

# Have We Forgotten?

## Introduction:

- Out of sight, out of mind. It is surprisingly easy to lose things, to forget that we even have them. I am sure that there are things in your house like that – things that you once paid money for and now have sat undisturbed in the same place for months if not years without being touched or used.
- Many find themselves separated from God for the same reasons. They just get out of the habit and forget. It doesn't take much to get lost.
- The story of the day I lost George - he simply made the wrong turn and by the time he realized it he felt he was so far away to come back.

## P1 2 Chronicles 33:21-23 (Setting the stage)

- Before we get to this morning's text let's take a couple minutes to look in on God's people – the children of Israel or by their new name, the Israelites
- The people – especially the rulers – were proud to claim the title of being God's people.
- But as we will see they apparently saw the title as more of an honorary thing. A jacket might be a good analogy. It was something they put on when the weather was bad (they were in trouble with and threatened by their neighbors). Then once the weather improved and they were no longer threatened they would hang their faith up beside the door where it would be ready if they ever needed it again.
- 2 Chronicles 33, Verse 1-7 introduces us to Manasseh, one of Israel's kings. We don't need to read it all right now but V-2 & V-7 gives us the Readers Digest version
- V-1 (***He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites***)
  - Certainly not a good beginning and it is certainly hard to imagine anything good is going to come from this. Verse 7 gives us at least one example of what Ole King Manasseh was up to.
- V-7 (***He took the carved image he had made and put it in God's temple.***)
  - Certainly not the way to lead God's people.
- Leadership is important. Take a look at verse 9
- V-1 (***But Manasseh led Judah and the people of Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the LORD had destroyed before the Israelites***)
  - I am not sure it was all that hard to lead the people astray – as they had demonstrated many times that they had a propensity for ignoring God and doing evil.
- Time passed as it always does and before long Ole King Manasseh is gone – replaced by his son King
- V-21/22 (***Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon worshiped and offered sacrifices to all the idols Manasseh had made.***)
  - V-23 tells us that Amon was even worse than his father in that he didn't humble himself before the Lord. Then in verse 24 his own officials conspire against him and assassinate him. By verse 25 he is gone and his son Josiah became king. Not much of a legacy.

## P2 2 Chronicles 34:1-21 (The Book of the Law is found)

- V-1 (***Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years***)
  - Since Josiah was only EIGHT when he became king I have to wonder what those first years were like and exactly who was in charge. While we don't hear much about the details of his early years as king verse 2 does give us a hint about Josiah.
- V-2 (***He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.***)
  - Josiah is off to a good start here. Instead of following the example of his father and his grandfather Josiah chooses to follow the example of King David. And for the most part David was a good king and served the people and God well.

- V-3 (*In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David. In his twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of high places, Asherah poles, carved idols and cast images.*)
  - Eight years have passed. Josiah has grown and matured and we can see it in his actions. He began to seek the Lord God, the God of King David.
  - Four more years pass and now he starts to act.
  - He begins by tearing down, breaking, and otherwise destroying the places and things associated with idol worship. Removing the temptation as well as the reminder of the evil that was done in days past. Helping the nation look towards the future – a future in which the people know and obey God (Or at least that is his plan)
- V-8 (*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*)
  - Six more years pass and Josiah is ready to move to the next level. He knows it is not enough to just seek the Lord. It is not enough to purge the nation and remove the symbols and tools of idol worship. He knows it is time to begin rebuilding the temple. Rebuilding the temple is a useful thing and it is also a message to the people that God will once again be worshiped in Israel.
- Now let's skip ahead to verse 14 because something interesting is about to happen.
- V-14 (*While they were bringing out the money that had been taken into the temple of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD that had been given through Moses*)
  - Did you notice how things worked out? Unlike his father and Grandfather Josiah sought to walk with the Lord God. In his heart he knew that the country was on the wrong path.
  - When he became King he started reversing the evil his father and grandfather had done. He got rid of the idols and places of worship dedicated to false gods.
  - Then he started cleaning up and repairing the temple.
  - He was actively seeking God and in the process discovered the book of the law that have been ignored and forgotten for so many years.
  - The important thing here is that when you are seeking God; God will make sure your search ends in his presence.

### Conclusion ( A call to action )

- In many ways we – the people of this age are like the people we have just been reading about.
- The word of God. God's plan and advice for us is more available to us now than at any time in history.
- You can buy one (a bible) in almost any book store; although you may have to look around a little and they are probably tucked away in some out of the way corner. Depending on where you shop you can even get a copy of the bible for under \$10
- If reading really isn't your thing you can buy tapes, cds, and dvds of someone reading the bible to you.
- Thanks to the work of the Gideon's you can find a copy of the bible in about any hotel/motel room in the country. It's there waiting for you and not only are you invited to read it; you are welcome to take it with you when you check out.
- Heck – if push comes to shove you could go to just about any church and ask for a copy of the bible and I bet they would give you one.
- Have you ever heard the quip, "If you were on trial for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?"
- Some years ago the Coke Cola Company commissioned and shared with us a song that proclaimed, "What the world needs now is more love." Let me remind you of John 3:16 suggest that we have all the love we will ever need. We have just forgotten we have it. We haven't used it and have tossed it in a corner of our lives where it has been gathering dust.
- We need to clean the dust and clutter out of our hearts and lives and once again discover and reclaim the living word of God and use it as our guide for all things.