

The Work of Repentance

2 Kings 22-23

INTRODUCTION

- A. Repentance plays an important role in God's plan for saving man.
 - 1. Jesus said that unless one repents, he will perish (Lk 13:3, 5).
 - 2. Before Peter told the crowd at Pentecost that they needed to be baptized, he told them to repent (Acts 2:38).
 - 3. After falling into sin after he became a Christian, Simon needed to repent (Acts 8:22).
- B. Repentance is hard work because it involves the heart.
- C. Josiah provides a good example of repentance.
 - 1. Josiah was a good man (2 Ki 22:2).
 - 2. Josiah instituted reforms in his nation, and by so doing he teaches us about "The Work of Repentance."

NEED TO CHANGE KNOWLEDGE, 22:8-13.

- A. Josiah was having the temple rebuilt.
 - 1. Josiah sent Shaphan, his secretary to give Hilkiah, the priest, money which people had brought to rebuild the temple.
 - 2. Hilkiah told Shaphan that he had found the book of the law.
- B. The book of the law had been lost.
 - 1. From Josiah's reforms, we believe Deuteronomy was the book that was found.
 - 2. We don't know for sure if this was the only copy of the law or not.
 - 3. We do know from the reaction of the people that they hadn't heard it before.
 - 4. The people had been so careless as to lose the book of God.
- C. Shaphan came & read the book to Josiah.
 - 1. Josiah tore his clothing—this was a sign of mourning.
 - 2. He sent men to a prophetess to inquire of the Lord.
 - a. Josiah knew God's wrath would be great (v 13).
 - b. So, he wanted a prophetess to inquire of the Lord on his behalf.
- D. In order to be able to repent, Josiah needed to know Scripture—if the book of the law had not been found, he wouldn't have known he needed such vast reforms.
- E. In order to repent, we need to know Scripture.
 - 1. We need to know what we're doing wrong before we can change it.
 - 2. Scripture can provide such information.
 - a. Mt 22:29.
 - b. Heb 4:12.
- F. This has two implications:
 - 1. Those in the world who don't know Scripture will be lost.
 - 2. We who know Scripture need to examine it & examine our lives in light of it.

NEED TO CHANGE THINKING, 23:1-3.

- A. Josiah called all the people together.
 - 1. He went up to the temple & read the book of the law.
 - 2. He then made a covenant to follow the Lord with all his heart & all his soul—not half-heartedly.
- B. If we are to repent, we must change our thinking.
 - 1. Scripture testifies of this need.
 - a. Col 3:1-2.

- b. Rom 12:2.
- 2. Our minds are a powerful force—Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself with what the king ate (Dan 1:8).
- C. Until we make up our minds to change our lives, we won't.

NEED TO CHANGE ACTIONS, 23:4-14.

- A. Josiah instituted many reforms.
 - 1. He ordered all the idols to be taken out of the temple.
 - 2. He deposed of the idolatrous priests.
 - 3. He broke down the houses of the male temple prostitutes.
 - 4. He defiled places of idolatrous worship, i.e., made them unfit for worship.
 - 5. He tore down idols throughout the country.
- B. His repentance was not complete until he instituted these reforms.
- C. Our repentance is not complete until we change our lives.
 - 1. Mt 3:8.
 - 2. Until we, like Josiah, change our lives, repentance is not complete.