

More on Josiah Humbling Himself Before the Lord

by Bob Hoekstra

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility before God's word as exemplified by King Josiah, leading to grace and transformation.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 34:26, Psalm 51:17, Proverbs 15:33, Isaiah 66:2, Zechariah 7:11, Matthew 5:5, Philippians 2:3, James 1:21, 1 Peter 5:5

Topics: "Humility Before God", "Responding To Scripture"

Description

Bob Hoekstra preaches on the importance of responding humbly to God's word, using the example of King Josiah who, upon hearing the neglected word of God, humbly tore his clothes and wept before the Lord, escaping the judgment deserved by the rebellious people. Josiah's blessings of grace were a result of his tender heart towards God's word, in contrast to the hardhearted response of the Israelites in Zechariah's day who faced great wrath for refusing to heed God's word. Josiah's humility and meekness before God's word allowed him to experience God's grace and avoid the calamity that was to come upon the land.

Transcript

Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "Concerning the words which you have heard -- because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you," says the LORD . . . "your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants." (2 Chronicles 34:26-27)

King Josiah was a godly ruler, who purged the land of idolatrous activities. When the neglected word of God was discovered in the temple, he responded humbly as he heard it read. "Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes." He thereby escaped the judgment that was deserved by the rebellious people. Also, this appropriate wrath was postponed until after his reign.

These blessings of grace were related to Josiah's humble response to God's word. His heart was soft when he heard the word of the Lord. "Concerning the words which you have heard -- because your heart was tender." The attitude of the heart toward the scriptures is pivotal if a person is to experience the grace of God at work in his life. A hardhearted response to the word of God does not receive the grace of God. The Israelites in Zechariah's day were a sad example of this. The Lord sent His word to them, "But they

refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 7:11-12).

Josiah's attitude was a vivid contrast. "You humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants." He did what James would later call God's people to do. "Receive with meekness the implanted word" (James 1:21). Josiah's humility was so evident. "You humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me." The result was that Josiah would enjoy the grace of God. His time of leadership would not have to go through the wrath that the people deserved from their previous rebellion and hardheartedness. "Your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants."

Dear Lord, I confess that I have not always responded in humility before Your word. I thank You for Your forgiving grace. Yet, even more, I hunger for Your transforming grace. Shape my heart into a tender vessel that will meekly receive Your holy word, day by day, for Your honor and glory, Amen.

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