

Prodigal King

I. Slide1,2 Announce:

- A. Read the intro to *The Ragamuffin Gospel*.
- B. Prayer: Lord your *gospel of grace* calls us to see the *everyday mystery of intimacy* with You God, *instead of* seeking for miracles & visions. *You desire us!*

II. Intro:

- A. Slide3 We have all seen idyllic portraits of the supposed *First Thanksgiving* in 1621.
1. Pilgrims and Native Americans gathered together, **feasting** on the bounty of the land, **forging** alliances of peace, **and** giving **thanks** for the blessings of life
 2. **Yet, just a generation later** colonists and natives found themselves at war **with each other**. Many colonists and Native Americans feared each other, **and** tribe after tribe would be forced from their land through *unjust transactions*, eventually relegated to *impoverished reservations* in unwanted lands. **How quickly the tide can turn!**
 - a) With the rise of King Manasseh, *the tide turned quickly* in Judah as well.
 - (1) After 29 years under godly Hezekiah, Manasseh took the throne and plunged the land into incredible wickedness, reversing everything Hezekiah had done.
 - (2) Manasseh was not only the most wicked king of Judah, he was more wicked than pagan nations.
- B. Slide4 Wicked king **Ahaz** fathered godly **Hezekiah**. Godly **Hezekiah** fathered evil king **Manasseh**. Evil king **Manasseh** *turns into a good king* and fathers the bad king **Amon**. **Amon** the wicked king fathered the godly king **Josiah**.
1. 2 years into Hezekiah's 15 yr extension...**Manasseh was born**.
 - a) He had the **genes**, the **finances**, even the **lineage** (Mt.1:10 Jesus' geneol).
 2. **Manasseh** began his reign **wicked but** ended with **repentance**. **Josiah** **sought the Lord early but** ended his life **disobeying**.

3. Evil Manasseh got to reign for **55 years**, the **longest** of any king of Judah or Israel. [Yet Manasseh has been called *the Nero of Palestine*]
 - a) *People who claim to **see clear patterns** in history or who locked divine providence into a **fixed formula** must keep this in mind...God's ways are not our ways; He is free to work as **He chooses**.* Warren Wiersbe
4. You and I can do very little regarding world affairs, **but we can pray** for those in authority, and be faithful to **obey** our God.

III. Slide5 **CHIEF OF SINNERS (1-9)**

- A. Q: How would you sum up in your own words *Mannaseh's flagrant idolatry*?
- B. How bold he was in *idolatry*. He must of hated the 1st 2 commandments.
- C. (5) **All of the host of heaven** - The sun, moon, stars, and planets.
 1. The book of 2 Kings 1st mentions this kind of idolatry, called **astral worship**, in the list of Israel's sins.
 2. Biblical law expressly forbids such worship (Deut 4:19).
 3. Slide6 Royal Seals of Judah. *The center of the handle is a winged sun-disk.*
- D. Slide7 (6) **Made his son pass through the fire** - Worshipped Moloch (Sun God).
 1. Required newborn babies as living sacrifices. **The arms were heated until they glowed and babies were placed in the arms.** A fire pit was built under the arms to catch and cremate the bodies. **Priest beat on drums to keep the fathers from hearing the death cries.**
- E. **Asherah** - idolatry & immorality go together.
 1. In **rejecting** God, there is the **embracing** of the **Syrian Venus**. Which let loose of sin pouring over the land of Judah.
- F. He **carried his sacrilege** right into the precincts of the holy temple. (4,5,7)

IV. Slide8a **JUDGEMENT (10-18)**

- A. **JUDGMENT BEGINS IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD (10-15)**
- B. (10-16) Because Judah returned to the kind of sin that caused God to destroy the Northern kingdom, it too would be destroyed. [reaping the bitter harvest of your sins]

- C. (13a) The 1st part of this verse means **Jerusalem** will receive **the same measure of judgement** as **Samaria &** the house of **Ahab**.
- D. (13b) The city of Jerusalem is situated on the hill, which is surrounded by hills on every side. When viewed from a distance, Jerusalem looked to be in the middle of a **bowl** with the encircling hills forming its rim.
- E. **Slide8b** Think about it...*Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakuk, Isaiah* lived & prophesied during his reign. **Do you think that weighs in on the judgment against him?**
- F. **OH, IT CAN GET WORSE?** (16-18)
- G. **Manasseh** also destroyed the word of God. Every copy found was consigned to the flames. But when Josiah, Manasseh's grandson came to the throne, a copy of it was found in the Temple. *All The Men of the Bible* (22:8)

V. **Slide9 AMON & JOSIAH (19-26)**

- A. (19-22) **Amon** followed his father in his **sins** but not in his **repentance**.

VI. **Slide10 GRACE IN FULL BLOOM (2 Chron.33:10-13)**

- A. Manasseh eyes were opened to his sinful condition. He sobbed out the misery of his helpless & cowardly, spineless soul.
- B. **Slide11** What brought this about? **Affliction** to the rescue.
1. Ps.119:67 *Before I was **afflicted** I went astray, But now I keep Your word.*
 2. Ps.119:71 *It is good for me that I have been **afflicted**, that I may learn Your statutes.*
 3. Ps.119:75 *I know, O Lord, that Your judgments are right, And that in faithfulness You **have afflicted me**.* [See what started *the prodigal son's* journey home, Lk.15:14]
 - a) In the prison house of Babylon...**Manasseh** prayed.
 - b) Ps.51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a **broken spirit**, A **broken** and a **contrite*** (expressing pain or sorrow for sins) *heart - These, O God, You will not despise.*
 - c) **Slide12a** God graciously received this **prodigal king**.
- C. How **quickly** God heard him, **and** how **incredible** was his restoration.

1. **Slide12b** He is not only set free, **but** actually restored to his kingdom **and** established on his throne. **[There is much hope for us all in this]**
 - a) If we truly repent of our sins, we shall be **forgiven**, **and** not only forgiven **but restored** again to our kingdom.
 - b) God not only **casts away our sins** **but restores our soul**.
 - c) **You cannot doubt God's grace in your life if** you catch a glimpse of this *godly-reared, apostate, idolatrous, devilish, stricken, humbled, repentant Manasseh*

D. **Slide13** Who in your life has sinned *too far* for you to forgive?
Do they compare to Manasseh?

E. **Maybe you** are that prodigal tonight?

1. You belong to the brotherhood of the *bedraggled, beat-up, & burnt-out*.
2. **You may feel like** a charred log in a fireplace, totally drained of energy, & unable to light a fire in yourself.
 - a) *Don't try to feel anything, think anything, or do anything.*
 - b) **Slide14** It is not yours to open a **rose bud** into a **blossom**. *You'll only ruin it.*
Your touch soils it. You'll only tear its petals to pieces.
 - (1) **He who opens the bud does it simply!**
3. **To be alive is to be broken. And to be broken is to stand in need of grace.**
 - a) **Do you need His grace tonight?**