

# Shoes to Fill

## 2 Chron 33:22-23; 34:1-7

### 2 Kings 22:1-3

Body:

#### I. Not Your Shoes (vs. 2 Chron. 33:22-23)

a. Amon

i. Evil in the Sight of the Lord

1. Evil - Qualitatively, evil is something bad in nature or condition, worthless, corrupt, displeasing, undesirable, or inadequate. Evil is misfortune, particularly injury or threat of injury to life or standing in society
2. Did not walk in the way of the Lord

ii. Did not humble himself

1. In addition, humility is the appropriate response of the sinner in the presence of the holiness of God

iii. Multiplied Guilt

1. Served and Worshipped Idols 2 Kings 21:21

- a. Just as Manasseh could not go back and undo the damage he had done to his nation, even so he could not go back and change the son he had raised to be a pagan.
- b. Amon followed in his father's footsteps, but not the steps that Manasseh would have liked him to follow
- c. The Chronicler's account of Amon follows rather closely that in 2 Kgs 21:19–26. The most notable difference is that for the writer of Kings, Amon was "just like" his father Manasseh (2 Kgs 21:20 // 33:22), whereas in Chronicles Amon is contrasted to Manasseh because of his failure to repent (33:23). The Chronicler explicates "walking in all the ways his father walked" (2 Kgs 21:21) as "offering sacrifices and worshipping all the idols his father Manasseh had made" (33:22; see Comment at 33:14–17 above)

b. Manasseh

i. Evil in the sight of the Lord

1. Served and Worshipped the Idols 2 Kings 21:21

- a. Of this King's brief reign nothing is recorded except that he followed in the evil footsteps of his father. Manasseh clearly was subservient to Assyria, and probably the policy of his son was the same, hence his death may have been caused by an Egyptian party
- b. Judah had capitulated to gross idolatry during the reign of Manasseh (696–642 BC). Baalism, Moloch worship, and other pagan religions had invaded the land, as had

occultism and astrology. A false altar even stood in the temple in Jerusalem, and human sacrifice to pagan deities was practiced near Jerusalem. The land was thoroughly corrupted.

- c. Although some reform occurred in Manasseh's latter days, conditions reverted to their former baseness during the reign of his son Amon (642–640 BC). In 640 officials of Amon's household assassinated him, and the "people of the land" put Josiah on the throne (2 Kgs 21:26; 22:1; 2 Chr 34:1).

## II. Your Shoes (vs. 2 Chron. 34:1-2)

### a. King Josiah

#### i. 8 years became king

1. and it appears that not till eight years afterwards did he begin "to seek after the God of David his father." At that age he devoted himself to God. This might be called the epoch of his conversion, the great turning-point in his own life as well as the turning-point in the history of his kingdom.
2. Aided by some members of noble families, who were also won to the cause of Jehovah, and probably encouraged in the work by Hilkiyah, the high priest, and by Jeremiah of Anathoth, who was about his own age

#### ii. Reigned 31 years

1. Sixteenth king of the southern kingdom of Judah (640–609 BC). A godly man, he stood in marked contrast to his grandfather, Manasseh, and his father, Amon. In fact, Scripture declares there was no king either before or after him that was as obedient to the Law of Moses (2 Kgs 23:25).

### b. His Reign

#### i. Right

1. In the Sight of the Lord

#### ii. Walked

##### 1. Ways of His Father David

- a. The son of Amon, and his successor on the throne of Judah (2 Kings 22:1; 2 Chr. 34:1). His history is contained in 2 Kings 22, 23. He stands foremost among all the kings of the line of David for unswerving loyalty to Jehovah (23:25).

#### iii. Did Not Turn

##### 1. Aside to Right or Left

- a. Though a number of kings are said to have followed the precedent set by their father David, only of Josiah is it said that he did not "deviate to the right or left."

- b. But whereas Josiah remained true to the Lord, not turning to the right or to the left, Joash was faithful only as long as Jehoiada, the priest, lived (24:2, 15–18). Hezekiah is the only other king in Chronicles besides Josiah to be compared favorably to David

### III. Walk in Your Shoes (vs. 2 Chron. 34:3-7)

- a. Age 16 Seek
  - i. Josiah began to seek God at age sixteen in the eighth year of his reign,
- b. Seek the God of His Father David
  - i. Josiah began to seek the God of David his father (2 Chr 34:3a). This indicates an “inner attitude of loyalty towards God
  - ii. Josiah was only 8 years old when he became king. Evidently he had spiritually motivated advisers or regents; by the time he was 16 he began of his own accord “to seek the God of David” (2 Chr 34:3).
- c. Age 20 Purge
  - i. Age 20
    - 1. Though his personal piety may have begun to stir at that time, he did not initiate acts of reform until his twelfth year at age twenty; this would be the age of his majority (Num 1:3; 26:2; 1 Chr 27:23; 25:5) and presumably then also the first year of his sole reign no longer under the authority of a regent
  - ii. 12<sup>th</sup> Year Purge
    - 1. time when he would still probably be under the tutelage of regents.
  - iii. Purge – Cleanse, purify
    - 1. Carved and Molten Images
      - a. **In his 12th year** as king (age 20) he initiated a campaign to rid the land of all vestiges of Canaanite religion. Apparently Manasseh’s purge (33:15) related only to the **idols** and pagan **altars** in the temple, not to those throughout the land (33:3).
      - b. When he was 20, he became greatly exercised over the idolatry of the land and launched a major effort to eradicate the pagan high places, groves, and images from Judah and Jerusalem.
  - iv. Torn Down Altars of Baal
    - 1. In Pieces and ground into powder and scattered
      - a. Josiah went so far as to scatter the **smashed ... idols** and other paraphernalia **over the graves of** their worshipers and to burn **the bones of the pagan priests on their very altars.**
  - v. Burned the bones of the priest
    - 1. So intense was Josiah’s hatred of idolatry that he even opened the tombs of pagan priests and burned their bones on pagan altars before these were destroyed

- vi. Expanded the purge
  1. he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places with their attendant cult objects (vv 3b–5) and then extended his efforts to Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali (vv 6–7). In the 18th year of his reign (622/621 B.C.E.), after the finding of the Book of the Law in the temple, he carried out a great reform program (34:8–35:19).
  2. And this purge was not limited to Judah. In Israel all the way up to **Naphtali** in the north the work of extirpation of idolatry went on.
- d. Returned to Jerusalem
- e. Repaired temple

# Word Studies

**Josiah.** 1. Sixteenth king of the southern kingdom of Judah (640–609 B<sup>1</sup>C). A godly man, he stood in marked contrast to his grandfather, Manasseh, and his father, Amon. In fact, Scripture declares there was no king either before or after him that was as obedient to the Law of Moses (2 Kgs 23:25). The Greek form of his name, *Josias*, appears in Matthew 1:10, 11 (κ<sup>2</sup>ν).

Judah had capitulated to gross idolatry during the reign of Manasseh (696–642 B<sup>3</sup>C). Baalism, Moloch worship, and other pagan religions had invaded the land, as had occultism and astrology. A false altar even stood in the temple in Jerusalem, and human sacrifice to pagan deities was practiced near Jerusalem. The land was thoroughly corrupted. Although some reform occurred in Manasseh's latter days, conditions reverted to their former baseness during the reign of his son Amon (642–640 B<sup>4</sup>C). In 640 officials of Amon's household assassinated him, and the "people of the land" put Josiah on the throne (2 Kgs 21:26; 22:1; 2 Chr 34:1).

***Josiah's Reform Activities.*** Josiah was only 8 years old when he became king. Evidently he had spiritually motivated advisers or regents; by the time he was 16 he began of his own accord "to seek the God of David" (2 Chr 34:3). When he was 20, he became greatly exercised over the idolatry of the land and launched a major effort to eradicate the pagan high places, groves, and images from Judah and Jerusalem. So intense was Josiah's hatred of idolatry that he even opened the tombs of pagan priests and burned their bones on pagan altars before these were destroyed.<sup>5</sup>

**JOSIAH** (PERSON) [Heb *yō š'iyāh (û)* (יְהוֹשִׁיָּא)]. The root of the name is probably *wš*, "to give" (Gordon *UT*, 354a, no<sup>7</sup>. 117); compare also *yō wš'iyāhû* (Jer 27:1), Joash, and *yā'ûš* of the Lachish Letters (from *yāhûyā'ûš* or *'elyā'ûš*, "Yahweh/God shall grant" [Gibson *TSSI* 1: 37]), and U<sup>9</sup>g *'ušn*, "gift". The root may, however, be *yšy*, "Yahweh brings forth" (Bauer 1930: 77), or Arabic *'asā*, "to heal" (Noth *IP<sup>10</sup>N*, 212; 1956: 326).

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<sup>1</sup>BC before Christ

<sup>2</sup>KJV The King James Version

<sup>3</sup>BC before Christ

<sup>4</sup>BC before Christ

<sup>5</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, "[Josiah.](#)" in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1223.

<sup>6</sup>*UT* C. H. Gordon. 1965. *Ugaritic Textbook*. AnOr 38. Rome; suppl. 1967

<sup>7</sup>no. number

<sup>8</sup>*TSSI* J. C. L. Gibson. 1971–82. *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*. 3 vols. Oxford

<sup>9</sup>Ug Ugaritic

<sup>10</sup>*IPN* M. Noth. 1928. *Die israelitischen Personennamen*. BWANT 3/10. Stuttgart. Repr. Hildesheim, 1966

1. King of Judah ca<sup>11</sup>. 640–609 B.C.E.; son and successor of Amon. Josiah after his father's murder was made king by the "people of the land" (2 Kgs 21:24; 2 Chr 33:25), designating especially the Judean landowners enjoying full citizen rights (*THA*<sup>12</sup>T 2: 299–300). He came to the throne at the age of eight and reigned for 31 years (2 Kgs 22:1; 2 Chr 34:1). His mother was Jedidah, daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath (cf. Josh 15:39).

V 3, p 1016 a. Josiah's Reform in the Sources. The early years of Josiah's reign are presented in different ways by the sources. Chronicles records that in the 8th year of his reign (ca<sup>13</sup>. 632 B.C.E.) Josiah began to seek the God of David his father (2 Chr 34:3a). This indicates an "inner attitude of loyalty towards God" (Williamson *Chronicles* NCB<sup>14</sup>C, 95). In the 12th year of his reign (628/627 B.C.E.), he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places with their attendant cult objects (vv 3b–5) and then extended his efforts to Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali (vv 6–7). In the 18th year of his reign (622/621 B.C.E.), after the finding of the Book of the Law in the temple, he carried out a great reform program (34:8–35:19).

But the author of Kings mentions only the reform in the 18th year of Josiah (2 Kgs 22:3), though this too extended beyond the borders of Judah and included the "cities of Samaria" (23:19), that is, the territory of the former <sup>15</sup>N kingdom.<sup>16</sup>

**JOSIAH**—healed by Jehovah, or Jehovah will support. The son of Amon, and his successor on the throne of Judah (2 Kings 22:1; 2 Chr. 34:1). His history is contained in 2 Kings 22, 23. He stands foremost among all the kings of the line of David for unswerving loyalty to Jehovah (23:25). He "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father." He ascended the throne at the early age of eight years, and it appears that not till eight years afterwards did he begin "to seek after the God of David his father." At that age he devoted himself to God. This might be called the epoch of his conversion, the great turning-point in his own life as well as the turning-point in the history of his kingdom. Aided by some members of noble families, who were also p 394 won to the cause of Jehovah, and probably encouraged in the work by Hilkiyah, the high priest, and by Jeremiah of Anathoth, who was about his own age, He distinguished himself by beginning a war of extermination against the prevailing idolatry, which had practically been the state religion for some seventy years (2 Chr. 34:3; comp. Jer. 25:3, 11, 29).

In the eighteenth year of his reign he proceeded to repair and beautify the temple, which by time and violence had become sorely dilapidated (2 Kings 22:3, 5, 6; 23:23; 2 Chr. 34:11). While this work was being carried on, Hilkiyah, the high priest, discovered a roll, which was probably the original copy of the law, the entire Pentateuch, written by Moses.

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<sup>11</sup>ca. *circa* (about, approximately)

<sup>12</sup>*THAT Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, 2 vols., ed. E. Jenni and C. Westermann. Munich, 1971–76

<sup>13</sup>ca. *circa* (about, approximately)

<sup>14</sup>NCBC New Century Bible Commentary

<sup>15</sup>N north (ern)

<sup>16</sup>Robert Althann, "[Josiah \(Person\)](#)," in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1015–1016.

When this book was read to him, the king was alarmed by the things it contained, and sent for Huldah, the “prophetess,” for her counsel. She spoke to him words of encouragement, telling him that he would be gathered to his fathers in peace before the threatened days of judgment came. Josiah immediately gathered the people together, and engaged them in a renewal of their ancient national covenant with God. The Passover was then celebrated, as in the days of his great predecessor, Hezekiah, with unusual magnificence. Nevertheless, “the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah” (2 Kings 22:3–20; 23:21–27; 2 Chr. 35:1–19). During the progress of this great religious revolution Jeremiah helped it on by his earnest exhortations.<sup>17</sup>

Evil - Qualitatively, evil is something bad in nature or condition, worthless, corrupt, displeasing, undesirable, or inadequate. Evil is misfortune, particularly injury or threat of injury to life or standing in society<sup>18</sup>

Humble - In addition, humility is the appropriate response of the sinner in the presence of the holiness of God<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> M. G. Easton, [\*Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature\*](#) (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893), 393–394.

<sup>18</sup> Duane F. Watson, “[Evil](#),” in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 678.

<sup>19</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, [\*Tyndale Bible Dictionary\*](#), Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 618.

## Commentary Studies

### ***(1) Introduction (34:1–2)***

**<sup>1</sup> Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. <sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.**

**34:1–2** Several elements of Josiah's reign have parallels with the reign of Joash (chaps. 23–24). Both came to the throne as boys. Both collected funds for temple restoration. Both are reported as having stood in the king's place in the temple precincts (34:31; 24:13), both led the nation in a covenant renewal in the temple (23:16–17; 34:29–32). But whereas Josiah remained true to the Lord, not turning to the right or to the left, Joash was faithful only as long as Jehoiada, the priest, lived (24:2, 15–18). Hezekiah is the only other king in Chronicles besides Josiah to be compared favorably to David (cf. 29:2; Sirach 49:4).

### ***(2) The Removal of Pagan Cults from Jerusalem (34:3–7)***

**<sup>3</sup> In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David. In his twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of high places, Asherah poles, carved idols and cast images. <sup>4</sup> Under his direction the altars of the Baals were torn down; he cut to pieces the incense altars that were above them, and smashed the Asherah poles, the idols and the images. These he broke to pieces and scattered over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. <sup>5</sup> He burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and so he purged Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim and Simeon, as far as Naphtali, and in the ruins around them, <sup>7</sup> he tore down the altars and the Asherah poles and crushed the idols to powder and cut to pieces all the incense altars throughout Israel. Then he went back to Jerusalem.**

**34:3** In the eighth year he would have been sixteen. He was still a young man and had not undertaken public duties. He probably was under the control and direction of a regent. However, in matters of personal religion he displayed personal piety. When he was twenty-one, he began his active reforms in Judah and Jerusalem, which he purged of high places, Asherah poles, the carved idols, and the images.

**34:4–5** Josiah was determined to complete the work of uprooting the apostasy of Manasseh's reign. Ultimately, he was unable to free the people of their attachments to paganism. It is in this sense that Kings rightly attributes the decline and fall of Judah to

Manasseh's reign. Notwithstanding Manasseh's later repentance, neither he nor anyone else was able to pull back the forces Manasseh had released early in his career.

Verses 4–5 take up the picture in the Kings account (cp. v. 4b with 2 Kgs 23:6 and v. 5a with 2 Kgs 23:14, 16, 20). Though not explicitly stated, the Chronicler implied that Josiah executed the priests of Baal (cf. 2 Kgs 23:20) following the precedent set by Jehu (2 Kgs 10) and Jehoiada (23:17). The punishment is fitted to the crime: the priests who burned sacrifices to Baal had their own bones burned on the same altar. According to 2 Kgs 23:16 the bones of priests who had died were removed from their graves and burned.

**34:6–7** These reforming activities were carried north to Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon as far as Naphtali. The appearance of Simeon here is unexpected. That tribe was normally located to the south of Judah (1 Chr 4:24–33). Meanwhile, Nineveh was besieged by Cyaxares and the Medes in 625 B.C. The Babylonians had broken free, and tribes from the north were raiding former Assyrian lands. It was a golden opportunity for Josiah to extend his control into Israel, even as far as Upper Galilee (Naphtali).<sup>20</sup>

## 1. JOSIAH'S REFORMATION (chap. 34)

### a. Preparations for temple repairs (34:1–13)

34:1–7. **Josiah**, son of Amon, who was only **eight years old when** his father died, ruled over Judah for **31 years** (640–609 B.C.) Much like his great-grandfather Hezekiah, Josiah loved **the LORD** and **began to** demonstrate this actively by the time he was 16 years old. **In his 12th year** as king (age 20) he initiated a campaign to rid the land of all vestiges of Canaanite religion. Apparently Manasseh's purge (33:15) related only to the **idols** and pagan **altars** in the temple, not to those throughout the land (33:3).

Josiah went so far as to scatter the **smashed ... idols** and other paraphernalia **over the graves of** their worshipers and to burn **the bones of the** pagan **priests on their** very **altars**. And this purge was not limited to Judah. In Israel all the way up to **Naphtali** in the north the work of extirpation of idolatry went on.

34:8–13. Then, in Josiah's **18th year** (age 26) he commissioned **Shaphan ... Maaseiah**, and **Joah** to **repair** and refurbish **the temple**. (This was one of several times that kings of Judah restored the temple.) These men took **money** which had been collected for that purpose from all over Israel and Judah and gave it **to Hilkiah the high priest** to enable him to hire workmen and **to purchase** materials for the task ordered by the king. The supervisors were **Levites**, two of the **Merari** branch and two of the Kohath branch. Those four were skillful musicians, a statement that probably attests to their artistry and sensitivity in all things pertaining to the

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<sup>20</sup> J. A. Thompson, [1, 2 Chronicles](#), vol. 9, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 374–375.

temple and worship. It was their task to oversee the workmen at every point. **Levites** with other skills and assignments served as foremen.<sup>21</sup>

The Chronicler's account of Josiah (2 Chr 34–35) parallels the earlier account in 2 Kgs 22:1–23:30. The accounts are approximately the same length and treat the same subjects. The Chronicler's narrative can be divided as follows (Elmslie, 330): 1. Eradication of pagan cults in Jerusalem, Judah, and Israel (34:2–7). 2. Temple repairs and discovery of the law book (34:8–28) 3. Covenant renewal (34:29–33) 4. Observance of Passover (35:1–19) 5. Death of Josiah (35:20–27) The narrative in Kings contains the same elements, but in varying detail and in a different order. For item (1) Kings goes to greater length and delays the account until after the discovery of the law book (2 Kgs 23:4–20). In Kings items (2) and (3) precede (1), and the reform of Josiah flows from the discovery of the law book. The observance of Passover under Josiah (4) is summarized only briefly in Kings (2 Kgs 23:21–23), whereas it is greatly expanded in Chronicles. The Chronicler uses one of his most characteristic compositional techniques in his account of Josiah. He introduces chronological notes that provide the structure for his narrative; see Dillard (JETS 23 [1980] 215) for a list of chronological notices unique to Chronicles. The author reports that Josiah began to seek God in the eighth year of his reign (34:3) and that he began to purge the pagan cults in his twelfth year, at age twenty (34:3); the reform was then well underway before the discovery of the law book in the eighteenth year of his rule (34:8 // 2 Kgs 22:3; 35:19 // 2 Kgs 23:23). These chronological notices have provoked a wide range of opinion: some accept them at face value, whereas others regard them as theological fabrications on the part of the Chronicler. There can be no serious doubt that the decline of Assyrian power in the latter half of the seventh century contributed to conditions favoring the reestablishment of a strong Judean state. Cross and Freedman ("Josiah's Revolt against Assyria," JNES 12 [1953] 56–58) tied the Chronicler's chronological notices to particular events in the decline of Assyria that would have encouraged rebellion on the part of Josiah and other vassals: his "seeking the God of his father David" in his eighth year would have followed the death of Assurbanipal in 633 b.c.; his extending his reform into the former Assyrian provinces in the north in his twelfth year (628 b.c.) was synchronized with the death of the Assyrian king Assur-etil-ilani; and the further reforms in his eighteenth year followed closely the failure of Assyrian control in Babylonia in 623 b.c. Cross and Freedman felt that their synchronisms between the Chronicler's dates for Josiah and the proposed chronology for the last kings of Assyria were mutually reinforcing. This argument now requires modification due to clarification of the date for the death of

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<sup>21</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, "[2 Chronicles](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 646.

Assurbanipal, an event now assigned to 627 b.c. (J. Oates, “Assyrian Chronology,” *Iraq* 27 [1965] 135–59). At the other end of the spectrum regarding the significance of these dates, M. Cogan (“Chronicler’s Use of Chronology,” 203–5) regards the data as schematic scaffolding developed by the Chronicler to show that a godly king like Josiah would certainly have begun his reform efforts before his eighteenth year. Cogan (205) sees the Chronicler as concerned with “the earliness and self-motivation of the king’s piety”; he draws an analogy with an inscription from the reign of Esarhaddon also depicting the youthful piety and reforms of that king. The discovery of the law book during repair work implies that some reform was underway already, even though earlier phases of Josiah’s reform are not mentioned in Kings. The Tendenz of the author of Kings in his account is also quite clear—he wishes to trace Josiah’s reforms to the discovery of the book. The book is central, and the narrative proceeds in concentric circles from the discovery of the book (2 Kgs 23:2) through the temple (2 Kgs 23:4), through the city of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 23:5–7), through Judah (2 Kgs 23:8–9), and into territories in the North (2 Kgs 23:15–20). The deuteronomic historian’s concern to portray Josiah’s fidelity to the law through Moses makes the discovery of the book the inciting event of the reform; the form of the narrative in Kings owes much to that author’s purpose. With the Tendenz of Kings so clearly to the fore in that account, one should not too quickly attribute the Chronicler’s chronological notices to fabrication arising from that author’s theological motives. It is possible both to regard the chronological notices as reflecting some accurate sources at his disposal and to appreciate that it may well suit the Chronicler’s interests to portray Josiah’s piety as stemming from a much earlier point in his reign. The theological interests need not be at the expense of historicity. The narrative is divided into paragraphs using the following devices: (1) a *ויהי*-clause with temporal phrase (34:19); (2) a temporal phrase (34:3a, 3b, 8, 14); and (3) an explicit subject (34:12, 16, 22, 29, 33). The paragraphs beginning at 34:3a and 3b are further marked by the repetition of the initial phrase using the verb *החל* “he began” with an infinitive Comment 1–2 Many features of the Chronicler’s presentation of Josiah have analogs in his account of Joash (2 Chr 24); see Explanation below. Both became king at a very early age; both presided over a refurbishing of the temple using the offerings brought there. Though neither biblical history reports such, it is highly probable that Josiah ruled until the age of his majority (34:3b) under the tutelage of one or more regents, acting perhaps in behalf of the “people of the land.” Regarding the “people of the land” and the age of Josiah’s father at the time of his birth, see Comment at 33:21–25. Regarding the omission of his mother’s name (2 Kgs 22:1), see Comment at 33:1. Though a number of kings are said to have followed the precedent set by their father David, only of Josiah is it said that he did not “deviate to the right or left.” Josiah died confronting Necho in 609 b.c., so his thirty-one-year reign would have begun in 640 b.c. 3 According to the Chronicler David described Solomon as *נער ורך* “young and inexperienced” at the time of his accession (1 Chr 22:5; 29:1; cf. 2 Chr 13:7); both terms are used also of Josiah (cf. 34:27). Josiah began to seek God at age sixteen in the eighth year of his reign, a time when he would still probably be under the tutelage of regents. Though his personal piety may have begun to stir at that time, he did not initiate acts of reform until his twelfth year at age twenty; this would be the age of his majority (Num 1:3; 26:2; 1 Chr 27:23; 25:5) and presumably then also the first year of his sole reign no longer under the authority of a regent. 4–7 These verses summarize aspects of Josiah’s reform treated at much greater length in 2 Kgs 23:4–20; the Chronicler has chronologically positioned them before the discovery of the law book in the temple (see Form/Structure/Setting). The passage is somewhat reminiscent also of reforms under Asa (15:8–15) and Hezekiah (chap. 29). Most of the Chronicler’s omissions from the more extensive parallel history appear to reflect aspects of his own Tendenz. Sacral

prostitution apparently was not as big a problem for post-exilic Judah, and the Chronicler routinely omits references to it (2 Kgs 23:7); see Comment at 14:2–5; and P. Dion, “Did Cultic Prostitution Fall into Oblivion in the Postexilic Era?” *CBQ* 43 (1981) 41–48. One would also not expect the Chronicler to elaborate on Josiah’s removing the altars of Ahaz and Manasseh (2 Kgs 23:11–12) when he had reported the intervening reforms of both Hezekiah and Manasseh. The Chronicler’s portrayal of a faultless Solomon would require omission of 2 Kgs 23:13 as out of accord with that portrait; see the introductory essay to 2 Chr 1–9, “The Chronicler’s Solomon.” The Chronicler did not report the visit of the man of God from Judah to the altar at Bethel (1 Kgs 13:1–32) and would then also omit 2 Kgs 23:15–18. Though not explicitly stated, the Chronicler implies that Josiah executed the priests of Baal (34:4–5; cf. 2 Kgs 23:20), following the precedent set by Jehu (2 Kgs 10) and Jehoiada (23:17 // 2 Kgs 11:18). Josiah suits the punishment to the crime: the priests who burned sacrifices to Baal have their own bones burned on the same altars; some are even disinterred for this purpose (2 Kgs 23:16). The Chronicler does not report that the ashes from the defiled temple implements in Judah were carried to Bethel (2 Kgs 23:4). The Assyrian empire was in an advanced stage of disintegration by Josiah’s twelfth year (628 b.c.). Nineveh itself was under siege by Cyaxares and the Medes in 625 b.c. The Babylonians were newly independent, and mountain tribes from the north were raiding former Assyrian territory. During the death throes of the Assyrian empire the territories of the Northern Kingdom became a “no man’s land” (Soggin, 245). It is intrinsically probable in these circumstances that Josiah would seek to extend his control and influence into Israel (34:6), even as far as the Upper Galilee (Naphtali). Others, however, find the notion of Josiah’s northern expansion improbable, the pious wishes of the Chronicler (Spieckermann, 112–14, 150–52; G. Ogden, “The Northern Extent of Josiah’s Reforms,” *AusBR* 26 [1978] 26–34). There is some archeological confirmation for the extension of Josiah’s kingdom in the South in the excavations at Mesad Hashavyahu (Yabneh-yam), En-gedi, and Arad. The destruction of an Israelite temple at Arad should probably be attributed to the centralization efforts of Josiah. While considerable circumstantial evidence favors the reliability of the Chronicler’s report that Josiah extended his border northward, it is also a theme dear to his own Tendenz: Josiah is shown as the king of a united kingdom almost reaching its Davidic/Solomonic proportions; “all Israel” acts in concert under this righteous ruler. The phrase “land of Israel” (34:7) occurs only four times in Chronicles, once each during the reigns of David (1 Chr 22:2), Solomon (2:16 [17]), Hezekiah (30:25), and Josiah. The range of territory suggested runs from Simeon to Naphtali, an approximate equivalent for “Beersheba to Dan.” The fact that Simeon occurs in a list with Northern tribes here and in 15:9 has been understood as indicating that the Chronicler thought it was in fact a Northern tribe. Whatever the correct explanation (see Comment at 15:9; and Williamson, *IBC*, 104), the suggestion that the Chronicler was ignorant of the geography and the territorial allocation for that tribe would be quite improbable. Regarding the “incense altars” (34:4, 7), see Comment at 14:4.

Raymond B. Dillard, [2 Chronicles](#), vol. 15, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 276–279.

The Chronicler’s account of Amon follows rather closely that in 2 Kgs 21:19–26. The most notable difference is that for the writer of Kings, Amon was “just like” his father Manasseh (2 Kgs 21:20 // 33:22), whereas in Chronicles Amon is contrasted to Manasseh because of his

failure to repent (33:23). The Chronicler explicates “walking in all the ways his father walked” (2 Kgs 21:21) as “offering sacrifices and worshiping all the idols his father Manasseh had made” (33:22; see Comment at 33:14–17 above).

Raymond B. Dillard, [2 Chronicles](#), vol. 15, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 269.

**33:21** Amon’s reign (642–640 B.C.) was brief, only two years. The Chronicler’s account is based on 2 Kgs 21:19–26.

**33:22–23** Just as Manasseh could not go back and undo the damage he had done to his nation, even so he could not go back and change the son he had raised to be a pagan. Amon followed in his father’s footsteps, but not the steps that Manasseh would have liked him to follow.<sup>22</sup>

**21–25. The reign of Amon** (641–639 B.C.).—Taken from 2 K. 21:19–24. Of this King’s brief reign nothing is recorded except that he followed in the evil footsteps of his father. Manasseh clearly was subservient to Assyria, and probably the policy of his son was the same, hence his death may have been caused by an Egyptian party (GAS<sup>23</sup>. *J*<sup>24</sup>. II. p<sup>25</sup>. 198), possibly representing the Patricians and Priesthood of Jerusalem (Erbt, *Die Heb*<sup>26</sup>. pp<sup>27</sup>. 162 *f*<sup>28</sup>.). Others regard the motive as religious, an act of the adherents of the cause of pure religion (Ki<sup>29</sup>. *Gesch*<sup>30</sup>. p<sup>31</sup>. 320). The cause is really unknown, and it is idle to conjecture. The section is taken from 2 K. 21:19–24 with v<sup>32</sup>. 22b. rewritten.—**21. Twenty-two years**]. If this age is correct, then Amon was only sixteen years old at the birth of Josiah. McCurdy holds that Amon was probably acting king

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<sup>22</sup> J. A. Thompson, [1, 2 Chronicles](#), vol. 9, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 372.

<sup>23</sup>GAS. George Adam Smith.

<sup>24</sup>J. George Adam Smith., *Jerusalem from the Earliest Times to A. D. 70*.

<sup>25</sup>p. page.

<sup>26</sup>*Heb.* Hebrew.

<sup>27</sup>pp. pages.

<sup>28</sup>*f.* and following.

<sup>29</sup>Ki. R. Kittel.

<sup>30</sup>*Gesch.* R. Kittel., *Geschichte der Hebräer*.

<sup>31</sup>p. page.

<sup>32</sup>v. verse.

when his father was in captivity, and hence older than twenty-two on his accession (*HPM*<sup>33</sup>. p<sup>34</sup>. 389). The name of Amon's mother, "Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah," given in 2 K. 21:19, is omitted.—**22.** *And Amon sacrificed to all the graven images, etc.*] 2 K. 23:21, "And he walked in all the way which his father walked and served the idols which his father served and worshipped them." The Chronicler has abridged and changed this statement because it is inconsistent with Manasseh's repentance, which his own statement allows.—**25.** *The people of the land*] the common people in opposition to the courtiers who had conspired against Amon. This vengeance may indicate that the people were favoured by the conditions which prevailed during the reign of Manasseh, as though the entire period had been one of quiet and contented vassalage under Assyria; or it may only be an expression of the loyalty so often felt by the common people for a sovereign.<sup>35</sup>

**34–35. The reign of Josiah** (639–608 B.C.).—The history of Josiah contained in 2 K. cc<sup>36</sup>. 22, 23, apart from the mention of his accession and his death, consists entirely of an account of the discovery of the book of the law and the subsequent reform. The Chronicler abridges this narrative in certain points and modifies, embellishes, and expands it in others. 2 K. knows of no reformatory activity on the part of Josiah until his eighteenth year, when the book of the law was discovered; the Chronicler, on the other hand, makes the young King exhibit special piety ten years earlier, in his eighth year (34:3), and in his twelfth year he begins to purge the land of idolatry so that his reformation in cultus precedes the discovery of the book of the law instead of, as in 2 K., following the discovery. The reason of this change is plain. Such a pious king as Josiah must be represented as pious from his youth and needed not the special cause of the discovery of the book of the law to influence him to remove idolatries. The Chronicler has also omitted all reference to the purging of the Temple in detail (recorded in 2 K. 23:4–6), confining himself to the single statement that he purged *the house* (v<sup>37</sup>. 8). This omission may have been simply due to brevity, or because in 2 K. 23:4–6 the idolatrous objects which are removed are clearly those associated with Manasseh, but according to 2 Ch. 33:15 Manasseh himself had purged the Temple of these. The narrative of the discovery of the book of the law is also rewritten. In 2 K. 22:3–7 the only officers mentioned in connection with the repair of the Temple are Shaphan the scribe and Hilkiah the high priest; but in Chronicles, Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joah the recorder appear (v<sup>38</sup>. 8). The keepers of the door also have become Levites (v<sup>39</sup>. 9, *cf.*<sup>40</sup>. 2 K. 22:4), and the money has been gathered not simply from "the

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<sup>33</sup>*HPM*. J. F. McCurdy., *History, Prophecy and the Monuments*.

<sup>34</sup>p. page.

<sup>35</sup>Edward Lewis Curtis and Albert Alonzo Madsen, [\*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles\*](#), International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1910), 500–501.

<sup>36</sup>cc. chapter, chapters.

<sup>37</sup>v. verse.

<sup>38</sup>v. verse.

<sup>39</sup>v. verse.

<sup>40</sup>*cf. confer*, compare.

people," *i.e.*<sup>41</sup>, those of the S. kingdom, but also from those of *Manasseh and Ephraim and all the remnant of Israel*. Also in 2 K. 22:4 the implication is that the money was derived from contributions made at the Temple according to the arrangements made by Jehoash, who placed a chest beside the altar to receive dues or offerings in money brought into the Temple (2 K. 12:9 f<sup>42f.</sup>). The Chronicler assumes that the money had been collected by peripatetic Levites.

The breaches of the house also are not those of natural decay, as is implied in 2 K. 22:5, but specifically those of violence done to the Temple by the idolatrous kings of Judah (v<sup>43</sup>. 11). The overseers of all the work also are Levites, a number of whom are mentioned by name (vv<sup>44</sup>. 12 f<sup>45</sup>.). These are entirely absent in 2 K. The account of the finding of the book and the inquiry of the prophetess and the entering into the covenant are given essentially alike in both narratives. But the account of the reformation, since that has already been assigned to the earlier years of Josiah, is entirely omitted, with the exception of the celebration of the Passover, which was a feature of Josiah's reform (2 K. 23:21–23). This is elaborated by the Chronicler in a description of nineteen verses. The Chronicler also gives a somewhat full account of the death of Josiah (35:20–25), which is very briefly narrated in 2 K. 23:29–30.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>*i.e. id est*, that is.

<sup>42ff</sup> and following.

<sup>43</sup>v. verse.

<sup>44</sup>vv. verses.

<sup>45</sup>f. and following.

<sup>46</sup> Edward Lewis Curtis and Albert Alonzo Madsen, [\*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles\*](#), International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1910), 501–503.