

September 29, 2021

Josiah's Pride

We come now to the last episode in Josiah's life – **II Chronicles 35:20-27**. Verse 20 begins, "After all this..." After the great revival and all the work that went into repairing the temple and commemorating the Passover, a test came. Success is often followed by trial as God seeks to prove the heart. Success can often lead to pride which God hates. In **II Kings 20**, Hezekiah was sick unto death, but when he prayed, God healed him and added to his life, fifteen years. Immediately after, we read in **II Kings 20:12-19**, that God tested the heart of Hezekiah. A test which he failed. Pride had entered his heart. Notice the personal pronouns in verse 13. Hezekiah showed them his precious things, his armor, his treasures, his house, and his dominion. He failed to give God the glory. In what way has pride entered your heart? Notice in **II Chronicles 32:24-26**, Hezekiah humbled himself, but the judgment still came in the days of his descendants.

Now Josiah faces a similar test. Pharaoh-nechoh, king of Egypt, came to fight against the king of Assyria in Charchemish by the Euphrates. Find a map of the middle East. Charchemish by the Euphrates is north of Israel. Egypt is to the southwest of Israel. In order of the king of Egypt to get to Charchemish, he would have to pass through the land of Israel. Keep in mind that the northern kingdom of Israel had already fallen to the Assyrians. Judah was a small country that basically encompassed Jerusalem. Pharaoh-nechoh would have passed by the west of Judah through the land of Philistia when Josiah decided to come out against him in battle.

In **verse 21**, Necho sends ambassadors to Josiah. Their message was three-fold. First, Necho was not coming to fight against Judah. Second, Necho was going to war according to God's command. Third, Necho asked Josiah not to fight against him, lest he be destroyed. According to **verse 22**, who was Necho's message from? According to **verse 21**, who was Josiah meddling with? Rather than humbly minding his own business, Josiah determined to fight against Necho in the valley of Megiddo, north of Judah, just west of the Sea of Galilee. The decision was a fatal one. According to **II Kings 23:25-27**, why did God command Pharaoh-nechoh to go against the king of Assyria? It was all part of God's plan to bring judgment against the nation of Judah.

Nevertheless, Josiah was a good king, a godly king. **II Chronicles 35:26** tells us his goodness was written in the books of the kings of Israel and Judah. **Verse 25** tells us that the nation of Judah lamented the death of Josiah, led by the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet. He had the difficult task of ministering during the decline and fall of Judah, **Jeremiah 1:1-3**.

It is unfortunate that many godly men have suffered a spiritual failure later in life. It is a reminder that we must always be on our guard. The process of walking with God never ends. Spiritual tests come in all stages of life. May the Lord help us to be faithful to the end.