



**Reaching,  
Restoring,  
Raising Up**

1140 Morrison Dr  
Fort Worth, TX 76120-3426

Phone: 817-451-5513  
Email: allan@celebrationnet.com

**L.I.F.E. Group Questions—I Kings 21**

Our L.I.F.E. Groups that meet in homes use the following questions from the sermon for discussion and application. To find a group pick up a L.I.F.E. Group brochure in the Welcome Center.

1. Share with your group about a time you wanted something so bad that you did something you wish you hadn't. How could you have dealt with this better?
2. Discuss what you do when someone (friend, foe, or God) tells you "no". What can you learn from these situations?
3. Have you ever been ganged up on, or unjustly pressured to give something up that was rightfully yours? What is the best approach at times like this?
4. Share with the group a time in your life when one wrong choice led to bigger wrong choices. How did you justify the choices?
5. Discuss the best way to "catch" the first wrong choice—how to recognize these tendencies and how to best say "no" to them.
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

**We're on the Web!**

**Www. Celebrationnet.com**

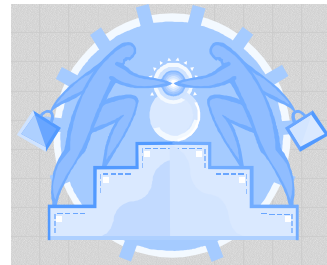
**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find  
Yours Below and Join Us!**

**Adult Bible Fellowships**

**Locations, Times, Descriptions**

**9:00**

**10:45**



**ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS  
- CONNECTING AROUND THE WORD -**

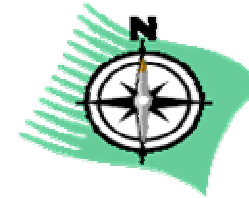
Room	9:00 Description	Room	10:45 Description
Rm104	30s-50s—Waller-Crary	Rm 104	Open—Bower-Chappell
Rm 112		Rm 112	Women—Byrum
Rm 201	30s-40s—Sims	Rm 201	20s—Alexy/Jones
Rm 202		Rm 202	30s—Tripp-Tripp
Rm 203	Young Singles —Franklin/Reynolds	Rm 203	Singles—Bentzel
Rm 204		Rm 204	30s—Heritier-Sharp
Rm 205	40s&Up—Christensen-Hasler	Rm 205	Engaged/Young Married —Houston/Baker
Rm 206	Experiencing God (starts Sept 12)	Rm 206	
Rm 207	40s-50s—McBrayer-Wicks	Rm 207	How People Grow (Starts Sept 12)
Rm 208	Women—Knox-Anderson	Rm 208	Open—Regis-Anderson

Aug 29, 2004

**Living Like a King**  
*Fulfilling Our Call to Royalty from 1 & 2 Kings*

**Celebration Fellowship  
(Un)Grand Finale**

**A preview of II Kings 24-25**



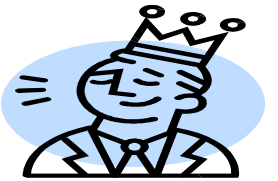
Volume 2, Issue 56  
August 29, 2004

**Inside this issue:**

Introduction to Next Week's Study	<b>1</b>
Summary of Last Week's Study Questions	<b>1-2</b>
Study Guide	<b>2-3</b>
Life Group Questions	<b>4</b>

The end had finally come in Judah; their evil had become so pervasive that God had no choice but to expel them from their homeland through an inglorious sequence of events. Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, had been installed as king by Pharaoh Neco; but, like most of the kings, he did evil in God's sight as well. The king of Babylon then came against Judah, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Foolishly thinking he could succeed, he led Judah to rebel against Babylon, but God's discipline was still sure. He sent various no-

madic bands of marauders against Judah to bring her to her knees, but nothing worked. After Jehoiakim's death, his son, Jehoiachin, took over and imitated the evil of his father. Babylon came against Judah again, besieging Jerusalem and taking most of the influential people into exile in Babylon. He left the poorest people there to tend the land, and installed Zedekiah, Josiah's third son, as king. He reigned eleven years, but rebelled against Babylon in the ninth year. Babylon came against them again, killed Zedekiah's



**We can live like kings when we follow the King, Jesus.**

sons, put out Zedekiah's eyes, and took them into captivity. Jerusalem was burned and razed, as this was Judah's final fall. They would be in captivity for seventy years in Babylon, and even though Jehoiachin later would be released, it was certainly an "un"-grand finale.

**Clean Sweep**

On the current TV show, "Clean Sweep", a team comes in to help a person reclaim a room that has been lost to disorganization. Sometimes life is that way; the mess gets so great that it demands a "clean sweep" for it to be usable again. That was Judah's situation in the days of Manasseh and Josiah. Manasseh was the most evil king Judah had ever known (like Ahab in Israel), and Judah's only hope was that someone would make a clean sweep of the evil he had spread. Josiah, as 2 Kings 22-23 shows, would be that person. Amazingly, Manasseh followed Hezekiah, his father, who had been one of Judah's most righteous kings. He undid his father's actions by spreading massive idolatry in Judah, making idols to the sun, moon and stars, building altars to Baal, and raising up fertility poles. He began the practices of child sacrifice, witchcraft, divination and spiritism, and restored the high places where people could

worship false gods privately. He even built altars to false gods in the temple, and placed an Asherah pole there. His actions can only be partially explained as a reaction to his father's pride during the first twelve years of his life. Regardless, these sins incurred the wrath of God, and, just as He had promised through Moses, they would lead to Judah's expulsion from the land. God began this judgment by speaking to Manasseh through His prophets that He was about to bring great "calamity" upon Judah. It would be so great that it would cause everyone's ears to tingle. It would be so complete that He would "wipe Jerusalem clean" as one does a dirty dish, just as He had wiped the evil dynasty of Ahab clean in his day. There would be no survivors among those who had participated in Manasseh's evil. This evil wasn't limited to idolatry, but, as is often the case when people renounce the true God, human life was devalued

**(2 Kings 21-23)**

as well—resulting in the shedding of much innocent blood. Amon, Manasseh's son, did evil like his father, and, just as Manasseh, was buried in a private grave, rather than the official royal gravesite. This dishonor was a result of their evil, even though Manasseh had humbled himself before God after being taken into Babylonian captivity. In this case God's blessing was simply taking him back to Jerusalem to finish out his life, but he would reap the consequences for the rest of the evil he had sown. The other consequence that Amon received was the premature end of his reign due to a conspiracy against him and subsequent assassination. Because of his early departure his son, Josiah, had to assume the throne at the age of eight, foregoing a normal childhood, showing that our wrongs always have a direct impact on those closest to us. However, God graciously led Josiah to seek Him at age sixteen, and his first action was to begin restoration of the

*(Continued on page 2)*

**The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life**

- Worship—You were planned for God's pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God's family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

## II Kings 21-23 (continued from pg 1)

Temple. The desire to worship God always occurs when our hearts turn back to Him, showing why Josiah began temple repairs first when he began to seek God. Early on the workmen discovered a copy of the Mosaic Law which had been lost. The scribe, Shaphan, began to read it, and immediately sent it to the Josiah. As he read it, he tore his clothes in anguish over the wrath of God that it revealed against the evil Judah had committed during Manasseh's 55 year reign, and the first 18 years of his. He immediately made contact with Huldah, the prophetess, to discover what God would do about this. She informed him that God's plan was to bring evil on Jerusalem and its inhabitants because of its sin, but she also told him that, because he had humbled his heart in repentance, that God would delay this judgment until after his death. This reveals that those who humble themselves before God will, in some way, be spared from His judgment on unrepentant sinners. Having heard this, Josiah then called the people together at the Temple, and read the Law to them. In light of God's wrath he then led them to renew their covenant with God, promising to walk after Him, keep His commands with all their heart, and to be completely obedient

to Him. The king then led a "clean sweep" of Judah's evil. He removed all idols, not only from Jerusalem, but also from the cities of Judah, and even from Israel to the north. As he removed them he ground them to dust and defiled many of the false worship places with human bones. He also destroyed idols and their altars in the temple, killed the priests of the false religions, and desecrated the graves of the priests of false gods from earlier times. As he did this, though, he made sure to honor the grave of the prophet in Jeroboam's time who had prophesied that he, Josiah, would carry out this purge over 200 years later. He even got rid of all accoutrements that went with the practices of Judah's idolatry, such as horses



**"The desire to worship God always occurs when our hearts turn back to him."**

used in sun-worship, and hangings that the women had made. He then positively reinforced his reforms by reinstating the Passover celebration, and then negatively by removing all witchcraft and spiritism from the land. As a result it was said that there was no king before him or after him who turned to the Lord with all his heart, soul and might. But, even though he would personally be spared from the coming judgment of God, Judah would not be. His final act was to go to battle against Pharaoh Neco at Megiddo, in which he was killed. His son, Jehoahaz, followed him, but returned to evil, thus reigning only three months before being imprisoned in Egypt. His brother, Jehoiakim, was made king and reigned eleven years, but he, too, was evil. This resulted in his having to pay heavy tribute to Egypt, which he exacted from his people. This shows that rebellion against God always hurts us, and those around us. Josiah shows the opposite. When he began to seek the LORD, he restored worship, which led to reading the Word. This, in turn, led to conviction, repentance, and a heart-felt renewal of his commitment. The result was a total purge of evil and a celebration of God's deliverance. It was a true "clean sweep".

## Study Questions for 2 Kings 24-25

*The remaining kings in Judah continue in evil, until their nation is completely expelled from their homeland.*

1. Read 2 Kings 24:1-5. What did Jehoiakim do (v1), and what did God do in response (v2)? Why did He do this (v3-4)? Instead of rebelling against God's discipline, what does this show we should do?
2. From 2 Kings 24:6-9 what king followed Jehoiakim (v6), and how did the balance of power shift in his reign (v7)? How long did Jehoiachin reign (v8), and what was he like (v9)? Is there any connection?
3. Look at 2 Kings 24:10-16. What happened to Jerusalem (v11, 14-16), the Temple (v13), and Jehoiachin (v12)? How do you think the people felt at this time, and how should they have responded?



**"Those who humble themselves before God will, in some way, be spared from His judgment on unrepentant sinners."**

4. In 2 Kings 24:17-20 who did the king of Babylon install as king (v17), and what was he like (v19)? Why had all this happened (v20), what did Zedekiah do (v20), and what should he have done (see Jeremiah 27)?

5. Using 2 Kings 25:1-7 what was the result of Zedekiah's rebellion (v2), how long did this last (v1-2) and what was his final outcome (v4-7)? How does this show the foolishness of disobedience?

6. Looking at 2 Kings 25:8-12 when did Judah's final exile occur (v8—586BC), and how long would it last (see 2 Chronicles 36:21 and Jeremiah 29:10)? What happened to Jerusalem (v9, 10)?

7. From 2 Kings 25:13-17 list the destructive things that happened to the Temple (v13, 14, 15). Why was this so sad (see 1 Kings 8:1-11, 54-66)?

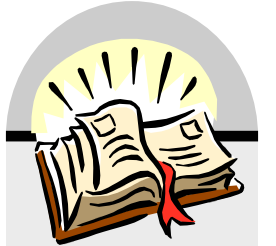
8. Read 2 Kings 25:18-21. Who else was discovered in Jerusalem (v18-19), and what happened to them (v20-21)? What do you think God is teaching us by including this little bit of information?

9. In 2 Kings 25:22-26 who was appointed governor by Nebuchadnezzar (v22), and how did the men of Judah (who were apparently in hiding) respond (v23)? What did Gedaliah try to get them to do (v24)?

10. From 2 Kings 25:27-30 how did Ishmael react to Gedaliah's suggestion (v25), and what did this cause (v26)? Who did they take with them (Jer 43:1-7), and what should they have done (Jer 42:18-22)?

11. Using 2 Kings 25:27-29 and 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 what happens while Judah is in exile? What does this reveal about God's grace and power?

12. Review the downward progression of Judah in these chapters—who each king was, what he was like, and how he reacted. What does this story teach about the way to respond to God's discipline (see Hebrews 12:5-13)?



## Memory Verse

**"So He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which he had spoken through his prophets."  
2 Kings 24:2**