



Josiah's career

1. Kings II 22:2-3 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

He did what was pleasing to the Lord and he followed all the ways of his ancestor David; he did not deviate to the right or to the left. In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent the scribe Shaphan son of Azaliah son of Meshullam to the House of the Lord, saying...

2. Chronicles II 34:3-7 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the Gd of his father David, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the shrines, the sacred posts, the idols, and the molten images. At his bidding, they demolished the altars of the Baals, and he had the incense stands above them cut down; he smashed the sacred posts, the idols, and the images, ground them into dust, and strewed it onto the graves of those who had sacrificed to them...

3. Kings II 22:8-13 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

Then the high priest Hilkiyah said to the scribe Shaphan, "I have found a scroll of the Teaching in the House of the Lord." And Hilkiyah gave the scroll to Shaphan, who read it. The scribe Shaphan then went to the king and reported to the king: "Your servants have melted down the silver that was deposited in the House, and they have delivered it to the overseers of the work who are in charge at the House of the Lord." The scribe Shaphan also told the king, "The high priest Hilkiyah has given me a scroll"; and Shaphan read it to the king.

When the king heard the words of the scroll of the Teaching, he rent his clothes. And the king gave orders to the priest Hilkiyah, and to Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Michaiah, the scribe Shaphan, and Asaiah the king's minister: "Go, inquire of the Lord on my behalf, and on behalf of the people, and on behalf of all Judah, concerning the words of this scroll that has been found. For great indeed must be the wrath of the Lord that has been kindled against us, because our fathers did not obey the words of this scroll to do all that has been prescribed for us."

4. Talmud, Megillah 14b

How could Josiah abandon Jeremiah and send for her? In the yeshiva of Rabbi Shilah they explained: Because women are merciful. Rabbi Yochanan said: Jeremiah was away, bringing back the ten tribes...

5. Kings II 22:14-20 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

So the priest Hilkiyah, and Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah—the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah son of Harhas, the keeper of the wardrobe—who was living in Jerusalem in the Mishneh, and they spoke to her. She responded: "Thus said the Lord, the Gd of Israel: Say to the man who sent you to me: Thus said the Lord: I am going to bring disaster upon this place and its inhabitants, in accordance with all the words of the scroll which the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken Me and have made offerings to other gods and vexed Me with all their deeds, My wrath is kindled against this place and it shall not be quenched. But say this to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord: Thus said the Lord, the Gd of Israel: As for the words which you have heard - because your heart was softened and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I decreed against this place and its inhabitants—that it will become a desolation and a curse—and because you rent your clothes and wept before Me, I for My part have listened—declares the Lord. Assuredly, I will gather you to your fathers and you will be laid in your tomb in peace. Your eyes shall not see all the disaster which I will bring upon this place." So they brought back the reply to the king.

6. Rashi to Kings II 22:8

It was hidden beneath a pile of stones, buried there when Achaz burned the Torah.

7. Rabbi David Altschuler, Metzudat David commentary to Kings II 22:8

The kohanim feared that Achaz would send forth his hand against the Torah written by Moses from Gd, that had been located beside the Ark. They took it and buried it, and after his death they searched for it and did not find it... The sages have said that when they found the scroll, it was rolled to the portion of rebuke (Deuteronomy 28).

8. Deuteronomy 31:24-26

And when Moses finished writing the words of this Torah upon a scroll, until their completion. And Moses instructed the Levites, bearers of the Ark of the covenant of Gd: Take the scroll of this Torah, and place it beside the Ark of the covenant of Hashem your Gd, and it will be a testimony for you there...

9. Chronicles II 34:14

And when they brought out the silver which had been brought to the House of Gd, Chilkiyahu the priest found the scroll of the Torah of Gd, in the hand of Moses.

10. Rabbi Levi ben Gershon (Ralbag, Gersonides), Commentary to Kings II 22:11

Perhaps he saw the rebukes and that which continues from them in Deuteronomy, for there is hinted the exile of Samaria and the exile of Judea with the king of Judea.

11. Kings II 23:2-26 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

The king went up to the House of the Lord, together with all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests and prophets—all the people, young and old. And he read to them the entire text of the covenant scroll which had been found in the House of the Lord.

The king stood by the pillar and solemnized the covenant before the Lord: that they would follow the Lord and observe His commandments, His injunctions, and His laws with all their heart and soul; that they would fulfill all the terms of this covenant as inscribed upon the scroll. And all the people entered into the covenant.

Then the king ordered the high priest Hilkiah, the priests of the second rank, and the guards of the threshold to bring out of the Temple of the Lord all the objects made for Baal and Asherah and all the host of heaven. He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and he removed the ashes to Bethel...

Josiah turned and saw the graves... He asked, "What is the marker I see there?" And the men of the town replied, "That is the grave of the man of Gd who came from Judah and foretold these things that you have done to the altar of Bethel. "Let him be," he said, "let no one disturb his bones." So they left his bones undisturbed together with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria...

The king commanded all the people, "Offer the passover sacrifice to the Lord your Gd as prescribed in this scroll of the covenant." Now the passover sacrifice had not been offered in that manner in the days of the chieftains who ruled Israel, or during the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. Only in the eighteenth year of King Josiah was such a passover sacrifice offered in that manner to the Lord in Jerusalem.

Josiah also did away with the necromancers and the mediums, the idols and the fetishes—all the detestable things that were to be seen in the land of Judah and Jerusalem. Thus he fulfilled the terms of the Teaching recorded in the scroll that the priest Hilkiah had found in the House of the Lord.

There was no king like him before who turned back to the Lord with all his heart and soul and might, in full accord with the Teaching of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

However, the Lord did not turn away from His awesome wrath which had blazed up against Judah because of all the things Manasseh did to vex Him.

12. Chronicles II 35:2-5 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

He reinstated the priests in their shifts and rallied them to the service of the House of the Lord. He said to the Levites, consecrated to the Lord, who taught all Israel, "Put the Holy Ark in the House that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; as you no longer carry it on your shoulders, see now to the service of the Lord your Gd and His people Israel, and dispose yourselves by clans according to your divisions, as prescribed in the writing of King David of Israel and in the

document of his son Solomon, and attend in the Sanctuary, by clan divisions, on your kinsmen, the people—by clan divisions of the Levites.

13. Talmud, Yoma 52b

When the Ark was put away, with it were put away the jar of manna, the jug of anointing oil, Aaron's staff and its almonds and flowers, the box the Philistines sent as a gift to the Gd of Israel... And who put it away? Josiah put it away. What did he see, to lead him to put it away? He saw Deuteronomy 28:36, "Gd will lead you, and the king you establish over yourself, away." He stood and put it away, as in Chronicles II 35:3...

14. Kings II 23:29-30

In his days, Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt, ascended against the King of Assyria upon the Euphrates. And King Josiah went to greet him, and [Necho] killed him in Meggido when he saw him. And his servants drove him away, dead, from Meggido, and brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his grave...

15. Chronicles II 35:20-25

In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, this Pesach was performed. After all of Josiah's preparations of the Temple, Necho, King of Egypt, ascended to fight in Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went to meet him. And [Necho] sent messengers to him, saying, "What is between me and you, King of Judea? It is not against you today, but to the place of my battle, and Gd has said to speed me along! Leave Gd be, who is with me, and he will not destroy you." But Josiah did not turn away from him, but he disguised himself to fight with him, and he did not listen to the words of Necho from Gd, and he came to fight in Bikat Meggido. And the archers shot at King Josiah, and the king told his servants, "Take me away, for I am very ill." And his servants transported him from the chariot, and they rode him on his second chariot, and they brought him to Jerusalem and he died. And he was buried in the graves of his ancestors, and all Judea and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. And Jeremiah wailed for Josiah, and all of the male and female singers spoke in their wailings about Josiah, until today. And they made [these wailings] a law for Israel, and they recorded it in the Lamentations.

16. Midrash, Eichah Rabbah 1:22

"And he did not listen to the words of Necho, from Gd." Jeremiah told Josiah, "Thus I have received from my master Isaiah: 'And I will confuse Egypt against Egypt!'" But [Josiah] did not listen; rather, he told him, "Moses, your master's master, said, 'And the sword will not travel through your land,' and now this wicked person's sword shall travel through my land and my borders?" And he did not know that his entire generation served idolatry...

A true scion of David

17. Kings I 13:2 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

[And he] cried out against the altar: "O altar, altar! Thus said the Lord: A son shall be born to the House of David, Josiah by name; and he shall slaughter upon you the priests of the shrines who bring offerings upon you. And human bones shall be burned upon you."

18. Kings II 21:7

And [Menasheh] placed the statue of *asheirah* he had made, in the house of which Gd had said to David and his son Solomon, "In this house, and in Jerusalem I have chosen from all of the tribes of Israel, I shall place My Name forever."

19. Kings II 22:2 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

He did what was pleasing to the Lord and he followed all the ways of his ancestor David; he did not deviate to the right or to the left.

20. Chronicles II 34:2-3

And he did that which was just in the eyes of Gd, and he went in the paths of his father David, and he did not stray, right of left. And in the eighth year of his reign, and he was still young, he began to seek the Gd of his father David...

21. Deuteronomy 17:18-20 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

When he is seated on his royal throne, he shall have a copy of this Teaching written for him on a scroll by the levitical priests. Let it remain with him and let him read in it all his life, so that he may learn to revere the Lord his Gd, to observe faithfully every word of this Teaching as well as these laws. Thus he will not act haughtily toward his fellows or deviate from the Instruction to the right or to the left, to the end that he and his descendants may reign long in the midst of Israel.

22. Chronicles II 35:2-5 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

He reinstated the priests in their shifts and rallied them to the service of the House of the Lord. He said to the Levites, consecrated to the Lord, who taught all Israel, "Put the Holy Ark in the House that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; as you no longer carry it on your shoulders, see now to the service of the Lord your Gd and His people Israel, and dispose yourselves by clans according to your divisions, as prescribed in the writing of King David of Israel and in the document of his son Solomon, and attend in the Sanctuary, by clan divisions, on your kinsmen, the people—by clan divisions of the Levites.

23. Rabbi Levi ben Gerson, Commentary to Kings II 23:22

"A Pesach like this had not been performed since the days of the Judges" – In his day, like that of Samuel, all of the Jews turned to Gd. In the days of Saul and David there were private altars, which were legal but which Gd did not desire. In Solomon's day the altars remained and were converted to idolatry. In Hezekiah's day, the Jews did not return to Gd in entirety; some mocked Hezekiah's words. Only in Josiah's day, in that year, did all of Israel return to Gd.

24. Talmud, Arachin 33a

Rabbi Yochanan said: Jeremiah returned them, and Josiah son of Amon reigned over them. How do we know that they returned? Ezekiel said, "For the seller will not return to the sold item. (Ezekiel 7:13)" Could the Jubilee have been nullified already, when the prophet testified that it would eventually be nullified? Rather, this teaches that Jeremiah brought them back.

And how do we know that Josiah reigned over them? "And he said: What is this mark that I see? And the people of the city told him: This is the grave of the man of Gd who came from Judah and announced these words over the altar in Bethel. (Chronicles II 23)" What was Josiah doing in Bethel?! When Jeremiah brought them back, Josiah reigned over them.

Rav Nachman brought proof from here: "Also, Judah, I have placed an officer for you, for when I will return the exile of My nation. (Hoseia 6:11)"

25. Isaiah 18:7 (JPS 1985 tr. c/o sefaria.org)

In that time, tribute shall be brought to the Lord of Hosts [from] a people far and remote, from a people thrust forth and away— a nation of gibber and chatter, whose land is cut off by streams—at the place where the name of the Lord of Hosts abides, at Mount Zion.

26. The Lamentation for Josiah <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/747527/>