

SOUTH FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Saturday Afternoon

Gospel Mission (3)

Date 25th February 2023

**Preacher Rev Philip Knowles Ps/Hymns Ps 32:1-5 St
Peter, 324 300, 286**

Read: 2 Chron 33:1-13 Text: 2 Chron 33:12-13

Title: Manasseh testimony of saving grace.

When Manasseh, came to the throne he was twelve years of the age. He ruled over Judah the Southern Kingdom of Israel, for fifty-five years.

Manasseh the was the son of King Hezekiah, and while Hezekiah was not a perfect man, yet he did seek to please the Lord.

God used Hezekiah in a time of restoration and revival. The nation was brought back to worship God.

Therefore, Manasseh was the son of a godly Father, a mighty man in prayer.

However, because his father Hezekiah trusted in God, this did not automatically mean Manasseh trusted in God.

While Manasseh was naturally born into an earthly Royal family, he was not naturally born into a heavenly Royal family.

In other words Manasseh was not born on the road to heaven, he was not born a Christian.

He still at some point of his life needed personally to have faith in the promised Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Like all men by nature, Manasseh was born with a corrupt nature marred by sin. Such a corrupt nature, resulted, in his daily practices leaning toward sin.

Fallen men and woman will act according to their corrupt nature. A sinful nature will always chose sin, and all its pleasures.

Manasseh's corruption is summarised for us in **verse 2** in the words that he "***did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.***"

These words, of course, are written over many of the O.T. kings, especially the kings of Israel.

But here they are written over the life of a king of Judah and how applicable they are as far as Manasseh is concerned for there was no more wicked man ever on the throne in Jerusalem.

Manasseh's corrupt nature is seen by that fact of his rebellious defiance in rejecting his father's religion that had been so mightily blessed by God.

We think of children who have had the privilege of a godly mother's prayer or a father's wise counsel.

Yet like Manasseh they have turned their face away, or as Absalom who rebelled and led a revolt against his father David.

However, the life of Manasseh, is one of those Scripturally recorded stories of the salvation of a soul that are designed to bring great hope to God's people and to sinners who may feel that there is no hope for them.

The story of Manasseh is recorded in two sections of Scripture -- **2 Kings 21 & then here in 2 Chron 33.**

But in the account in **2 Kings 21** there is absolutely no reference to Manasseh's conversion.

Indeed, in reading that passage it would seem that Manasseh lived and perished in his sin and died without hope.

However, in reading **2 Chron 33** what comfort and hope there is to read that one who was a hardened sinner was saved by the grace of God.

Manasseh in the final analysis was brought to know the God of his father Hezekiah.

There we must look at testimony of saving grace.

I FIRST THE COURSE OF MANASSEH'S SIN

1 it was a Determined course –

Manasseh was determined to remove every influence of God in his life or remembrance of having a godly upbringing.

verse 3-4 Manasseh “***he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.*** ⁴ ***Also ...” he built altars in the house of the LORD***

He had set up Baal and Ashtaroth in the courts of the temple at Jerusalem.

He was eager to mix all forms of idolatry.

He was not satisfied with one false god, or one set of idolatrous rituals, but he set up altars for Baalim many gods.

He brought all this blasphemy into the house of God. Manasseh rebelled against the Lord to its utmost extent!

He “**observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards:**”

Manasseh was eager in these pursuits. He multiplied his wicked devices, with every evil invention against God.

Paul writing to the church at Corinth, said “**such were some of you...**”

To the church at Ephesus, **Eph 2:2** “**Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world,**” Jude said we walked after our own ungodly lusts.

We were determined, to worship self, or God on our own terms.

While our sins may not have been the exact at Manasseh, yet they were still pursued with a determination against the God of heaven.

2 It was a Deflecting course – **v9** “**so Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.**”

By his influence and position Manasseh deliberately deflected or led the nation away from God. **2 Kings 21:11** he “**hath made Judah also to sin with his idols.**”

The whole land followed its king, except only a remnant according to the election of divine grace.

The people seemed as eager for idolatry, as the king himself was.

Manasseh's purpose was to cause the nation to go into the ways of evil.

Manasseh caused others to err, to the point, ***to do worse than the heathen.***"

As King leading a kingdom, he swayed those in the nation to side with him. He was a stumbling block to others.

Remember when Absalom lead a revolt against his father David for the throne, **2 Samuel 15:6** "***so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.***" He lead them to err.

Think of Eli's son who were priests, they should have been leading the people into worship, however, **1 Sam 2:24** "***Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress.***" **3:13** "***his sons made themselves vile,***"

How many today in position of leadership in Country or in the family home, are deflecting the nation or people away from God.

They are influencing others to travel a road without Christ as Saviour.

Think of false ministers or vicars, who are the blind leading the blind. They have deflected their flock from Biblical worship, accepting a false gospel, which centre upon religious works and activities.

But there is also, a solemn lesson for us child of God, we must seek by God's grace to be a godly influence in a fallen world.

redirecting sinner to Calvary and consider Jesus Christ the only Saviour of sinners.

It was a Destructive course – Manasseh had learned the “**abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.**” The original natives of Canaan a long time before had been destroyed by the Lord for their vileness. Yet they were Manasseh's role models.

However, he made a way back for them and their practises. he “**caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom.**”

This was the idol, Moloch made of brass, which was heated red hot and filled with fire till the flames came pouring forth from its mouth.

Into the red-hot arms of this image some parents placed their young, so that they were consumed alive—but others, like Manasseh, passed their children between those burning arms.

This was the sacrificing of his children to pagan deities. He dedicated them to the false gods.

2 Kings, 21:16, that he persecuted the people of God very furiously to their death. “**Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.**”

And so sin is destructive, think of a time dear believer, where sin had dominion over you.

Sins power was destructive in your life. It controls your attitudes, and effected your action, like the man in Mark 5 no man could tame you, no man could control you.

People tried to intervene but every effort was thrown back at them.

Manasseh life shows sin will take any man further that they ever wanted to go and cost them more than they ever wanted to pay.

It was Dangerous course. While Manasseh walked the course of sin, God spoke to Manasseh, by sending His prophets to him, but he would not hear.

Notice, **verse 10** we read “***And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.***” Since he influenced the nation to worship idols, they would not hear the truth.

They like their leader refused the voice of God, this is what makes sin exceeding sinful: the deliberate refusal to yield to the warning voice of God.

For anyone to live in sin, hear God’s word to turn from sin, and yet refuse, is living dangerously.

It keeps the rejecter on the road to eternal ruin. Every time you refuse the message then everyday, you are a step closer to a lost eternity.

This course of Manasseh's sin underlines the great and solemn truth that no man deserves the salvation of our God.

All men deserve eternal punishment for their sin and trespass against God.

The very fact we are still here today, is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed.

It is only when you come to Christ do you truly releases, how deep down you were in sin, and that God had every sovereign right to leave you in that pit of iniquity and hatred. As Paul

said in **Roman 5:8** “*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”

II SECOND, THE CONSEQUENCES OF MANASSEH’S SIN

King Manasseh was rebuked for his rejection and suffered the consequences of his sin. The Lord took Manasseh’s throne away from him. His sin cost him everything.

The king of Assyria came against him and he was unable to resist his assault.

Sennacherib, a former king of Assyria, had invaded the land in the days of Hezekiah and the Lord had delivered His people, but God allowed the armies of Assyria to come upon him.

Manasseh's idols, evil associates could not deliver him from the Babylonians. They failed him when he needed most as false religion always does.

He was captured, “*and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.*” He who had trusted idols was made a slave to an idolatrous people!

Like the prophet of Baal, their false idol Baal did not answer them in a time of need.

“*He was in affliction,*” unable to change his state, he was bound, a prisoner, kept in bondage.

Had Manasseh been left to the consequences of his sinful heart and lifestyle he would surely have perished.

He neither looked for nor deserved the grace that saved him.

Rom 5: 20, “*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*”

If it was not the amazing grace of God, we would still remain under the bondage of sin, held prisoners to sin.

We were without strength, unable to save ourselves.

However, God during that time of affliction, brought us low, in order to see His grace greater than all our sin, and He delivers out of the pit of corruption.

God permitted this affliction in his life as a means to break him and cause him to repent.

God often breaks the stubborn sinner by allowing some affliction to enter his life.

What did it take for him to break you, what affliction did he send to you awaken you.

Dear unsaved one what affliction, trouble, will God send you in order to turn you from sin.

What will be take from you that will get your attention.

The bible says **Proverbs 13:15** “**the way of transgressors is hard.**” Manasseh’s way was hard, because he refused the word of God.

III THIRD, THE CONVERSION FROM MANASSEH’S SIN

God handed Manasseh over to his foe to bring him to conversion in faith and repentance.

In the prison of affliction, burdened down with a load of care, no power to break his chains and set himself free.

It was in that time in prison he convicted of sin.

Manasseh besought or called upon the name of the Lord to be saved. He came with that contrite and broken heart, **Verses 12-13**, “**And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, ¹³ And prayed unto him: and he was**

intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom.” This proud rebellious heart humbled himself before God and the Lord pardoned him.

Remember David prayer in **Psa 32:5** ***“I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.***

Paul said in **1 Timothy 1:13** ***“I obtained mercy, v16*** what is the cause, the basis for this mercy to an underserving sinner, **v15** ***“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”***

What a testimony of His infinite mercy and grace, God moved the king of Assyria to take Manasseh out of prison and restore him to his throne!

The Lord does great marvels and shows great mercy unto the very chief of sinners.

Manasseh of the OT, was as Paul in NT the very chief of sinners.

Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty of sin by laying down His life and shedding His blood, and now in heaven.

Jesus lives and pray on the ground of that blood to save the vilest of the offenders.

Come even now and seek His face. There is only one who breaks the power of sin, and set the sinner free. He is ready to pardon you now.

