

# Josiah


*Followership, the forgotten side of leadership...*

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***Why is Josiah a good  
example of a righteous  
follower?***

***And, how was Josiah's  
followership such a vital key  
to his incredible leadership?***

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- Josiah was 16<sup>th</sup> King of Judah (640 BC – 609BC).
  - He sought God and was a reformer like his great-grandfather, Hezekiah.
  - Contemporary with Jeremiah, Huldah, Zephaniah and Habakkuk.
  - ***Josiah chose to follow the Eternal***...not his wicked father or grandfather...not the population...and not the surrounding pagan people... ***He was a righteous follower!***
  - Destroyed the pagan temples and alters. Restored proper Temple worship
  - A time of relative peace and prosperity
  - His hatred of idolatry was so great, he opened the tombs of the pagan priests and burned their bones on the pagan alters before they were destroyed.

“Give to the Lord the glory due His name.  
Bring an offering and come into His  
courts. Oh, worship the Lord in the  
beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him,  
all the earth” (Psalm 96:8&9)

# Josiah's reforms...

- Burning the bones of the pagan priests and destroying the pagan temples, was prophesied. Compare I Kings 13:1-3 and 2 Kings 23:15 – 18.
- When Shaphan, his administrator, read from the Law (which had become unknown), Josiah was struck to the heart and sent to Huldah to learn what punishment would befall Judah. She prophesied that because of his righteousness, Judah's punishment would come after his death (2 Chron 34:8-28).
- At age 26, he launched a program to cleanse the temple and restore temple worship.

# Josiah's reforms, cont...

- He carried his reforms beyond the borders of Judah, including into the cult center of Bethel, where Jeroboam had set up his pagan worship.
- What he did at Bethel, he also did in the land of Samaria (fallen Israel, from 722 BC), 2 Kings 23:19&20.
- He enacted strict policies to cleanse the land of paganism (2 Kings 23:4 – 14).

**2 Kings 21:24 – 23:30**

**(homework = read 2 Kings 22&23)**

**2 Chronicles 33:25 – 35:27**

**Jeremiah 1:1-3; 22:11, 18**

**Matthew 1:10&11** (*Josias is Josiah*).

*In a period of perverted national wickedness, and in the face of incredible “international” pressure from hostile and pagan superpowers, why was King Josiah such a strong king, such an effective leader, and such a zealous reformer?*



“He who cannot be a good follower,  
cannot be a good leader.” - Aristotle

Israel & Judah,  
from the time of  
Rehoboam &  
Jeroboam  
(Solomon's  
successors) **to the  
time of Josiah...**



Babylonian Empire during the time of **Josiah** (d. 609BC)



- Josiah reigned from age 8 to 39. He died in 609 BC. He was killed in battle in 609 BC. He was the last, great servant king of Judah.
- Killed by army of Pharaoh Neco II. *He was greatly mourned by Jeremiah and all the people, 2 Chron 35:25.*
- As recounted by Jeremiah, Habakkuk and other prophets, immediately after Josiah's time, Judah went back into paganism, decline, and then very quickly into exile and slavery...
- The Babylonians conquered Nineveh in 612 BC, and then Babylon began subjecting Judah as a vassal state, eventually *destroying Jerusalem in 583 BC, only 28 years after Josiah's death.*

Josiah was a good leader  
*because* he was a good  
follower!

*Christians follow Christ...*

Matthew 4:19, Matthew 8:22,  
John 10:27, John 12:26

“Never before had there been a king like Josiah, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul and strength, obeying all the laws of Moses. And there has never been a king like him since”

- 2 Kings 29:25

# What are some lessons from Josiah that support our theme of “righteous followership”?

- I. He chose to follow the Eternal.
- II. His followership made him strong.
- III. He inspired his people to follow him.
- IV. He made a lasting impression and was highly complimented by God!
- V. Can you think of other lessons?