

The Book That Wouldn't Die

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

A. Slide2-5 Married Couples. DivCare. Tanzania Trip. Women's Retreat Planning mtg.

II. Slide6 **Intro:** *The Book That Wouldn't Die*

A. **Ash Wednesday is today** - its starts 40 days of fasting & the Lent season (excluding Sundays) leading up to Easter. Its name, is from the practice of placing ashes (from Palm branches) on the forehead as a celebration and reminder of *human mortality*, and as a sign of mourning and repentance to God.

1. Similar to *sackcloth and ashes* in the OT.
2. It's a day to **reflect** on the state of your **heart and mind**. A day to *take stock* of your relationship with God, and to accept the **grace** that He freely offers.
 - a) What do you need to **confess** with this *ash-laden* season of your life?
3. **Remember**, it starts with ash Wed, but ends with **resurrection** :)

B. **Prayer:** HS in Florida, 17 deaths :(

C. **Ask:** I bet you can remember *1 impact scripture* that sent reverberations through your spiritual life. [Rom10.9 *that if you confess w/your mouth...*]

1. *The Book That Wouldn't Die.*

III. Slide7 **DOING GOD'S WORK (22:1-7)**

A. **Josiah** - a good king. 640-609bc Only he & Hez *walked in all the ways of his father David.*

1. **Jedidah** (his mom) - *beloved* (similar to the Lord's pet name for Solomon).
2. Certainly **Hilkiah**, *the high priest*, saw to it that the young king honored the Lord.
 - a) Never underestimate the power of godly influence.
3. The young King dedicated his life to the Lord at age 16. He began **campaigning against idolatry at age 20** (2 Chron.34:3-7).
4. **Jeremiah** and **Zephaniah** prophesy during his reign. By the time of the events in **this chapter**, Josiah was **age 26**.

B. (7) **Trust** on a handshake.

IV. Slide8a **DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD (22:8-20)**

A. **THE PRIEST** (8-13)

B. The Book of the Law is found & it launches a *Revival* throughout Judah.

C. Some of the phrases suggest that he found some form of **Deuteronomy**.

1. Imagine losing **the word of God in the house of God**.
2. *It is good to have God's Word, it is even better to hear God's Word, the greatest blessing of all is to heed God's Word.* Warren Wiersbe

D. Slide8b **THE PROPHECY** (14-20)

E. **Huldah** is the only female prophet in the books of 1,2 Sam, 1,2 Kings, & 1,2 Chronicles.

1. Given that the king's advisors consulted **Huldah** on matters of state, she might have been *an official court prophet*.
2. Earlier in Israel's history, **Deborah** was a prophet. Judges 4

F. *I am gathering you to your ancestors* - **Josiah is the only king** to whom the author applies this archaic expression. The phrase appears in the Bible only in reference to the patriarchs, **Aaron** and **Moses**.

G. What kicked off this reforming zeal in Josiah?

1. Ps.119:161b *my heart stands in awe of Your word*.
 - a) **Bird Dog Story**: A man had a favorite bird dog that was special to him – got separated, had to leave – remembered a trick an old dog trainer told him, he took his shirt put it under some leaves under a bush – came back next day (worried) to find him curled up on it with his nose under the sleeve.
 - (1) **When you get lost, do you have the trust to look for some part of God's Word & curl up in it?** And find once again His *Peace like a River*.

H. Slide9 Read Is.66:1,2.

I. (1,2) Isaiah closes with, **displaying our God as being so *Majestic***, no earthly temple could contain Him.

1. **Besides, how do you build a house for the Lord *when* He made everything?**

a) I've seen some of the greatest houses of worship man has devised in which to worship God. *Like...*

(1) **The National Cathedral in Washington D.C.** (stained glass impressive).

(2) **St. Peters basilica in Rome** (the art & statues remarkable).

(3) **The Jade Buddha Temple in Shanghai** (both its sitting & reclining Buddha).

(4) **Hindu temples in India.**

(5) **The Muslims 3rd & 5th holiest site on the Temple Mnt:** the *black* dome Al Aqsa mosque & *The golden* dome of the Rock mosque (They believe this is where Abraham almost sacrificed *Ishmael* not Issac).

2. **So**, God is so great He uses *the earth* as His ottoman/footstool... **Yet, He** condescends to fellowship w/those who are humble & heed His word.

J. **Slide10** Who will the Lord look upon? (w/favor) *3-fold:*

1. **Humble** - GK Chesterton, ***Humility is the mother of giants. One sees great things from the valley; only small things from the peak. If a man would make his world large, he must be always making himself small. It is impossible without humility to enjoy anything – even pride. It is always the secure who are humble. The real great man is the man who makes every man feel great.***

a) Winston Churchill **was** once asked, ***“Doesn't it thrill you to know that every time you make a speech, the hall is packed to overflowing?”***

“It's quite flattering,” replied Sir Winston. ***“But whenever I feel that way, I always remember that if instead of making a political speech I was being hanged, the crowd would be twice as big.”***

2. **Slide11** **Contrite spirit** – deeply repentant.

3. **Tremble at God's Word** – tremble means to **respect** what God says & fear to disobey it.

a) Msg ***But there is something I'm looking for: a person simple and plain, reverently responsive to what I say.***

V. Slide12a **RESTORING TRUE WORSHIP (23:1-20)**

A. Josiah's reign occurred during the *decline* of the Assyrian Empire.

1. As Assyria's influence waned, **a power vacuum** formed in the province of **Samaria** (formerly the kingdom of **Israel**), allowing **Judah** to expand its northern border and extend Josiah's religious reforms into this region. Josiah instituted worship of Yahweh *as prescribed in Deuteronomy* - which supports the view that the book of the law found by Hilkiah was a version of Deuteronomy.¹

B. Slide12b **THE PLEDGE** (1-3)

C. **Manasseh** rebuilt everything that his father (Hez) tore down, **but Josiah** tore down what Manasseh built up.

1. *Reformation alone* will not change people, there must be **repentance** and **renewal** within the heart.

D. Slide12c **THE PURGE** (4-20)

E. Are our lives marked by a similar eagerness to *depart from iniquity* and *to live in covenant with God*?

1. Perhaps **our lives** and **our churches** could use a good housecleaning occasionally?

F. (7) **Perverted persons** - the male shrine prostitutes.

1. The Hebrew word used here, *qedeshim*, literally refers to *sacred, consecrated people* and is often understood to refer to *male prostitutes* set apart for pagan worship.
2. Deut 23:17,18 prohibits the daughters or sons of Israel from becoming a *qedeshah*(f) or *qadesh*(m) and then prohibits bringing the wages of a *zonah* *whore* into Yahweh's house.

VI. Slide13a **JOSIAH KEEPS THE PASSOVER, GOD KEEPS THE PUNISHMENT (23:21-30)**

A. **THE PASSOVER** (21-25)

¹ Faithlife Study Bible

- B. Josiah presides over *the first centralized celebration of Passover* since before the Israelites conquered the promise land, and he enacts additional reforms.
- C. The observance of Passover reminded the people that they belong to the Lord and must put evil out of their lives.

D. Slide13b **THE PUNISHMENT** (26-30)

- E. (27) Remove Judah from My sight - exact opposite of Numb.6:24-26 *The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you (turn His face toward you), And give you peace.* [here, He is turning His face away from them]

VII. Slide14a **2 BAD KINGS (23:31-37)**

A. **JEHOAHAZ** (31-34)

B. Slide14b **JEHOIAKIM** (35-37)

C. 2 ways to respond to the hearing of God's word:

1. As Josiah heard the Word of God...he tore his clothes (heart/tender, humble, wept). As Jehoiakim heard the Word of God...he tore the Word of God up.
2. See Jeremiah 36:20-32
3. Here we have *the book that wouldn't die.*
 - a) In music we have a tuning fork known as A-440 (440 vibrations per sec). It always has been & always will be [5000 yrs. from now it will still be the same pitch it will not change] Same with the Word of God.
4. The Lord handles this w/simply telling Jeremiah to write another scroll (36:28). But this time *he adds the kings doom.*
 - a) What he could not reach w/knife & fire was of course...*their Author.*
 - b) Ps.119:89 *Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.*
 - c) Is.40:8 *The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.*
5. Slide15 Last quote to Warren Wiersbe, *Any king who thinks he can silence God w/a knife & fire, has a very high opinion of himself, & a very low opinion of God.*