

Sunday Morning Message

May 7, 2023

Title – *Have You Found the Book – Part One*

Text – 2 Kings 22 (Parallel Passage – 2 Chronicles 34)

Congregational Reading – 2 Kings 22:8 - 11

Introduction

The first week of May marks the 412th anniversary of the first publication of the King James Version. For the entire month of May on Sunday mornings we will be preaching messages about the Word of God.

King James Bible Facts:

- The King James Version is the most popular Bible translation; an estimated 1 billion or more copies have been published. A recent [USA Today article](#) reported that of the 89% of adult Americans who own a Bible, 67% own a King James.
- The translation was authorized by King James I of England upon the request of Puritans who wanted an English version authorized. It was first published in 1611 A.D. (some believe between May 2–May 5).
- At least 169 original 1611 King James Bibles are in existence today.
- The original book was very large—approximately 17" tall, 30" wide when opened, and it weighed up to 30 pounds.
- A committee of approximately 54 translators worked for 7 years to complete the King James translation.

Unlike many modern translations of the Bible, the King James Bible is a “word for word” translation, known as formal equivalence – not a “thought for thought” translation, which is referred to as “dynamic equivalence.” You will notice that there are many words in the King James that are in italics, and that is because these English words were inserted into the text by the translators to help the passages to make sense in English.

In the passage of Scripture that we are examining this morning we learn about a lost Book that was located as a group of workers were repairing the House of God, the Temple in Jerusalem. This Book of the Law was then delivered to King Josiah who reads it for the first time in his life. It immediately begins to change him personally and through him, this once neglected Book, will bring about a drastic change in the nation of Israel.

What is amazing to me is how this story parallels the times that we are living in; only today the amount of Bible ignorance cannot be attributed to a lack of Bibles.

A survey conducted by the Barna Research Group reveals widespread ignorance of common Christian terms. Researchers asked a sample group of 1,210 adults to define Great Commission, evangelical, John 3:16, and gospel. In each case, only a small minority gave accurate answers. Even "born-again Christians" had trouble answering.

- Only 9 percent of the respondents accurately defined Great Commission. About 75 percent of born-again Christians could not offer a definition.
- Eighteen percent of the respondents correctly defined evangelical, with 57 percent of born-again Christians unable to give a definition.
- Twenty-five percent of the respondents gave accurate or partially accurate descriptions of John 3:16, and half of the born-again Christians could not offer a definition.
- Thirty-seven percent of the respondents correctly defined gospel, and 16 percent of born-again Christians could not offer a definition.

George Barna asked the question:

Why is there so much ignorance about the Bible? Most likely, it comes from a lack of Bible readership. Half of all Americans do not read the Bible. Most of all born-again Christians read the Bible once or twice a week, or not at all. The survey found that only 18% of all Christians said they read the Word every day, while another 18% read the Bible between three and six days a week, 37% read it once or twice a week, and 23% said they do not read the Bible at all. Among non-Christians, 70% do not read the Bible. Is this because many people do not own a Bible? No. Our research has shown that 93% of all American own at least one Bible, and most own more than one.

Illustration - Which of the following aren't in the Bible?

Cleanliness is next to godliness

God helps those who help themselves

Confession is good for the soul.

We are as prone to sin as sparks fly upward

Money is the root of all evil

Honesty is the best policy.

None of them are!

Humorous Illustration

A candidate for church membership was asked, "What part of the Bible do you like best?" He said: "I like the New Testament best. Then he was asked, "What Book in the New Testament is your favorite?" He answered, the Book of the Parables, Sir." They then asked him to relate one of the parables to the membership committee. And a bit uncertain, he began...

"Once upon a time a man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves; and the thorns grew up and choked the man. And he went on and met the Queen of Sheba, and she gave that man, Sir, a thousand talents of silver, and a hundred changes of raiment. And he got in his chariot and drove furiously, and as he was driving along under a big tree, his hair got caught in a limb and left him hanging here! And he hung there many days and many nights. The ravens brought him food to eat and water to drink. And one night while he was hanging there asleep, his wife Delilah came along and cut off his hair, and he fell on stoney ground. And it begin to rain, and rained forty days and forty nights. And he hid himself in a cave. Later he went on and met a man who said, "Come in and take supper with me." But he said, "I can't come in, for I have married a wife." And the man went out into the highways and hedges and compelled him to come in! He then came to Jerusalem, and saw Queen Jezebel sitting high and lifted up in a window of the wall. When she saw him she laughed, and he said, "Throw her down out of there," and they threw her down. And he said "Throw her down again," and they threw her down seventy-times-seven. And the fragments which they picked up filled twelve baskets full! NOW, whose wife will she be in the day of the Judgment?" The membership committee agreed that this was indeed a knowledgeable candidate!

Humorous Illustration

The new minister was asked to teach a boys' class in the absence of the regular teacher. He decided to see what they knew, so he asked who knocked down the walls of Jericho. All the boys denied having done it, and the preacher was appalled by their ignorance. At the next deacons' meeting he told about the experience. "Not one of them knows who knocked down the walls of Jericho," he lamented. The group was silent until finally one seasoned veteran of disputes spoke up. "Preacher, this appears to be bothering you a lot. But I've known all those boys since they were born and they're good boys. If they said they didn't know, I believe them. Let's just take some money out of the repair and maintenance fund, fix the walls, and let it go at that."

Transition

Those illustrations may seem funny, but are they really? America has become a Bible ignorant society, and the lack of Bible in our society is manifesting itself in a moral decay. We can see through the eyes of history that as the Bible became less and less a part of our society, society deteriorated into a moral cesspool.

What is the solution? We need to find the lost Book.

I am speaking to Christians. The world will never find the Book if God's people don't find it. True Biblical revival has always been dependent on God's people:

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." - (2 Chronicles 7:14)

This morning we will take a look at 2 Kings 22 and see how God brought about revival to a Bible ignorant nation.

I. A Man That Wanted to Please God (vs. 1 – 7)

Revival will always begin with a people that have a desire to please the Lord.

Josiah was perhaps Israel's greatest King. From day one, Josiah wanted to please the Lord. The Bible tells us:

"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." - (Proverbs 21:1)

God truly raised up this godly King to bring revival to His people Israel.

By the way – his father (Amon) was one of the most wicked kings in Judah's history, as was his grandfather (Manasseh).

II. A Missing Copy of the Word of God is Found and Read (vs 8 – 11)

Revival will always come through the Word of God, and through the House of God that reveres the Word of God.

Notice – Josiah doesn't really know what to do, but he starts by repairing the house of God. The House of God is a good place to find the Word of God.

III. A Man of God is Sought For (or in this case a woman of God – vs 12 – 20)

Josiah finds the Book, but he doesn't really understand it. He understands enough to know that Israel is in trouble. He goes to this prophetess, Huldah; and asks her to inquire to God regarding what to do.

Conclusion

In the next message, we will see what Josiah does, regarding what he learns from the lost Book. But for now, let us consider some basic principles that we can apply to our lives.

- 1 You need to desire the God of the Book.
- 2 You need to find the Book. (The Book that's in your lap; in your car; on your coffee table – you've got one)
- 3 You need to read the Book on your own.
- 4 You need to study the Book with the men and women of God in the House of God.
- 5 You need to apply the Book. Obey it.