

This study sheet belongs to:

Study 1. King Uzziah



Key Verse: Proverbs 16: 18
**"Pride goes before destruction,
 and a haughty spirit before a fall."**

THE ADOLESCENT KING -

When one's father, grandfather and great-grandfather have died violent deaths, succeeding them on the throne of Judah would daunt the strongest heart! Yet that unenviable task was thrust on a sixteen year old, Uzziah. In his early years, Uzziah came under two influences for good; his mother Jecholiah, and Zechariah, a man of vision, who was equally intent on the king's prosperity, spiritually as well as politically. (He must not be confused with the prophet whose prophecy precedes Malachi in our Bibles, who lived some 400 years later!) Just as we, ourselves, may be encouraged and influenced by experienced Christians, we should also try to be a good influence and example to others.

THE ADVENTUROUS KING -

Uzziah proved to be a most inspiring leader. His reputation as a general reached as far as Egypt after successful campaigns against the Philistines, Arabians and Edomites. (vs. 7 & 8) His military genius led to superb army organization (vs. 11-13) and armour design. (vs. 14 & 15) Few military commanders have been so well equipped, and of few it could be said, "And God helped him . . .". (v. 7) Uzziah's inspiration wasn't confined to military matters. He was an able architect and an ardent agriculturalist, as noted in verses 9 & 10. Uzziah proved himself to be a man of many talents and for the majority of his 52 years upon the throne, "God made him prosper" (v. 5) and "marvellously helped" him. (v. 15) The Lord was central and foremost in his life.

With similar vision and zeal we, too, should be industrious for the Lord. In the 18th century, William Carey - universally regarded as the 'father of modern missions' - said, "Expect great things FROM God! Attempt great things FOR God!" Let us always remember, as disciples of Jesus Christ, that the skills and abilities we possess are gifts from God and it should be our sole aim in life to use them in making known the Lord Jesus and in trying to further His work! Sadly today too much time and energy are wasted in seeking pleasure and material gain for

READ: 2 Chronicles 26: 1-23

ourselves, and then the work which God has given us to do, is neglected.

THE ARROGANT KING -

What sad words are recorded in *verse 16!* "But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God...". Until this time, the name of Uzziah might have been mentioned in the same breath as David and Solomon. He had restored Israel's territorial and political advantage in the volatile regions of the Middle East. Although kingship had been thrust upon him when he was so young, his reign had been stable, progressive and God honouring, until this error. What a tragedy, that his good reputation was marred by his own self-importance and pride. We learn from *Proverbs 6: 16-19*, that pride is the first of seven particular sins that God hates. (See also *Psalms 101: 5*) What had Uzziah done? He had decided to be a priest, as well as a king, in the conscious knowledge that God's Word prohibited it. Old Testament teaching had clearly separated the tribe of Judah as the royal line (*Genesis 49: 10*) and the tribe of Levi, as the priestly line. (*Deuteronomy 10: 8*) It was not God's will that any earthly monarch should also be a priest; such honour belongs only to the Lord Jesus. (*Zechariah 6: 12 & 13*) Uzziah's intrusion into the sanctuary of God caused Azariah, the High Priest, and all the priests to cry, "Get out... for you have trespassed!" (v. 18) With this, "Uzziah became furious;... and while he was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead". (v. 19) God's solemn judgment was witnessed and the king became an outcast "because he was a leper". (v. 21) For the rest of his life, he was cut off from the temple and the throne!

God resists the proud because He hates the sin of pride. It was pride that turned Lucifer into Satan. It was pride - a desire to be like God - which stirred Eve to take the forbidden fruit! "The pride of life" is an evidence of worldliness according to *1 John 2: 16*. God wants us to be humble and to depend upon Him, while Satan wants us to be proud and to depend upon ourselves! Satan enjoys inflating the ego and encouraging the Christian to do things his own way! Pride is Satan's great sin and is one of his chief weapons in his warfare against us. The only antidote to pride is the grace of God and we receive that grace when we yield ourselves to God. "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." *James 4: 6* Submitting to God, accepting His will for our lives and obeying His Word will enable us to overcome any arrogant spirit, and avoid the pitfalls into which Uzziah fell, with such disastrous consequences!

Study 1. King Uzziah

1 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- a) Who was Uzziah's father?
- b) Who was his mother?
- c) For how long did Uzziah reign?
- d) Over which kingdom did he rule?

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2 i. WHAT DID UZZIAH DO IN THE DAYS OF ZECHARIAH?

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ii. WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THIS ACTION?

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3 HOW SHOULD WE 'SEEK GOD' TODAY AND IN WHAT WAYS MAY WE PROSPER?

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4 DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS ONE OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YOUNG KING.

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5 PAUL WROTE IN ROMANS 12:11, "NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS; FERVENT IN SPIRIT; SERVING THE LORD." WHAT SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE BE TOWARDS THE ACTIVITIES HE ENGAGES IN THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE?

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6 i. WHY WAS GOD SO DISPLEASED WITH UZZIAH, AND WHY WAS HE PUNISHED SO SEVERELY?

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ii. WHY SHOULD PRIDE HAVE NO PLACE IN A BELIEVER'S HEART OR MIND?

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7 WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MAIN LESSONS FOR US TO LEARN FROM UZZIAH'S LIFE?

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25

Total marks for this study

This study sheet belongs to:

Study 4. King Zedekiah & The Captivity

**READ: 2 Chronicles 36: 11-21,
Jeremiah 37: 16 & 17, 38: 14-24 and 39: 1-7**

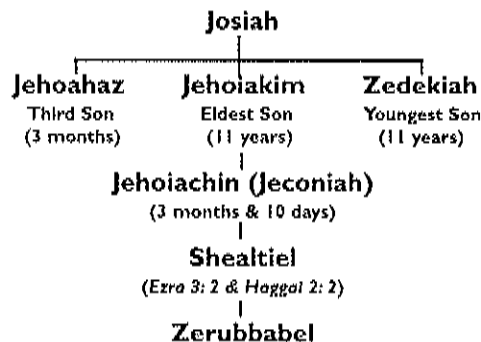


KEY VERSE: Jeremiah 21: 8

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.’ ”

The prophet Jeremiah witnessed the entire sad history of the last kings of Judah. We note in **2 Chronicles 35: 25** that he lamented King Josiah's death. After Josiah, three of his sons and one of his grandsons ascended the throne. Judah sank into religious and political decline because none of Josiah's descendants feared the Lord!

The Kings of Judah up to The Captivity (with the length of their reigns)



First Jehoahaz, his third son reigned for three months. **(36: 1 & 2)** Afterwards Jehoiakim, his eldest son, occupied the throne for 11 years. **(36: 5)** Jehoiakim's 18 year-old-son, Jehoiachin reigned for three months and ten days. **(36: 9)** Zedekiah, the last son of Josiah, at the age of 21 replaced his nephew on the throne and reigned 11 years. **(36: 11)**

Due to their wickedness God permitted Judah to be taken into exile. The captivity took place in stages. In the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign he captured Jerusalem, made Jehoiakim his servant and took many people as captives to Babylon. **(2 Kings 24: 1)** This marked the commencement of the 70 years of captivity. **(Jeremiah 25: 1-3 & 11-13)**

During a period of 23 years Jeremiah, the prophet, had been faithfully warning the nation and its kings! In the case of King Zedekiah, more than once Jeremiah had spoken directly to him. His message was different from the one delivered to the previous kings, when repentance would have held back

judgment. Through Jeremiah God was now commanding the people to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar. They were to submit to the foreign invader and to serve him. Instead of humbling themselves, Zedekiah and the rest of the people persisted in resisting the Lord's word.

Immediately upon Zedekiah's coronation, Jeremiah spoke to him and urged him to serve Nebuchadnezzar. **(Jeremiah 27: 12)** During the siege of Jerusalem he again warned him of the consequences of disobedience. **(Jeremiah 34: 1-7)** Maybe Zedekiah was somewhat impressed by the prophet's insistence, as he heard repeatedly the same message. A short time later he ordered the prophet to be brought to him. For the last time the king was exhorted **"Please, obey the voice of the Lord which I speak to you"**. **(Jeremiah 38: 14 & 20)** Zedekiah hesitated for a while, but was unable to reach a decision! Throughout this whole sequence of tragic events there has been one clear message from God - Obey and **"it shall be well with you and your soul shall live"**. The king was plainly told he had a choice. Read the **Key Verse** again.

If you are not a believer on the Lord Jesus, God presents you with a similar choice. Choose Christ today and have eternal life and peace with God! **(1 John 5: 12)**

In the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, Nebuchadnezzar came and besieged Jerusalem. Sixteen months later the city was broken up. As the king of Judah and his army fled, they were overtaken and captured. The city was burned, the Temple was plundered and destroyed, and the people taken away to Babylon. **(2 Kings 25: 1-9)**

It is worth noting that in the Hebrew order of the O.T. books, Chronicles stands last. Instead of ending **"with a curse"** **(Malachi 4: 6)**, the Jewish Bible ends on the positive and encouraging note of **2 Chronicles 36: 23!** While the people of Judah were in captivity, Babylon was conquered by Cyrus King of Persia. Exactly 70 years after the captivity began, he issued a proclamation, permitting the Jews to return to their land. God had kept His promise - as He always does!

Study 4. King Zedekiah & The Captivity

1 PUT THE CORRECT KING'S NAME AFTER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.

- a. Jeremiah lamented this king.
- b. This king was the first to be deported by Nebuchadnezzar.
- c. This king lost his eyesight.
- d. This king permitted the Jews to return to their land.

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2 ACCORDING TO THE *KEY VERSE*, ZEDEKIAH WAS PRESENTED WITH TWO OPTIONS. WRITE IN YOUR OWN WORDS WHAT THE "WAY OF LIFE" INVOLVED. (*JEREMIAH 21: 9 AND 27: 11-13* MAY HELP YOU)

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3 WHAT IS THE GREATEST 'LIFE OR DEATH' DECISION WHICH EACH OF US MUST FACE? (*CLUE: 1 JOHN 5: 12; JOHN 3: 36*)

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4 READ *2 CHRONICLES 36: 15-20* AGAIN, THEN ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:-

- a. What reason is given for the fact that God sent warnings by His messengers to His people?
- b. How were the warnings received?
- c. What happened to the treasures of the House of God?
- d. What happened to the people who were not killed in the fighting?

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5 SUGGEST SOME REASONS WHY PEOPLE TODAY FAIL TO PAY ATTENTION TO WARNINGS OF THE BIBLE, SUCH AS *JOHN 3: 18, AND JOHN 8: 24.*

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6 WHAT IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL LESSONS, FOR OUR LIVES TODAY, CAN BE DRAWN FROM THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS?

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100

Total marks for this Unit

Return your study sheets to:
 PBS Centre or to:

25

Total marks for this study

This study sheet belongs to:

Study 2. King Hezekiah



KEY VERSES: 2 Chronicles 31: 20 & 21

"Hezekiah . . . did what was good and right and true before the Lord his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God . . . he did it with all his heart."

HIS CHARACTER: (His reign in Jerusalem)

2 Kings 18: 1-8

Hezekiah is mentioned in nine books of the Bible. After David, he was probably Judah's best king. (See **verse 5**) The prophets Hosea, Micah and Isaiah lived in his time and the northern kingdom of Israel was taken away into captivity by the Assyrians, who in turn then threatened Jerusalem. When he began his reign, spiritually, things were very bad. In rejecting the Lord, his father Ahaz had led the nation into sin and so ungodliness abounded! The Temple was shut up and idolatry was rife! Yet, amazingly, the young prince had true faith in God. (v. 5) His individual trust in the Lord shows how personal conversion is. We should not use our circumstances or upbringing, as an excuse for not having our own individual trust in the Lord.

Verses 3-8 highlight his character as he publicly displayed his faith and devotion to God. The Word of God had a high priority in Hezekiah's personal life and that of his people. (**2 Chronicles 30: 22 & 31: 4**) The result was God's blessing and victory over his enemies. It should always be our desire to push Satan off 'our turf'! In a word, Hezekiah was wholehearted. He had a heart for God, the Word of God and the people of God! (See the **Key Verse** and **2 Chronicles 29: 10**) His zeal for God had a tremendous effect upon others as noted in **2 Chronicles 30: 12**. When our lives are completely surrendered to the Lord, there are rich blessings to be enjoyed individually which, in turn, can bring great joy and blessing to others.

HIS COMMITMENT: (His restoration of the Temple)

2 Chronicles 29: 3-19

Have you ever wondered why our Christian lives may be stagnant, ineffective or without purpose? Why does the world appear more interesting than Christ? It is probably because 'our life' or 'our temple' is in ruins, filled up with rubbish and in need of restoring! What is 'our temple'? Look up **1 Corinthians 6: 19 & 20** and **2 Corinthians 6: 16**. Note what Hezekiah's father had done. (**2 Chronicles 28: 19, 24 & 25**) By a definite and defiant act of will he had destroyed the holy things, deliberately ended true worship (by shutting up the Temple) and had demonstrated openly

READ: 2 Kings 18: 1-8,

2 Chronicles 29: 1-20 & 32: 1-20

his sin. We must beware of allowing similar things to happen in our lives! We must not displace the Lord as the centre of our lives, replacing Him with our own self interests and desires. We must not neglect our communion with Him, by having no prayer time or Bible reading. Nor should we deny ourselves fellowship with other Christians or defy the Lord openly, for if we do, we shall backslide and our spiritual lives will suffer greatly!

Note carefully the urgency with which Hezekiah set about the work! (**29: 17, 20, 31 & 36**) It was the first thing he did in his reign! (v. 3) He believed that if he cared for the house of God (Temple) and the worship of God there, then God would give peace to his kingdom and turn from "**His fierce wrath**". (v. 10) So he instructs the priests and Levites to set about cleansing the Temple. (vs. 11 & 15-19)

Likewise we too need to "**cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God**". (**2 Corinthians 7: 1**) If time is taken to read **2 Chronicles 30 & 31**, you will note that the result of restoring the Temple, the Passover and God's Word was a fresh attitude to God and a new awareness and appreciation of God! Praise and joy marked everything and there was a desire to remove all evidence of the old sinful habits!

HIS CHALLENGE: (His resolve against Sennacherib)

2 Chronicles 32: 1-20

Satan is always battling against the Christians. Like Sennacherib, (v. 1) he tries to 'enter' our minds through what we see and hear. Then he attempts to 'encamp' (v. 1); we must beware of allowing him to gain a foothold in our lives by foolishly 'playing about' with sin.

What did Hezekiah do when faced by Sennacherib's threats? First he protected the water supply (v. 3), then he strengthened his defences (v. 5) but above everything else, he trusted in the Lord. (**Read vs. 6-8 again**) Glancing through **verses 10-18** we see the subtle ways the enemy persisted! What was the king's response? He took the whole matter to the Lord in prayer. (v. 20 & **2 Kings 19: 14-19**) He trusted the Lord alone, to help him to overcome.

The Lord wonderfully answered by sending one angel who destroyed 185,000 men during the night! (**2 Kings 19: 35**) Hezekiah would not compromise or allow the enemy to dishearten him. He found his strength in the Lord Himself, and so can we! In fact, it is interesting to note the meaning of Hezekiah's name - 'Jehovah is strength'. (Read **Philippians 4: 13** and believe it!)

Study 2. King Hezekiah

1 WHAT DID HEZEKIAH DESTROY THAT MOSES HAD MADE, AND WHY DID HE DO SO?

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2 A. HEZEKIAH "KEPT" SOMETHING WHICH THE LORD HAD COMMANDED MOSES. WHAT WAS IT?

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B. GIVE A DEFINITE EXAMPLE FROM HEZEKIAH'S LIFE OF WHAT THIS ENTAILED.

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3 READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6 : 19 & 20 AGAIN.

- i. What is 'our temple'?
- ii. If we are truly Christians, who dwells in 'our temple'?
- iii. What kind of things should we beware of allowing to defile 'our temple'?

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4 A. WRITE OUT ROMANS 8: 31

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B. WRITE OUT PART OF A VERSE FROM 2 CHRONICLES 32: 1-8 THAT EXPRESSES THE SAME TRUTH.

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5 DESCRIBE IN YOUR OWN WORDS TWO WAYS BY WHICH SENNACHERIB TRIED TO WIN THE PEOPLE OVER TO HIMSELF.

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6 A. THE STUDY SUGGESTS THAT AS SENNACHERIB WAS THE SUBTLE ENEMY OF HEZEKIAH, SO SATAN IS OUR ENEMY. READ EPHESIANS 6: 10-18 AND LIST FOUR ITEMS OF THE "ARMOUR OF GOD".

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B. HOW IMPORTANT IS "THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD" IN A CHRISTIAN'S BATTLE AGAINST TEMPTATION? GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER.

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7 FROM THE ACCOUNT OF HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER IN 2 KINGS 19: 15-19 WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT:

A. THE LORD IN WHOM HE TRUSTED?

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B. HEZEKIAH'S REASON FOR SEEKING DELIVERANCE?

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This study sheet belongs to:

Study 3. King Manasseh & King Josiah

READ: 2 Chronicles 33: 1-19,
34: 1-8, 14-33 & 35: 20-27



KEY VERSE: Proverbs 16: 19
"Better to be of a humble spirit."

MANASSEH - The Remorseful King 2 Chronicles 33: 1-19

The reign of Manasseh represents one of the most dramatic turnabouts in all of the Chronicles. He began as an extremely evil king and led the hearts of the people away from the Lord. (vs. 2-9) Other Biblical writers, like Jeremiah for example, saw Manasseh's reign as the point of no return, leading to the exile. (See *Jeremiah 15: 4*) However *verses 10-17* give us an account of Manasseh's repentance resulting from a painful exile in Babylon. What happened to the king personally in his exile was soon to happen to the nation as a whole. It is important to note that even the most wicked offender can find grace when he humbles himself and calls out to God in prayer. (vs. 12 & 13) Note what Solomon had been told in *2 Chronicles 7: 14*. Manasseh's repentance is a lesson in God's grace! We should not forget, however, that the king's early sins had devastating consequences for his people and his kingdom! We should always remember the truth of *Galatians 6: 7*, "**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap!**"! Though it was a terrible tragedy that this young man, whose parents were godly, had rejected God's Word so forcibly, it is encouraging to learn that there was still hope. There always is, when there is true repentance!

JOSIAH - The Repentant King 2 Chronicles 34: 1-8, 14-33 & 35: 20-27

Josiah, like his grandfather Manasseh, came to the throne when he was a child. Like Uzziah and Hezekiah before him, he sought to walk in the ways of David and to do what was right before

the Lord. At just 16, "**while he was still young, he began to seek... God**". (v. 3) There can be no better desire than this, for any teenager! Four years later he sought to purge the land of idolatry and in the 18th year of his reign he ordered the repair of the Temple. (v. 8)

During this work, "**Hilkiah the priest, found the Book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses**". (v. 14) This discovery of God's Word was made known to King Josiah. As he listened to it and heard of God's judgment, due to the people's disobedience, he sought the Lord's mercy with true repentance and tears. (v. 27) Having been humbled himself, he then commanded everyone to gather in the Temple and to hear the Word of the Lord. (v. 31) Once he had read it, he publicly made a covenant with the Lord to follow Him and to obey His commandments. He instructed the people to do the same. (v. 32) His firm hand and personal example in this matter led to a time of revival. (v. 33) One key feature was the reintroduction of the annual Passover feast. (35: 18)

Josiah met his end while attempting to oppose the Egyptian forces, en route to a battle at Carchemish. The battle involved two major empires of the ancient world - Babylon and Egypt. Because Josiah did not listen to Necho's message, he was killed in the battle that ensued. Josiah, a great king, whose reign was characterized by obedience and godliness, in the end did not heed God's warning. He failed at a crucial moment to obey the will of God. We must learn from his mistake! Pursuing our own plans, regardless of God's Word and will, is foolishness! Rather, let us humbly seek to "**diligently serve the Lord**". (34: 33)

Study 3. King Manasseh & King Josiah

1 A. IN WHAT WAYS WAS MANASSEH SO DIFFERENT FROM HIS FATHER HEZEKIAH?
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B. WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF HIS ACTIONS?
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2 WRITE A SENTENCE OUTLINING MANASSEH'S REPENTANCE WHILE IN EXILE.
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3 WHAT LESSON ABOUT GOD'S ATTITUDE TO SINNERS CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS COMPLETE 'TURNABOUT'?
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4 GIVE DETAILS OF WHAT JOSIAH DID IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS OF HIS REIGN.
i. Eighth year
ii. Twelfth year
iii. Eighteenth year

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5 A. THREE CHARACTERS ARE MENTIONED IN CONNECTION WITH THE BOOK OF THE LAW. WHAT PART DID EACH PLAY?
i. Hilkiyah
ii. Shaphan
iii. Huldah

B. WHY WAS THE KING UPSET WHEN HE HEARD THE CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF THE LAW?
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C. WHAT GOOD NEWS DID HULDAH, THE PROPHETESS, HAVE FOR THE KING?
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6 "BETTER TO BE OF A HUMBLE SPIRIT." WRITE A FEW SENTENCES TO ILLUSTRATE, FROM THE LIVES OF THESE TWO KINGS, THE TRUTH OF THE KEY VERSE.
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7 WHAT IMPORTANT POINTS CAN YOU SEE IN JOSIAH'S ATTITUDE TO THE BOOK OF THE LAW, WHICH WOULD BE HELPFUL TO CHRISTIANS TODAY, IN DEVELOPING A PROPER ATTITUDE TO THE BIBLE?
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