



2 Chronicles 33

Tape #7142
II Chronicles 33
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn now to II Chronicles, chapter thirty-three, as we continue our study through the Bible. In the previous chapter, verse twenty-four, we read where Hezekiah was sick to the death. He prayed unto the Lord, and spake unto Him, and the Lord gave him a sign. The prophet came to Hezekiah and said, "Set your house in order or you're going to die and not live". Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, began to cry out unto God, pray that the Lord would extend his life for a period of time. He didn't feel that he was ready to die. So the Lord promised him an extra fifteen years. Gave him a miraculous sign to assure him of the promise of an extra fifteen years.

But in the previous chapter, verse twenty-five, we read that after this, "Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit was done to him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem". Leads to some interesting kinds of speculation. Because three years after the Lord extended the life of Hezekiah, three years later his wife bore a son, they named Manasseh. Manasseh was such a wicked, horrible ruler. Did evil in the eyes of the Lord, that you would very likely say, concerning Manasseh. It would've been much better for the nation, if that man had never been born.

Is there such a thing as the permissive will of God, in contrast to the direct will of God? It would seem that there are scriptures that do indicate that such is the case. God will allow or permit certain things to take place in our lives, that are not His direct will for us. I believe that many times we hinder that full work that God desires to do in us, and ultimately through us. I will limit that which God desires.

We do read concerning the nation of Israel in the Psalms, that they limited the Holy one of Israel, through their unbelief. In other words, God would have done more. The indication is that God desired to do more. The bible tells us that, "God is not willing that any should perish". That's the direct will of God, but in the permissive will of God, men do perish. In the permissive will of God, men do walk in their own ways. The bible says of another group that God gave them, the children of Israel, in the wilderness, as they were craving after the meat, lusting for meat, said, "We are tired and we are sick of this manna. Our souls hate this thing. It's loathsome to us. It's bland, it's mild. We need some onions and garlic, and zing to the food. We want some meat!" And, it says, "God gave them the desires of their flesh, but brought them leanness of soul". In other words, God allowed, or permitted certain things to take place because of the insistence of the people, that were not necessarily His best for them, or His primary will for them.

It would appear that it was God's time for Hezekiah to die. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, pleaded, begged, cried all night! God said, "Alright I'll give you another fifteen years". But those fifteen years, were disastrous years, and they produced Manasseh. Disastrous years for Hezekiah, because this man who, up to this point, had been so intune with God, walking in the ways of the Lord, was lifted up in his own heart, in pride, after this experience.

He actually uh, after this, exposed his riches in pride to the Babylonians, Babylonian emissaries that had come when they heard of his recovery from his sickness. The Babylonian emissaries came to congratulate him, and he showed them all the treasures. The prophet said, "Why did you do that? Now they are gonna carry those treasures away to Babylon one day!"

I mean all of these things, the wrong things came to him, after this fifteen year extension. You often wonder what the history would've been, had he died at that time that it would seem, that God had appointed him to die. It was appointed unto man once to die. It would seem that Hezekiah interceded and changed that appointment, but in his so doing, entering into this, a gray area of permissive will that he lost out in God's best, and did in fact bring disaster unto himself, and unto the kingdom.

I think that one of the highest relationships that we can experience with God, is that relationship of full commitment on our parts, to the will of God. There's such peace with that. "Alright Lord, if this is your

time, praise your name!”. And to just go with it.

I had a couple of experiences in life, that I thought maybe I was you know, facing eternity. Once, when a fellow who didn't really have a full load of bricks, pulled a forty five on me, put it in my stomach and pulled the trigger. I could see the shells in the chamber, and I thought, “Hmm”, well, really my wife said, “Don't go out to the car with that guy. He's crazy, he'll pull a gun on you and kill you. He's crazy! Don't go out to the car with him”. The guy said, “I want to talk to you out in the car”. Kay was behind the door saying, “Don't, don't, don't, don't! He's crazy, he'll pull a gun!”. I said, “Ah honey”, so I went out to the car, and he pulled the gun. I watched the chamber come around. I saw the shells in the thing, and he pulled it twice, the trigger twice. And I, and I, the thought that I had was, “I'm married to a prophetess”. Now they say that, you know, your whole life goes before you. My whole life didn't go before me. That was my thought, I thought, “Well, this is my last thought. I'm married to a prophetess”, you know. I really thought that, that was it! But I found out that he was just, “Testing my faith”, he said. To see if I really trusted God. He said, “You passed the test”! But it, there was a commitment, “Well Lord if this is my time, fine”.

Several years ago, I was pastoring a little church where I was janitor, and I was the pastor. I was working in a business of repairing mobile homes on the side. Putting in seventy hours a week, or so, to keep things going. On a Saturday night late, as I was cleaning the church for Sunday services, started getting pains around my chest, and a numbness in my arm, and I'd heard about heart attacks, and I thought, “Hmm, you know this must be it”, and I sat down on the front row. I said, “Okay Lord, if we're going, let's go”. Ha, ha! “Lived a good life!” And, and I thought you know, maybe I was going, but sat down for a little bit, felt better. So I had to finish cleaning the church. But it is that commitment to the Lord. “Lord my life is yours. My life is in your hands. You are in control.” The peace that comes from knowing that God is in control. It's a beautiful thing! A life of commitment.

When we try to alter God's plans, I think that we can often get into trouble. When I resist or stiffen against what God is wanting to do, I can maybe push my way. God has given me this capacity of choice, self determination, free will. I can push for my way, but often I think, when we do so, it is to our hurt, to our detriment, and so it was with Hezekiah. Begging, pushing, pleading, crying for extra time, an extension to his life! God gave it to him, but the consequences were disastrous.

During this time, three years later, Manasseh was born. When Hezekiah died, Manasseh was only twelve years old. But he came to the throne, at the age of twelve. So we read in chapter thirty three.

Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for fifty five years in Jerusalem (33:1):

Now here, to me is again, one of those things that people say, “Well, I don't know why God...”, and I surely don't either. He had the longest reign of all of the kings of Israel. Now if I were God I would've cut him short. The minute the guy went, you know that path of wickedness, I'd say, “Alright man! That's it!”, I would've cut him off. I wouldn't have given him fifty-five years on the throne! Here we have some good kings that were cut short! They didn't have a very long reign. Here's a wicked evil king, God lets him stay there for fifty five years, in Jerusalem.

He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel (33:2).

The practices of the Canaanite religions were unspeakably vile. Their abominations were horrible. It was because of their horrible abominations, that God drove them out of the land, that God destroyed them, using the people of Israel, as His tool of judgement. God was striking out against the vile, abominable practices of the people of Canaan. It was for these abominations, that God drove them out of the land, and ordered the children of Israel, to utterly destroy. “Don't leave any of them, because of the vileness of their practices.” So Manasseh matched the evil practices of the people, the Canaanites, the Canaanite religion. For he actually embraced their religious practices.

He built again the high places which his father Hezekiah had broken down, he reared up altars for Baalim, [And the “im”, in the Hebrew is the plural ending. So for the Baal, Baal's. The um, the Baal was the name of the God, and of course they would have many statues, idols, for Baal. So they became the Baalim, the plural.] he made the Ashtoreth [Or Ashorem in the Hebrew. Again, the plural. The little pornographic

female idols. The nude little statues in all kinds of provocative positions, designed to inflame the passions and lust of man. The sexual female goddess worshiped in all forms and types of sexual rituals, and licentious sexual rituals. Massive group sex orgies, and “anything goes” kind of a, just total debauchery. He made these images, the Ashorems, and established this worship of sex.] *he worshiped all the host of heaven*, [That is the zodiac, the constellation, and the positions of the planets within the constellations. Then he followed them.] *he served them* (33:3).

He guided his life according to the supposed mystic influence of the stars at a particular position at your birth, and how they control you through your whole lifetime.

He also built altars in the house of the Lord, [That is, altars for the pagan gods.] *whereof the Lord had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever* (33:4).

Here in this holy city, the city of God, the place where God’s name was to be for ever, he was seeking to obliterate the name of God, and he was seeking to set up all of these false, pagan idols. Verse seven. “And he 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 before all the tribes of Israel, I’ll put my name for ever.” So there, in the Holy of Holies, he removed the ark of the covenant, and he put in this pagan idol that he had made. Totally perverted the house of God, just desecrated the place of the worship of God! Verse five...

He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord (33:5).

They had the inner court, and the outer court. The outer court where the people would gather to worship, the inner court where the priests would come to offer the sacrifices. Where the altar, the burnt offering, altar of burnt offering was there in the inner court. He profaned these places, by putting the signs of the zodiac right there within the temple precincts itself.

He caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: [That is, he offered his own children unto the pagan god, Molech, the god of pleasure. Burning his own children, cremating his own children alive, to somehow show devotion and love unto Molech. It was their form of abortion in those days. Whenever you open the door to pornography, and man’s passions, and sensual desires are aroused, you then have that pressure towards inordinate, and promiscuous sexual relationships. It follows a pattern, and inordinate, and promiscuous sexual relationships lead to unwanted pregnancies. And unwanted pregnancies lead to pressure for abortion, or the getting rid of the product. In those days, they had not the sciences of abortion, as we have today, thus they would bear the child, but then they would take the baby and place it alive, in the fire. They’d burn it. Cremate it. It is not by accident but just by the same pattern, and the same pattern that he’d noticed, he followed the pattern, the worship of Ashtoreth.

Pornography, was followed by the promiscuous sexual rites, the temples that were built for these rituals and all, followed by these unwanted pregnancies, followed by the sacrificing of your children to the fires of Molech. So the first thing that happened in our nation is, the courts opened the doors for pornography. It happened from the Supreme Court, who said that they were unable to define obscenity. That it was sort of an indefinable term, and thus, it was actually the result of the influence of existential philosophy. You see, existential philosophies declares that there are no absolutes. What may be obscene to me may not be obscene to you.

So buying into this philosophical system of existentialism, naturally, if there are no universal morals, or universal standards, then you cannot have a real true definition of obscene. So the court buying into the existential philosophy, declared, “We cannot define what is obscene”. That may be obscene to me, but it may not be to you. So their inability to define obscene, opened the door to all types of sex magazines with explicit types of sexual pictures, designed for the purpose of arousing and inflaming a man’s passions. Stirring a person in a sensual way. But there’s something about getting involved in that, and that is, once you do, there is a satanic force and power that gets hold of you, it is the worship of a pagan god! In the old days, they called it Ashorem. The little female pornographic goddess. Paul said, “They that sacrifice to these idols, are actually sacrificing to demons”. When you start getting into these things, there comes a demonic hold upon your life. The thing is, you’ve got to have more, and more, and more. Soon, just a female form standing there nude isn’t enough. You, you want something that is a little more tantalizing, and enticing, and

arousing. So the pornography becomes worse. It's got a hold on your life, and you become a slave to it. Which then leads to all forms of perverted sex. For any sex outside of a commitment within a marriage vow, is perverted sex. Because you are perverting God's intention for the purpose of giving to us the capacity of sex, and giving to us the enjoyment of sex, and giving to us sexual thrives. All purposed by God to create a beautiful intimacy between two persons who have committed their lives unto each other. "For this cause a man shall leave his mother and father, and cleave to his wife, and they two become one flesh." That's God's purpose, that's God's design, and it's to create a beautiful unity, a oneness, to create this total kind of an intimacy between the two in a sacred relationship.

So that, if from this expression of love and intimacy, there is a child born. It is reared in a loving environment, as both parents, in love with each other see the product of their love, and raise that child in this protective environment of love. That they can grow up, surrounded by this kind of love. And oh it's hard to describe the love and the excitement that you receive in seeing the offspring of your love, watching them grow and develop, and now, the absolute joy of watching your grandchildren! We drove down last night to Vista, where my little granddaughter starred in a production. Well, I thought she starred, she was just one of the many little dancers. But I mean, she was the only one I saw. She didn't have any major role in the thing, but she was the star I want to tell ya! She, her eyes, those big brown eyes just sparkled! I sat there in rapture watching her do her little routines with the rest of the kids. I knew that everyone in the place was watching her too, even though they had their own kids in the thing, they had to be watching my little granddaughter! She is so beautiful, I don't know how they keep their eyes off of her! Oh, I had also a tragedy, I had another little granddaughter that was supposed to be in it, and I was looking forward to seeing her too. She had been rehearsing for six months! Every Saturday, she'd given up her Saturdays for six months to rehearse in this thing. Perversities, of perversities, she came down with chicken pox, this last week. Something's not fair! I was looking forward to watching her also in this production. Because it would've had two stars, had she been there. But oh the joy, the blessing, of the fruit of the love, and being able to see it, and how it touches and moves your heart!

That's what God intended. Any other use, is a perversion. I know people don't like to be called perverted, because they enter into lesbian or homosexual activities, but it is. I don't care if they like it or not, it's perverted! That isn't the way God intended the use of this capacity! Those that are involved in fornication, that's a perversion! Any use, outside of that God intended purpose of the bond, and intimacy of marriage, is a perversion! That leads to unwanted pregnancies. The next thing the courts decided that anything that consenting adults wanted to do was alright. They obliterated all of our laws against adultery, our laws against homosexuality, and all. They got rid of all of those and anything that consenting adults want to do is permissible. Suddenly, we began to have hundreds of thousands of unwanted pregnancies. So the court was then obligated to rule that abortion is okay, if a woman desires it. And we began to sacrifice our children to the fires of Molech. So far, over twenty million babies in the United States, have been sacrificed on the altars of Molech. For this, God brought the nation of Israel into judgement. For this, God brought the heathen nations into judgement. For this, God will surely bring the United States, and our world in which we live today, into judgement.

You cannot just go on continually defying the laws of God, and thinking that you're not gonna have to pay! There's a price for this kind of licentiousness, as this nation will surely discover. "He caused his children to pass through the fire", or he, actually that, "passed through", he just, "put them in the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom":] *also he observed times* [That is, he followed the horoscope.] *he used enchantments*, [That means he had crystals, and pyramids, and other little supposed kind of power sources to carry around. Aids to tap into spirit powers, and spirit forces. Even as people today are using crystals, and pyramids and all, for the same purpose. I mean it's nothing new.] *he used witchcraft*, [Which was dabbling into the area of the occult, into the spirit realm.] *he dealt with a familiar spirit*, [That is, he received a spirit guide, learning how to go into the trance, and learning how to go into an altered state of consciousness, or through the witchcraft, which was the use of drugs, by the use of drugs, going into the altered state of consciousness. In this altered state of consciousness, receiving then a spirit guide, a familiar spirit. Which is a spirit guide, one that would direct his life, and one to whom he could seek advice and counsel, and

direction. The familiar spirit, or the spirit guide.] *and then he also dealt with wizards*: [Which were people who were channelers, who in their altered state of consciousness, would speak forth the words of a spirit that would take control of their bodies, and of the words that they would speak. So all of these things of the new age movement, the crystals, the channelers, the spirit guides, the altered state of consciousness, nothing new about it. It's the old age. It's just a coming back, to the old pagan practices that were almost wiped out in our western culture, by the rise of Christianity, by the enlightenment of Christianity, they were almost eradicated. But now, with the demise of Christianity, you see these things again becoming popular. We see programs on TV. We see the magazine articles filled, newspapers filled with articles on these very things. Nothing new about it! Manasseh did it, and because he did it.] *he had done* [many things] *many evil things in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger* (33:6).

So God declared, verse eight...

Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land [Well this goes on from chapter seven. God said that, as we mentioned earlier, he set up this image in the Holy of Holies. The place that God said, that He would be there. "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, I'll put my name for ever. Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land",] *which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses* (33:8).

God said, "I'll establish them in the land, if they will keep my ordinances, if they'll keep my commandments". But here he is violating, and breaking the laws of God. Even as the United States has been blessed by God when we established a nation. "One nation under God indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Basing the whole thing upon the biblical concept of government. Based upon the influence of a Christian church. A nation that could stand, if they would continue to do all that God commanded. "Keeping His statutes and ordinances."

But we have ruled that God's word is not valid, we have ruled that God's word is not even proper within our educational system. Though they can teach the new age garbage, and though they do teach the new age garbage to your kids, though they teach them witchcraft, though they teach them how to discover their spirit guides, they teach them how to go into altered states of consciousness, but they dare not teach them from the bible! For that is a violation of the constitutional rights, according to the Supreme Court. The constitutional rights of those for the freedom from religion. That's the mistake that the court has made. That is not what the constitution declares. It's, "Freedom of religion", not "freedom from religion".

And the Lord spoke to Manasseh, and to his people: they would not hearken (33:10).

And the final thing is, is though God would, spoke to them, God sent the prophets to them, God warned them. They would not listen to God.

Therefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns [Or literally, "the rings".] *and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon* (33:11).

The Assyrians took their captives, when they would lead them away captive, they would put a hook, a ring through the lower lip, and attach a leash to it, a chain. So it would discourage them from resisting. Because, it would hurt when that ring got pulling on your lip. So thus they would lead their captives. The Babylonians would take and put the ring through the nose, and then they'd lead the people by the ring, through the nose. So in the pictures that you have from ancient times, of the various conquests, and various, uh, depicting the various scenes of victory, and all, if you see the ring through the lower lip, you know it's the Assyrians that have conquered. If you see the ring through the nose, you know it's Babylonians. That's how they can discern in the, in these pictographs, and things that they discovered. They learn whether it's Babylonian or Assyrian, by where the ring is. But it's the way they led their captives away. Manasseh was led away to captivity to Assyria with this ring through his lip.

And when he was in affliction, [There in, he was carried away to Babylon, by the Assyrians, "and when he was in affliction",] *he sought Yahweh his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers* (33:12),

Up to the age of twelve he'd had a good example. He was taught in the ways of the Lord. Up until the

age of twelve, he worshiped Yahweh in the temple, with the family, with his father. He knew of God. His was a deliberate rebellion against the God that he knew. His was a deliberate turning himself over to the passions and the lusts of his own flesh. Turning away from God. He continued in that pattern until he went into captivity.

To me, it's amazing how these things can take possession of a person, and take them as a captive. Pornography can just take you as a captive, and make you a slave. Perverted sex has a way of taking a person captive. Becoming involved in that area, and you get to where you can't quit. You, you, it, it holds you in a vice grip. His captivity was more than just in a spiritual sense, it became in a physical sense, and it usually follows. "There in Babylon, in great affliction, he sought the Lord, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers".

It is interesting to me that when a person is in real difficulty, when it becomes a life and death situation, they know that their only hope for help is in the living God. You that have been witnessing to them, they've been laughing at you, they've been mocking, they've been scorning, they've been calling you all kinds of names, "holy Joe", and uh, asking you to roll, and so they can see a "holy roller", you know. They are just saying all kinds of uh, you know, cutting kind of things. It's amazing how when they're in trouble, you're the one they'll call. Because they know that they need more than what they've been following after. "He sought the God of his fathers."

He prayed unto him: [And to me, the amazing thing of the story is that God heard him, and God forgave him. "He prayed unto him",] *and God was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and God brought him again into Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that Yahweh was God (33:13).*

God not only heard his prayer, He restored to him, that which he lost, through that life of sin. I see people going into sin, and I see them losing their freedoms. I see them becoming slaves to drugs, I see their lives being destroyed by the drugs, I see them becoming slaves to alcohol, and their lives being destroyed by their alcohol. I see them becoming slaves to their sexual desires, and I see their sexual desires destroying their families, their relationships, everything that is precious and good. Yet they seem to be bound by these fetters, and can't be released. Yet, I see them as they finally get to the place of desperation, and they call unto God. I've seen God deliver them, and restore to them that which was lost.

When Mike McIntosh first came to Calvary Chapel, he had blown his mind with LSD. He went around in a daze. He didn't really have his full senses about him. He had gone through a very traumatic experience. A group of people, LSD advocates, and they had given him a strong dose of LSD, and then they began, as he began to go into this freaky state, they began to sort of terrorize him. This one fellow in the group pulled out this gun, and they held Mike on the floor, and the one guy put the gun next to his ear, and blasted the thing into the floor. Mike, in his altered state of consciousness, under the LSD, thought that they actually had blown out the back of his head, and his brains were blown out. He was walking around, talking about this hole in the back of his head. He was convinced that the back of the head was blown off, and you couldn't convince him otherwise. He walked around in this altered state of consciousness, he went over the edge, and he couldn't seem to come back.

But I saw the glorious work of God, the power of God in restoring Mike's sanity to him! During these experiences in drugs, and during this high from drugs, he went out and just burned his bridges. His wife, and beautiful little daughter, she couldn't handle it anymore. She said, "I've had enough", and she left Mike, wanting never to see him again! But when God began to work, and restore Mike, I had the glorious privilege of remarrying Mike and Sandy with their little girl as the flower girl in the wedding. God restored! God gave him back! He made a mess of things! He'd become a slave! But God restored, and God gave him back that which was lost, through that little trek into the other side that he took in the realm of sin and darkness, dabbling into the world of the spirits.

"Manasseh prayed, he cried unto the Lord, God heard him. God brought him back. God restored the kingdom." Oh the riches of the grace of God! How unsearchable are His ways, how far they are beyond our finding out! Who hath known the ways of the Lord? Who hath searched the depths of His love and His riches, of grace towards man? A God who is willing to forgive such a man as Manasseh, would forgive anybody. I mean, the story tells me there's no one beyond hope! Manasseh had gone as far as anybody could

possibly go! Yet, God restored him, God brought him back, and God restored his kingdom to him. God will do the same for you! If He would do it for Manasseh, He'll do it for you! Call upon the Lord, if you'll seek the Lord, God can heal, God can deliver, God can take you out of the slavery, and God can restore to you, that which you've lost as a result of your dabbling into that area, that netherworld.

Now after this he built a wall outside of the city of David, on the west side of the Gihon valley, even to the entering in of the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up to a very great height, and he put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah (33:14).

Not only did God restore him, God made him strong, and the kingdom began to be restored under Manasseh, strengthening the kingdom.

He took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and 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 (33:15).

He got rid of all of this pagan trappings that he had brought in.

And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and he sacrificed thereon the peace offerings, and the thank offerings, [Oh how thankful he was for what God had done! And how thankful he should be! His life was as good as gone! It was destroyed, and yet, God restored. Thus, he is approaching God. "Peace offerings, thank offerings",] and he commanded Judah to serve Yahweh the God of Israel. Nevertheless the people did continue to sacrifice in the high places, [Only not to the pagan gods anymore. They made their sacrifices,] unto Yahweh (33:15-16).

In the high places. But God didn't ordain that, and God didn't order that. Now it is interesting to me that many times we want to worship God in our terms. There are many people that are seeking to worship God in ways that have not been ordained by God. In fact, they're seeking to worship God in sort of pagan rituals, "only we'll put the name Jesus to the pagan ritual". So Eshtar, the pagan holiday, which actually comes from, Eshtar is the Greek Ashorem, or Ashtoreth, the female sex goddess, Eshtar Her celebration came in the spring, celebration of new life. So we say, "Well we will celebrate Easter", which comes directly from Eshtar, in the spring. So we want to just Christianize the thing. Worshiping God in ways that God did not ordain. So people get the bunnies, they color the eggs, and they follow the pagan practices. Only now under the guise of, "Jesus rose from the dead".

If we're gonna celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, great! Let's do it! But let's leave out the colored eggs, let's leave out the bunnies, let's leave out the pagan aspects of it. Let's just, on the first day of the week, rejoice that Jesus rose from the dead. It's good to have memorials and reminders. God established those with Israel. But let's not do it with pagan trappings. Here are the people worshiping now, Jehovah, but they're worshiping in these same high places where they'd worshiped the other gods. Following the pagan practices, worshiping God in unprescribed ways.

Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of Jehovah God of Israel, behold, they're written in the book of the kings of Israel (33:18).

So we do have another account in the book of the kings of Israel, of some of these things of Manasseh.

His prayer also, and how God was entreated of him, and all of his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built the high places, and set up the Ashorem and the graven images, before he was humbled: and, behold, they are written among the sayings of the seers. [We don't have any of those.] So Manasseh slept with his fathers, they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead. Now Amon was twenty two years old when he began to reign, he reigned for two years in Jerusalem. [And listen.] He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them; He humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more. [Only got worse!] And so his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house. But the people of the land slew all those that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead (33:19-25).

Now, with Amon, you see we read concerning Manasseh, he took the idols and all, and he put them out of the city, but he didn't destroy them. When the children of Israel came into the land, God ordered them to utterly destroy all the idols. Why? Because these Ashorem were pornographic types of, of little images. God

said, "Utterly destroy them. Get rid of them". He didn't, he just you know, put them in a rubbish heap outside of town. He put them in the, in the, in the dump, the city dump. So when Amon his son became king, he went out and recovered these idols and all that his dad had made. Brought them back, and began to worship them.

The next king, Josiah, as he reforms we find that he ground these things to powder. Obliterated them, as was the commandment of the Lord. So, here the incomplete kind of thing. Manasseh yes, God heard him, God restored, and he got rid of the idols, but not completely. Thus his son followed in the path of his dad, in the path of evil more and more. Reigned for only two years, was assassinated. We'll pick up chapter thirty four next week. We got too involved with Manasseh tonight. Ha, ha! But oh what lessons to learn. God help us to take to heart these things, and to learn from these things.

Father we thank You tonight for Your word. It is steadfast, it abides forever, and in it Lord are warnings, in it are exhortations, in it is the path of life, and the warnings against the path of death. Lord, help us to give heed. Father, for those tonight whose lives are messed up because of their sin, those who have gone into captivity, those who are beginning to experience the pain, the affliction, the loss, because of their sins, those who the enemy has deceived, and has lied to them, telling them Lord, that You're not interested in them. They've gone too far, that there's no forgiveness for them. Oh God may they take comfort in this story of Manasseh, who went further than any of us, in this path away from you. Oh God and may they also call unto You. May they also pray unto You Lord, and find that You are a loving, forgiving God. That their trespasses and their sins might be forgiven, and that You might work in them. Giving them the power to destroy those idols, and restoring to them those treasures that they lost through their dabbling with sin. For there is forgiveness with thee, O God, for those who call. May they call, in Jesus' name. Amen.

My heart is deeply concerned for what I observe in our nation today. Deeply concerned over the traceable trends. Seeing the diabolical deception of Satan, which first led into the existential philosophy, our buying into that garbage, which then opened these other doors. Set the minds of the people to move into these other directions. That destroying of the absolutes, denying of God, denying the word of God as being an absolute. We see the, the, we follow the progression, and we see history being repeated. As we see the articles, and the advertisings for the crystals, for the pyramids, and these other, we see history repeated.

But, being an observer of history, and of the word of God, I know what the next step is you see. Man has taken the last step down, the next step is judgement. Paul the apostle said, "For the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and the unrighteousness of man, who hold the truth of God in unrighteousness". You see it isn't a denial of God. That is not what's happening. But it's the holding of the truth of God in unrighteousness for when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. But became vain in their wicked imaginations, and their foolish hearts being darkened, they began to worship and serve the creature, more than the creator, who is blessed forever more. What are we hearing today? Man's worshiping and serving the creature, more than the creator.

"It's the power within you, it's tapping that source of power that is within", you see, it's worshiping the creature, more than the creator. It's getting your attention upon yourself. Loving yourself. Esteeming yourself. The thing that really disturbs me is how that this garbage has permeated the church! You don't just hear it from Shirley MacLaine, and Marilyn Ferguson, but you're hearing a lot of this garbage in the church!

The next step is captivity, judgement, affliction. That's where my heart aches when I see that beautiful little sparkling, brown eyed, beauty, up there going through the routine, and singing the songs of praise to Jesus. But my heart aches when I look at the world, and the trends, and the things that are going on, and I think, "What chance has she?"

It's not hopeless. In this whole context, God said, "If my people call by my name, will humble themselves and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear". But it's time folks to really begin to pray, as we've never prayed before. It's time that, that fellowship hall be packed on Saturday night, with men gathering to pray. Pray for our nation, pray for our community, pray for our children, pray for our grandchildren. Pray for this world that is on the brink of destruction. For the God who heard Manasseh, will hear us.

But you see, as I observe, the real problem, though the world is in a desperate strait tonight, the church is

not desperate. I have a nice home, I have a nice car, I've got a good job, and I'm not desperate before God, because I'm not clearly seeing the things that are taking place. I'm not putting them in perspective. So God help us. And may you take time this week, extra time this week, in seeking God, in prayer, that God might bring revival, spiritual renewal, such as we have never seen before. It's the only hope. The only hope.