

23 Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. 2The king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD. 3Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all *his* heart and all *his* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.

1. Renewal of the Covenant

- a. Before the discovery of the Law scroll, Josiah thought that he had done a thorough job of renewal
 - a1. Often, we repent & become better, but fall way short of true holiness & dedication to Lord
 - a2. Huldah's words spurred Josiah to take action
- b. Josiah gathered the people to ask for full commitment
 - a1. Not only obeying the king, but personal devotion
 - a2. Covenant renewals were common: Moses before entering land, 2ce with Joshua, Ezra...
- c. Renewing our commitment to Lord = communion task

4And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. 5Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven. 6And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground *it* to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people

2. Total cleansing

- a. Even though Josiah had cleansed before, this was total
- b. They found every object that had been used in idol worship in the temple & burned them
 - a1. Ashes were spread over the paupers' graves
 - a2. All the high places were destroyed
- c. The Levites who served at the high places were banned
- d. The ritual booths, images, places of dedication to Molech, Chemosh, & Milcom, built for Solomon's wives, were destroyed & defiled

e. The sacred pillars were destroyed & the bones of the idolatrous priest were burned & their ashes removed

16Moreover the altar that *was* at Bethel, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place *and* crushed *it* to powder, and burned the wooden image. 18As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that *were* there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned *them* on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. 17Then he said, "What gravestone *is* this that I see?" So the men of the city told him, "*It is* the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel." 18And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

3. Bethel Bone Burning Bash

- a. 1 Kn. 13 300 year old prophecy that Josiah would burn the bones of the priests of Baal on Jeroboam's altar
 - a1. Josiah fulfilled that prophecy by burning the bones of the priests & then destroying the altar
 - a2. He poured the ashes he had burned in Jerusalem over the graves of the priests
- b. He left alone the grave of God's prophet
- c. Josiah cleansed Samaria of idol worship

21Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." 22 Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the Lord in Jerusalem. 24 Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. 25 Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

- d. Josiah removed all the spiritists & mediums with those who consulted them
- e. Josiah destroyed the chariots & horses dedicated to god of the heavens (sun god of Ammonites)
- f. Josiah led in an enormous Passover celebration
- g. The renewal of the Covenant delayed judgment on Judah, but did not postpone it
 - a1. After Josiah's death, Judah reverted back to sin
 - a2. Emotion-driven repentance will not last
 - a3. Only a change of heart will bring full renewal