteenth year of his reign. Although Josiah's reforms are described in just five verses, the process has taken six years. From this we learn that spiritual change is a process that often takes time. While there are some things that change almost immediately following an individual's profession of faith in Christ, there may be other things that take time as the individual grows in Christ. We must be careful not to criticize those who are babes in Christ, but rather we are to encourage them in their spiritual walk and growth.

The second lesson we learn from this passage is things left to themselves will naturally decay. This is true in both the physical and spiritual realm. If you purchase a new car, park it in a garage, and leave it there for a year or two untouched, what might happen to the car? You might find the battery has lost some of its charge, the tires may lose some of their air pressure, and dust may accumulate on the dashboard. Although it may take some time, eventually the tires would begin to dry rot, the metal would begin to rust, and the paint would begin to chip or bubble. The fact that it is protected from the elements will slow the process of decay, it cannot stop it. The same principle applies spiritually. The Christian life is not stationary. We are either growing closer to Christ and moving forward in our Christian walk or we are sliding backwards away from the Lord.

In this case there were two root causes to the decay of the temple. The first was neglect. Every homeowner knows, it takes a lot of work to maintain or keep up a piece of property. The nation of Israel had forsaken the house of the Lord to worship in the high places and groves of Baal. Many times, when a person turns away from the things of God, people are left to wonder what happened. In most cases the spiritual decay began long before they turned away. Usually, it begins with the neglect of spiritual disciplines. We don't mean to neglect spiritual things we just get busy and find ourselves easily distracted. What are some spiritual disciplines people tend to neglect? How can you encourage others to be faithful in spiritual things?

The second root cause of the decay of the temple is found in verse 11. The kings of Judah had actually destroyed the house of God by desecrating and defiling it. In **II Chronicles 33:4-9**, What did King Manasseh do to defile God's temple? Not only can a person's spiritual life can be ruined by neglect, it can also be destroyed by the actions of others. In what ways can a person be guilty of hurting another spiritually? Consider **Proverbs 6:14,19**, **Proverbs 16:28**, **I Corinthians 3:3**, and **James 4:16**.

Finally, we see that it took a lot of money, a lot of people, and a lot of oversight to complete the work. The Levites who were to serve in the temple, were responsible for the collection of the money, the hiring of the workers, and the oversight of the entire process. Even those who served as musicians and scribes (verses 12-13) had to take on oversight responsibilities. When it came to repairing the house of the Lord, it was all-hands on deck. Unfortunately, in the church today, it seems like it is the faithful few who do the majority of the

work when it should be all-hands on deck. In what way are you contributing to or participating in the work of the Lord through your local church? What else can you do to be involved?