

# JOSIAH MAKES A COVENANT

Thursday, September 19 • 2 Chronicles 34:29-33



**QUESTION: Are we willing to change without demanding that God change?**

After reading the book of the law, Josiah realized that changes had to be made in order to bring the nation back in line with God. He immediately led the elders of Jerusalem and Judah into the Temple, where he read to them from the book. Now referred to as “the book of the covenant” (2 Chronicles 34:30b), the document that Josiah read from was a reminder of God’s covenant with Israel at Sinai. There the people had promised to obey the Ten Commandments (Exodus 24:3). Their obedience to the law was to be rewarded by God’s constant care, temporal prosperity, and victory over enemies (Exodus 23:20-33). When the agreement was not honored by the people, the covenant became the cause for judgment (2 Kings 17:13-18).

When Josiah realized that the law had been forgotten, he stood in the Temple and renewed the covenant with God, pledging to keep all the Lord’s commands, regulations, and decrees. The people also promised to obey the words written in the book as their forefathers had done. For the moment at least, Judah was returning to the good old days of covenant renewal (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

With just one reading of God’s law, Josiah changed the course of the nation. He could not change God’s inevitable punishment; but he could make the people aware of why they would be punished. Josiah set an example for his people by living righteously. He commanded reforms that opened the eyes of at least some of the people, who would “follow the LORD, keeping his commandments” (2 Kings 23:3).

Shocked and humbled after reading the book, Josiah did what was right in the sight of God: He chose to deliver his nation from sin. He did not sit at home pouting that the kingdom was doomed. The future was set aside for the present. Josiah set out to save as many people as he could from sin caused by their ignorance. He also committed his own life to serving the Lord.

Today millions of people own Bibles, but few are affected by the truths found in God’s Word. What we read should cause us, like Josiah, to take action immediately to change those things that are contrary to God’s will. Unlike Josiah, we seem most committed to reform when the outcome affects us personally—and in a positive way. Are we willing to make changes in our own lives, to turn from sin, even if our circumstances do not change?

**PRAYER: O God, help me to obey you unselfishly. Amen.**

