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32 After these things and these acts of faithfulness,
King Sennacherib of Assyria came and invaded Judah
and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win
them for himself.² When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib
had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem,
³ he planned with his officers and warriors to stop
the flow of the springs that were outside the city;
and they helped him.⁴ A great many people were gathered,
and they stopped all the springs and the Wadi that flowed
through the land, saying 'Why should the Assyrian kings
come and find water in abundance?⁵

33 Hezekiah set to work resolutely and built up the
entire wall that was broken down, and raised towers
on it, and outside it he built another wall; he
also strengthened the mills in the City of David,
and made weapons and shields in abundance.
⁶ He appointed combat commanders over the people,
and gathered them together to him in the
square at the gate of the city and spoke
encouragingly to them, saying,

8

With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the
Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles.
The people were encouraged by the words of King
Hezekiah of Judah.

9 After this, while King Sennacherib of Assyria was at Lachish with all his forces, he sent his servants to Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah of Judah and to all the people of Judah that were in Jerusalem,

¹⁰ saying, "Thus says King Sennacherib of Assyria: on what are you relying, that you undergo the siege of Jerusalem?" Is not Hezekiah misleading you, handing you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, "The Lord our God will save us from the hand of the King of

^{12.} Assyria"? Was it not this same Hezekiah who took away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, "Before one altar you

Shall worship, and upon it you shall make your offerings"? ¹³ Do you not know what I and my ancestors have done to all the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all able to save their lands out of my hand? ¹⁴ Who among all the gods of those nations that my ancestors utterly destroyed was able to save his people from my hand, that your God should be able to save you from my hand? ¹⁵ Now therefore do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to save his people from my hand or from the hand of my ancestors. How much less will your God save you out of my hand!

16 His servants said still more against the LORD God and against his servant Hezekiah. ¹⁷ He also wrote letters to throw contempt on the LORD the God of Israel and to speak against him, saying, 'Just as the gods of the nations in other lands did not rescue their people from my hands, so the God of Hezekiah will not rescue his people from my hand!' They shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify

them, in order that they might take the city.¹⁹ They spoke of the god of Jerusalem as if he were like the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of human hands.

²⁰ Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed because of this and cried to heaven.²¹ And the Lord sent an angel who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in disgrace to his own land. When he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword.

²² So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of King Sennacherib of Assyria and from the hand of all his enemies; he gave them rest on every side.

²³ Many brought gifts to the Lord in Jerusalem and precious things to King Hezekiah of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onwards.

²⁴ In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. He prayed to the Lord, and

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he answered him and gave him a sign.²⁵ But Hezekiah did not respond according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem.²⁶ Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

²⁷ Hezekiah had very great riches and honour; and he made for himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for shields, and for all kinds of costly objects;²⁸ storehouses also for the yield of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds.²⁹ He likewise provided cities for himself, and flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him very great possessions.³⁰

This same Hezekiah closed the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down to the west side of the city of David. Hezekiah prospered in all his works.³¹ So also in the matter of the envoys of the officials of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land,

God left him to himself, in order to test him and
to know all that was in his heart.

³² Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his good deeds,
are written in the second vision of the prophet Isaiah son of
Amoz in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

³³ Hezekiah slept with his ancestors, and they buried him on
the ascent to the tombs of the descendants of David; and
all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour
at his death. His son Manasseh succeeded him.

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1. Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned for fifty-five years in Jerusalem.² He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel.³

For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had pulled down, and erected altars to the Baals, made sacred poles, worshipped all the host of heaven & sacrificed them.⁴ He built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, 'In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.'⁵ He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord.⁶ He made his son pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom, practised sooth-saying and augury and scrying, and dealt with mediums and enchanters. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger.⁷ He carved an image of the idol that he had made

he set on the house of God, of which
God said to David and to his son,
McSolomon, "In this house, and in
Jerusalem, which I have chosen out
of all the tribes of Israel, I will put
my name for ever,⁸ I will never again
remove the feet of Israel from the land that
I appointed for your ancestors, if only they
will be careful to do all that I have
commanded them, all the law, the statutes,
and the ordinances given through Moses."

Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants
of Jerusalem, so that they did more evil
than the nations whom the Lord had
destroyed before the people of Israel.

10. The Lord spoke to Manasseh and to
his people, but they gave no heed.

11. Therefore the Lord brought against
them the commanders of the army of
the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh
captive in manacles, bound him with fetters,
and brought him to Babylon. 12 While he was

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in distress he entreated the favour of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. 13 He prayed to him, and God received his entreaty, heard his plea, and restored him again to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord indeed was God.

14 Afterwards he built an outer wall for the city of David west of Gihon, in the valley, reaching the entrance at the Fish Gate; he carried it around Ophel, and raised it to a very great height. He also put commanders of the army in all the fortified cities in Judah. 15 He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem all the altars that he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD, and he threw them out of the city.

16 He also restored the altar of the Lord and offered on it sacrifices of well-being and of thanksgiving; and he commanded Judah to serve the

LORD the GOD OF ISRAEL. The people however still sacrificed at the high places, but only to the Lord their God.

18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, these are in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. 19. His prayer, and how God received his entreaty, all his sin and his faithlessness, the sites on which he built high places and set up the sacred poles and the images, before he humbled himself, these are written in the records of the seers.²⁰ So Manasseh slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in his house. His son Amon succeeded him.²¹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned for two years in Jerusalem.²² He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images that his father Manasseh had made, and served them.²³ He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images that his

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father, Manasseh, had made, and served them.²³ He did not humble himself before the Lord, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself, but this Amon incurred more and more guilt.²⁴ His servants conspired against him and killed him in his house.²⁵ But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon; and the people of the land made his son Josiah King to succeed him.



King Josiah of Judah

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1. Josiah was eight year's old when he became king of Judah, and he ruled Jerusalem for thirty one years.
2. He did what was pleasing to the Lord; he followed the examples of his ancestor King David, strictly obeying all the laws of God.

Josiah Attacks Pagan Worship

3. In the eighth year that Josiah was king, while he was still very young, he began to worship the God of his ancestor King David. Four years later he began to destroy the pagan places of worship, the symbols of the goddess Asherah,
4. and all the other idols. Under his direction his men smashed the altars where Baal was worshipped and tore down the incense-altars near them. They ground to dust

the images of Asherah and all the other idols and then scattered the dust on the graves of the people who had sacrificed to them.⁵ He burnt the bones of the pagan priests on the altars where they had worshipped. By doing all this, he made Judah and Jerusalem ritually clean again.

6. He did the same thing in the cities and the devastated areas of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far north as Naphtali.

7. Throughout the territory of the Northern Kingdom he smashed the altars and the symbols of Asherah, ground the idols to dust, and broke in pieces all the incense-altars. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

The Book of the Law is Discovered.

8. In the eighteenth year of his reign,

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after he had purged the land and the Temple by ending pagan worship, King Josiah sent three men to repair the Temple of the Lord God: Shaphan son of Azariah, Maaseiah, the Governor of Jerusalem, and Joah, son of Joahaz, a high official.

9. The money that the Levite guards had collected in the Temple was handed over to Hilkiah the High Priest (It had been collected from the people of Ephraim and Manasseh and the rest of the Northern Kingdom, and from the people of Judah, Benjamin, and Jerusalem.)

10. This money was then handed over to the three men in charge of the temple repairs, and they gave it to ¹¹the carpenters and the builders to buy stones and the timber used to repair the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to decay.

12. The men who did the work were thoroughly honest. They were supervised by four Levites: Jahath and Obadiah of the clan of Merari, and Zephaniah and Meshullam of the

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Clan of Kohath (The Levites were all skillful musicians)

13 Other Levites were in charge of transporting materials and supervising the workmen on various jobs, and others kept records or served as guards.

14. While the money was being taken out of the storeroom, Hilkiah found the book of the law of the LORD, the Law that God had given to Moses.

15. He said to Shaphan, "I have found the book of the Law here in the Temple." He gave Shaphan the book, and Shaphan took it to the king.

16. He reported "We have done everything that you commanded.

17. We have taken the money that was kept in the Temple and handed it over to the workmen and their supervisors."

18. Then he added, "I have here a book that Hilkiah gave me." And he read it aloud to the King.

19. When the King heard the book being

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read, he tore his clothes in dismay and
20. gave the following order to Hilkiah, to Ahikam son of Shaphan, the court secretary, and to Asaiah, the king's attendant.

"21. Go and consult the Lord for me and for the people who still remain in Israel and Judah. Find out about the teachings of this book. The Lord is angry with us because our ancestors have not obeyed the word of the Lord and have not done what this book says must be done."

22. AT THE KING'S COMMAND, HIRKIAH AND THE OTHERS WENT TO CONSULT A WOMAN NAMED HULDAH, A PROPHET WHO LIVED IN THE NEWER PART OF JERUSALEM. (HER HUSBAND SHALUM, THE SON OF TIKUAH AND GRANDSON OF HARNAS, WAS IN CHARGE OF THE TEMPLE ROBES.) THEY DESCRIBED TO HER WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

23. and she told them to go back to the king and give him 24. the following message from the Lord. I am going to punish Jerusalem and all its

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People with the curses written in the book that was read to the King.^{25.} They have rejected me and have offered sacrifices to other gods, and so have stirred up my anger by all they have done. My anger is aroused against Jerusalem, and it will not die down.^{26.} As for the King himself, this is what I, the Lord God of Israel, says: you listened to what is written in the book,^{27.} and you repented and humbled yourself before me, tearing your clothes and weeping, when you heard how I threatened to punish Jerusalem and its people. I have heard^{28.} your prayer, and the punishment which I am going to bring on Jerusalem will not come after your death, I will let you die in peace.

The men returned to King Josiah with this message.

Josiah Makes a Covenant to
Obey The Lord.

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29. King Josiah summoned all the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem,
30. and together they went to the Temple, accompanied by the priests and the Levites and all the rest of the people, rich and poor alike. Before them all, the king read aloud the whole book of the covenant, which had been found in the Temple.

31. He stood by the royal column and made a covenant with the Lord to obey him, to keep his laws and commands with all his heart and soul, and to put into practice the demands attached to the covenant, as written in the book.^{32.} He made the people of Benjamin and everyone else present in Jerusalem promise to keep the covenant. And so the people of Jerusalem obeyed the requirements of the covenant they had made with God of the ancestors.

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33. King Josiah destroyed all the disgusting idols that were in the territory belonging to the people of Israel and as long as he lived he required the people to serve the Lord the God of their ancestors.