

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FLAWED MASTERPIECE



wisdom from
ancient voices

WEEK 6



FLAWED MASTERPIECE WEEK SIX

These past few weeks we have been teaching some hermeneutical practices (that's just a fancy phrase for "bible study tools") to dive deeper into the biblical text. This week, we are taking a look at historical context and how it can inform us with a more broad scope of what the author or the story is telling.

Looking at historical context starts with a simple reading of the before and after passages of text in which you are focusing on and subsequently even gathering information from other texts and commentaries about the cultural climate in the story.

This week we are looking at 2 Chronicles 34 and the story of the child king, Josiah!

WATCH THIS VIDEO FIRST:



DO THIS PART SECOND:

Read 2 Kings chapters 21-23 and ask these questions:

- What is happening in Jerusalem?
- What can you observe about the kings before Josiah?
- How is Josiah different?

As we look at this passage now (2 Chronicles 34). How are you more informed about Josiah?

Opening Questions

- What stands out to you the most about this story?
- What are the major differences in Josiah's reign than the kings leading up to him?
- How does this impact you directly?

**SEE BELOW FOR ONE
COMMENTARY ON
THIS TOPIC.**

The story is told both in 2 Kings 22-23 and in 2 Chronicles 34-35. The author of Kings describes the accession of Josiah to the throne at 8 years, and then a busy year of reform in the 18th year of his reign. It begins with the decision to renovate the Temple, which leads to the discovery of the Book of the Law. This in turn prompts the reforms: renewal of the covenant of Yahweh with the whole nation; the destruction of idolatrous worship in both the Southern and the Northern Kingdoms; and a climactic restoration of the celebration of Passover. Finally Josiah's death in battle is recorded. Both books bookend the story of Josiah with the highest possible praise for this king.

Unlike so many of the kings of Judah, Josiah "walked in the way of his father David, turning aside neither to the right or the left." But he was even greater than David: "Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him" (2 Kings 22:2; 23:25; cf. 2 Chron. 34:2; 35:18). It is not only his public policy that wins appreciation; we glimpse the intensely personal dimension of his leadership when as a youth "he began to seek the God of his ancestor David" (2 Chron. 34:3), and in Huldah's assurance that God would grant him peace "because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before the Lord" (2 Kings 22:19; 2 Chron. 34:27).

Selman, 534. Cf. Choon-Leong Seow, "The First and Second Books of Kings," in L. Keck, et al., eds, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. III (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), p. 282. Andrew Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles* (NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), p. 646.



DISCUSS WITH YOUR GROUP

Taking a look at 2 Kings to gather more information on Josiah and what was happening in the context of the time is because Chronicles is a beautiful summary of both Samuel and Kings. In fact, Chronicles is the last book in the traditional Jewish order of the Bible and summarizes all of the Jewish Scripture from Adam to the return of Israel from exile! This is exactly why context is so exciting!

- What stands out to you because you have taken the time to look over the context behind the story of Josiah?
- Why do you think the author chose to tell the story in this manner?
- How does 2 Kings 22:2 and 2 Kings 23:25 hint at Josiah as different than the kings before him?



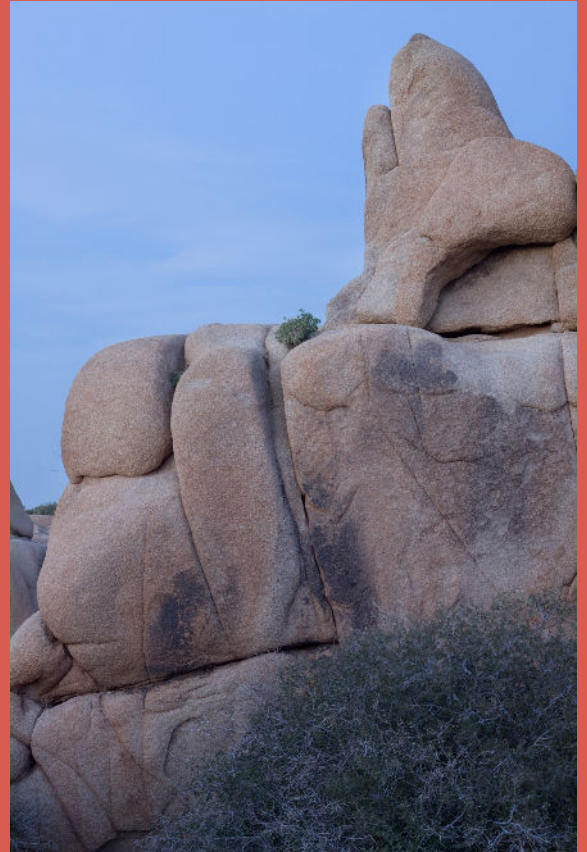
"In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, to purify the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the ruler of the city, with Joah son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the temple of the Lord his God..."



FINAL THOUGHTS

Take a final few minutes to apply this passage to your lives:

- What in your life is needing to be restored?
- How can this story encourage you in your walk with Jesus?
- What will this story change about your life? How does it speak to you directly?



**Here are some online commentaries
you can consider:**

Free:

biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/
blueletterbible.org/study.cfm

Paid:

accordancebible.com
logos.com