

## Part 8

Regardless of Whatever You've Done, It's Never Too Late to be Forgiven by God

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years.

He did what was evil in the Lord's sight, following the detestable practices of the pagan nations that the Lord had driven from the land ahead of the Israelites.

He rebuilt the pagan shrines his father, Hezekiah, had broken down. He constructed altars for the images of Baal and set up Asherah poles.

# 2 Chromicles 33:3b He also bowed before all the powers of the heavens and worshiped them.

He built pagan altars in the Temple of the Lord, the place where the Lord had said, "My name will remain in Jerusalem forever."

He built these altars for all the powers of the heavens in both courtyards of the Lord's Temple.

Manasseh also sacrificed his own sons in the fire in the valley of Ben-Hinnom. He practiced sorcery, divination, and witchcraft, and he consulted with mediums and psychics.

He did much that was evil in the Lord's sight, arousing his anger.

Manasseh even took a carved idol he had made and set it up in God's Temple, the very place where God had told David and his son Solomon:

"My name will be honored forever in this Temple and in Jerusalem—the city I have chosen from among all the tribes of Israel.

If the Israelites will be careful to obey my commands—all the laws, decrees, and regulations given through Moses—I will not send them into exile from this land that I set aside for your ancestors."

But Manasseh led the people of Judah and Jerusalem to do even more evil than the pagan nations that the Lord had destroyed when the people of Israel entered the land.

The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they ignored all his warnings.

So the Lord sent the commanders of the Assyrian armies, and they took Manasseh prisoner. They put a ring through his nose, bound him in bronze chains, and led him away to Babylon.

But while in deep distress,

Manasseh sought the Lord his God

and sincerely humbled himself

before the God of his ancestors.

And when he prayed, the Lord listened to him and was moved by his request. So the Lord brought Manasseh back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh finally realized that the Lord alone is God!

After this Manasseh rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, from west of the Gihon Spring in the Kidron Valley to the Fish Gate, and continuing around the hill of Ophel.

He built the wall very high. And he stationed his military officers in all of the fortified towns of Judah.

# 2 Chromicles 33:15a Manasseh also removed the foreign gods and the idol from the Lord's Temple.

He tore down all the altars he had built on the hill where the Temple stood and all the altars that were in Jerusalem, and he dumped them outside the city.

Then he restored the altar of the Lord and sacrificed peace offerings and thanksgiving offerings on it. He also encouraged the people of Judah to worship the Lord, the God of Israel.

However, the people still sacrificed at the pagan shrines, though only to the Lord their God.

The rest of the events of Manasseh's reign, his prayer to God, and the words the seers spoke to him in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, are recorded in The Book of the Kings of Israel.

Manasseh's prayer, the account of the way God answered him, and an account of all his sins and unfaithfulness are recorded in The Record of the Seers.

It includes a list of the locations where he built pagan shrines and set up Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself and repented.

When Manasseh died, he was buried in his palace. Then his son Amon became the next king.



# Principle #1

Sin is the ultimate cause of suffering, disease, and death for all of God's creation.

In the same way that God allows humanity to commit evil acts, God also allows the earth to reflect the consequences that sin has had on His creation.

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# Principle #2

Blatant sin and outright rebellion will always arouse the Lord's anger, which inevitably brings consequences.

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We reap what we sow, more than we sow, later than we sow.

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Unlike the seeds of the ground, planting a seed in your life has no exact timetable. Some seeds may produce quickly and others may take years to come into bloom. As it says in Galatians, there is a proper time appointed for the harvest.

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Life's most profound pain and horrific suffering are meant to shake our confidence in this life and force us to think about eternity.

