

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 42

Manasseh

Manasseh

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective The goal of this lesson is to demonstrate God's mercy to even the worst of sinners using the story of Manasseh.

Key Verses

2 Chronicles 33:1-20—Main Teaching Passage
2 Kings 21:1-18

Memory Verse - Lamentations 3:22 (July Memory Verse)

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed,
Because His compassions fail not.

Hook

Catch one of your assistant teachers in the act of stealing candy from the prize jar. Have the class suggest punishments for this crime. After taking some suggestions, determine that you will not punish the teacher. Inform the class that not giving someone the punishment they deserve is called mercy.

In today's story, someone deserved a severe punishment for the sins they committed. We will see if God shows him mercy.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

After Hezekiah, one of Judah's most righteous kings, his son Manasseh took the throne. Manasseh was the most wicked king Judah ever had. He worshipped all kinds of idols and put them all over Judah. He even put idols in God's house, the temple! For every good thing that his father Hezekiah did, Manasseh did evil. Hezekiah took down the high places that God had forbidden Judah to worship in. Manasseh put them back up. God sent prophets to warn Manasseh, but he wouldn't listen. In fact, many believe that Manasseh ordered the prophet Isaiah to be killed. He had heard of how the Lord punished Judah's neighbor Israel for their disobedience, but Judah refused to learn her lesson.

Because of this, the Lord was angry with Judah. He declared that Judah would soon be invaded by Babylon and carried off into captivity, just like Israel (2 Kings 21:10-15 records this). This punishment would take place many years later. As part of his punishment, Manasseh was carried into captivity by the king of Assyria. While in captivity, the Bible says that Manasseh repented of his sins and was released. Then he knew that the Lord was God. He returned to Judah and attempted to undo all his wrongs. He took away all the idols and made Judah worship the one true God. All the altars to these false gods were destroyed. The people only worshipped the true God. In addition, Judah was not captured during his lifetime.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Manasseh's story of repentance is one of the greatest examples of God's mercy in the whole Old Testament. Manasseh was the worst king Judah ever had. He was possibly even worse than Ahab and Jezebel. His sins were so great that God had to punish the nation of Judah by sending them away to Babylon. Judah was living in total sin. In addition, Manasseh was taken into captivity by the king of Assyria. Then, Manasseh repented and turned to God, and he was restored. He returned to Jerusalem and turned the hearts of the people toward the Lord.

However, it's important to notice that while he did repent, and while the Lord did accept that repentance, there were still consequences for Manasseh's actions. Judah was still going to be carried away into Babylon, even if it wasn't during his lifetime. In learning about mercy, it is important to remember that mercy does not mean that someone will not face the consequences of their actions. Sin is still sin, and sin can only lead to pain and suffering. Mercy instead keeps sinners from experiencing the ultimate consequences of their sin. For Manasseh, that meant not being captured by Babylon in his lifetime.

LOOK (Continued)

God's mercy toward Manasseh shows us all that, no matter what we have done, there is hope for us. While we may not have done all the things Manasseh did, we all have our own sin. We have all told lies, taken things that weren't ours, hated people in our hearts, and loved people and things more than God. For these sins, we deserve a punishment even worse than Manasseh's. We don't just deserve to be taken from our earthly homes and put into captivity. We deserve eternal separation from God.

That's why Jesus came to earth as a man to die on the cross for us. He took our punishment and forgave our sins. As we saw earlier, we still face consequences for our sin. If we disobey our parents, we still get punished. If we steal something, we get in trouble. If we get into a fight, we still get bumps, bruises, and broken bones. However, if Christ is our Savior, we never have to worry about facing ultimate punishment, eternal separation from God. If someone as wicked as Manasseh could repent and be forgiven, than we can be sure that no matter how bad we are or what sins we commit, Jesus is still able to show us mercy and forgive us.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

This would be a good opportunity to invite students to ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior.

Pray: Thank the Lord for His amazing mercy. Ask Him to forgive your sins and have mercy on all the class each day.

Parent Question: How did God show mercy to King Manasseh?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Chronicles 33 by David Guzik

THE REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON

A. The reign of Manasseh, son of Hezekiah.

1. ([2 Chronicles 33:1-2](#)) A summary of the reign of Manasseh, a 55-year rule of evil.

Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

a. **Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king:** This means that he was born in the *last fifteen years* of Hezekiah's life, the *additional* fifteen years that Hezekiah prayed for ([2 Kings 20:6](#)). Those additional fifteen years brought Judah one of its worst kings.

i. "Had this good king been able to foresee the wickedness of his unworthy son, he would doubtless have no desire to recover from his sickness. Better by far die childless than beget a son such as Manasseh proved to be." (Knapp)

b. **And he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem:** This was both a remarkably long and a remarkably evil reign. A long career or longevity is not necessarily evidence of the blessing and approval of God.

i. "He was a son of David, but he was the very reverse of that king, who was always faithful in his loyalty to the one and only God of Israel. David's blood was in his veins, but David's ways were not in his heart. He was a wild, degenerate shoot of a noble vine." (Spurgeon)

c. **According to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before:** Manasseh imitated the sins of both the Canaanites and the Israelites of the northern kingdom ([2 Kings 16:3](#)). Since God brought judgment on these groups for their sin, casting them out of their land, then similar judgment against an unrepentant Judah should be expected.

2. ([2 Chronicles 33:3-9](#)) The specific sins of Manasseh.

For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever." And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers; only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses." So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

a. **He rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down:** Manasseh opposed the reforms of his father Hezekiah and he brought Judah back into terrible idolatry.

i. This shows us that repentance and reform and revival are not permanent standing conditions. What is accomplished at one time can be opposed and turned back at another time.

b. **He raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images:** Manasseh did not want to imitate his godly father. Instead, he imitated one of the very worst kings of Israel: Ahab. He embraced the same state-sponsored worship of Baal and Asherah (honored with **a carved image**) that marked the reign of Ahab.

c. **He also built altars in the house of the LORD:** It was bad enough for Manasseh to allow this idol worship into Judah. Worse, he corrupted the worship of the true God at the temple, and made the temple a place of idol altars, including those dedicated to his cult of astrological worship (**he built altars for all the host of heaven**).

d. **He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD:** Manasseh did not only bring back old forms of idolatry; he also brought new forms of idolatry to Judah. At this time the Babylonian Empire was rising in influence, and they had a special attraction to astrological worship. Manasseh probably imitated this.

i. "The king's apostate worship of 'the starry host' had evil precedents going as far back as the time of Moses ([Deuteronomy 4:19](#); [Acts 7:42](#)), but such practices were a particular sin of Assyro-Babylonians, with their addiction to astrology." (Payne)

ii. "But this Manasseh sought out for himself unusual and outlandish sins. Bad as Ahab was, he had not worshipped the host of heaven. That was an Assyrian worship, and this man must need import from Assyria and Babylonia worship that was quite new." (Spurgeon)

e. **He caused his sons to pass through the fire:** Manasseh sacrificed his own sons to the Canaanite god Molech, who was worshipped with the burning of children.

f. **Practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists:** Manasseh invited direct Satanic influence by his approval and introduction of these occult arts.

i. "The Hebrew word for 'spiritists' is **yiddeoni**, by etymology, 'a knowing one.' It referred originally to ghosts, who were supposed to possess superhuman knowledge; but it came to be applied to those who claimed power to summon them forth, i.e., to witches." (Payne)

g. **He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God:** The Chronicler seems too polite to say it, but [2 Kings 21:7](#) tells us that this **idol** was Asherah, the Canaanite goddess of fertility. This god was worshipped through ritual prostitution. This means that Manasseh made the temple into an idolatrous brothel, dedicated to Asherah.

i. "From the whole it is evident that Asherah was no other than **Venus**; the nature of whose worship is plain enough from the mention of **whoremongers** and **prostitutes**." (Clarke)

ii. "Manasseh **repeated these sins and exaggerated them each time**. After one forbidden idol had been enshrined, he set up another yet more foul, and after building altars in the courts of the temple, he ventured further.... Thus he piled up his transgressions and multiplied his provocations." (Spurgeon)

h. **Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed:** [2 Kings 21:9](#) tells us what the attitude of the people was: **they paid no attention**. This described the basic attitude of the people of Judah during the 55-year reign of Manasseh. They **paid no attention to the generous promises of God, promising protection to His obedient people**. In addition, they were willingly **seduced** by Manasseh's wickedness and were attracted **to do more evil**.

i. "He did all he could to pervert the national character, and totally destroy the worship of the true God; and he succeeded." (Clarke)

ii. "How superficial had been the nation's compliance with Hezekiah's reforms! Without a strong spiritual leader, the sinful people quickly turned to their own evil machinations. The judgment of God could not be far

away.” (Patterson and Austel)

iii. This was a transformation of the culture from something generally honoring God to a culture that glorified idolatry and immorality. In general we can say this happened because the people **wanted it to happen**. *They didn't care about the direction of their culture.*

B. Manasseh's repentance.

1. (2 Chronicles 33:10-11) God chastises Manasseh.

And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon.

a. **And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people:** This was the great mercy of God. He was under no obligation to warn or correct them; God would have been completely justified in exercising judgment immediately. Instead, **the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people.**

i. [2 Kings 21:10-15](#) tells more about these specific warnings of the prophets.

b. **But they would not listen:** Despite God's gracious warnings, neither the king nor the people would **listen**. God found more compelling ways to speak to the rulers and people of Judah.

i. [2 Kings 21:16](#) tells us of the terrible extent of Manasseh's sin: **Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.**

ii. "We cannot vouch for the tradition that the prophet Isaiah was put to death by him by being sawn in sunder, but terrible as is the legend, it is not at all improbable." (Spurgeon)

c. **Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria:** God allowed Manasseh to be taken and carried away as a captive, after the pattern of his own sinful bondage.

i. "God sent him into the dungeon to repent; as he did David into the depths, and Jonah into the whale's belly to pray. Adversity hath whipt many a soul to heaven, which otherwise prosperity had coached to hell." (Trapp)

ii. "No mention is made of Manasseh's exile in Assyrian sources, even though Manasseh appears in the annals of Esarhaddon (680-669 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (668-626 B.C.) as a rather unwilling vassal forced to provide supplies for Assyria's building and military enterprises. It is quite possible that he rebelled against these impositions at some point." (Selman)

iii. "Manasseh's presence in **Babylon** is not surprising, since Assyria had had a long interest in Babylon, which was under the direct control for the whole of Esarhaddon's reign and after Shamash-shum-ukin's demise." (Selman)

2. (2 Chronicles 33:12-13) The remarkable repentance of Manasseh.

Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

a. **When he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God:** Manasseh was not the first one (and not the last) to turn back to God after a severe season of **affliction**. It has been said that God speaks to us in our pleasures and he shouts to us in our pains. Manasseh finally listened to God's shouting through **affliction**.

i. "The Assyrians were notoriously a fierce people, and Manasseh, having provoked them, felt all the degradation, scorn, and cruelty which anger could invent. He who had trusted idols was made a slave to an idolatrous people; he who had shed blood very much was now in daily jeopardy of the shedding of his own; he who had insulted the Lord must now be continually insulted himself." (Spurgeon)

b. **And humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers:** The word **humbled** reminds us that the essence of Manasseh's sin was **pride**. The phrase **God of his fathers** reminds us that Manasseh returned to the godly heritage he received from his father Hezekiah.

i. This is a wonderful example of the principle, **Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it** ([Proverbs 22:6](#)). Manasseh was raised by a godly father, yet he lived in defiance of his father's faith for most of his life. Nevertheless, at the end of his days he truly repented and served God.

c. **He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom:** God graciously restored the late-repenting Manasseh. This gracious response to Manasseh was the final step in his return to the LORD (**Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God**).

i. "He was convinced by his own experience of God's power, justice, and goodness, that Jehovah alone was the true God, and not those idols which he had worshipped, by which he had received great hurt, and no good." (Poole)

ii. "Manasseh's repentance was evidently the chief subject in the mind of the chronicler, and while his sins are painted faithfully and revealed in all their hideousness, all becomes but background which flings into relief Manasseh's genuine penitence and the ready and gracious response to God." (Morgan)

iii. In his sermon, *The Old Testament "Prodigal,"* Spurgeon imagined what it would be like for the remnant of believers in Jerusalem to hear that Manasseh was returning from Babylon. They had a brief pause in the persecution they had suffered from the evil king, and at least a slow-down in the official promotion of idolatry. Now to hear he was coming back must have driven them to their knees, asking God to have mercy on them once again. Imagine their surprise when they found that King Manasseh returned a repentant, converted man!

iv. "Oh! I do not wonder at Manasseh's sin one half so much as I wonder at God's mercy." (Spurgeon)

3. ([2 Chronicles 33:14-17](#)) The late deeds of Manasseh.

After this he built a wall outside the City of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate; and it enclosed Ophel, and he raised it to a very great height. Then he put military captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. He also repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the LORD their God.

a. **After this he built a wall:** Before he was humbled and repentant, Manasseh didn't care very much for the defense of Judah and Jerusalem. Now, with a more godly perspective, he cared deeply about the security of God's people and the kingdom of Judah.

i. "This was probably a weak place that he fortified; or a part of the wall which the Assyrians had broken down, which he now rebuilt." (Clarke)

b. **He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD:** Before he was humbled and repentant, Manasseh **promoted** the worship of idols. Now, he destroyed idols and promoted the worship of the true God of Israel alone; he even **commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel**.

i. "Manasseh's religious reforms represented a direct reversal of earlier policies ([vv. 2-9](#)), since each of the items removed in [verse 15](#) is mentioned in [verses 3, 7](#)." (Selman)

ii. "Turn to Him with brokenness of soul, and He will not only forgive, but bring you out again; and give you, as He did Manasseh, an opportunity of undoing some of those evil things which have marred your past." (Meyer)

c. **Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the LORD their God:** This reminds us of the distinction between two different kinds of **high places**. Some were altars to pagan idols; others were unauthorized altars to the true God. Manasseh stopped all the pagan worship in Judah, but unauthor-

ized (that is, outside the temple) worship of the God of Israel continued.

i. "Half a century of paganism could not be counteracted by half-a-dozen years of reform." (Payne)

ii. "While repentance of personal sin brings ready forgiveness, the influence of the sin is terribly likely to abide." (Morgan)

4. ([2 Chronicles 33:18-20](#)) Manasseh's death and burial.

Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, indeed they *are written* in the book of the kings of Israel. Also his prayer and *how God* received his entreaty, and all his sin and trespass, and the sites where he built high places and set up wooden images and carved images, before he was humbled, indeed they *are written* among the sayings of Hozai. So Manasseh rested with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house. Then his son Amon reigned in his place.

a. **The rest of the acts of Manasseh:** The Chronicler must refer to documents that have more information than the 2 Kings text. 2 Kings does not mention the repentance of Manasseh, and does not tell us anything about his reign substantially different than what we read in 2 Chronicles.

i. "Manasseh illustrates one of the central themes of Chronicles, that God can fulfill his promise of restoration in [2 Chronicles 7:12-16](#) to the repentant even in the most extreme circumstances." (Selman)

ii. "As for despair, it is damnable. While the story of Manasseh stands on record, no mortal hath a just excuse to perish in despair; no one is justified in saying, 'God will never forgive me.' Read over again the history of Manasseh; see to what lengths of sin he went, to what extravagant heights of evil he climbed; and then say to yourself, 'Did sovereign mercy reach him? Then it can also reach me.'" (Spurgeon)

b. **So Manasseh rested with his fathers:** Manasseh was a remarkably bad and evil king, yet at the end of his days he truly repented and served God. In this way, we can say that it was very true that **Manasseh rested with his fathers**.

i. "Manasseh's conversion helps to explain a longstanding problem in Kings, namely, why the exile did not fall in Manasseh's reign if his sins were really so serious." (Selman)

ii. Yet, his repentance was too late to change the nation. "The widespread revolts during the reign of Ashurbanipal, which occurred from 652-648 B.C., may provide the occasion for Manasseh's summons to Babylon and imprisonment. If so, his subsequent release and reform were apparently far too late to have much of an effect on the obdurately backslidden people." (Patterson and Austel)

iii. It was also not soon enough to change the **destiny** of the kingdom. "*Years later, when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, the writer would blame Judah's punishment on the sins of Manasseh* ([2 Kings 24:3-4](#))." (Dilday)

iv. Manasseh "more than any other single person was responsible for the final destruction of the kingdom of Judah ([2 Kings 23:26](#); [24:3](#); [Jeremiah 15:4](#))." (Payne)