

*the Lord God of Israel*" (v. 16). Though the record indicates that there were residual effects from his former lifestyle, he nevertheless made every attempt to undo his wicked past. For the most part he was successful, even though he did not receive an honorable burial as his father did, and rightly so. Yet, Manasseh died a forgiven man. Amazing!

Just how deep is God's forgiveness? Certainly deeper than the deepest trench in all the world. Certainly, it was deep enough to reach the lowest of the low in King Manasseh. Charles Wesley said it well in his timeless hymn, *"His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood availed for me!"* Scripture further testifies that neither height nor depth or any other created thing *"shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus"* (Rom. 8:39). The corridors of history are filled with multitudes who can equally testify of the staggering depth of God's forgiveness. And so can you, dear friend if you need to hear or be reminded of this message as well.

The account of King Manasseh will forever go down in biblical history as a brilliant example of the power of God to forgive. His life gives encouragement to the worst of sinners (and to those who are praying for them) because it shows just how deep God can reach to rescue what seems to be a hopeless and ruined life. That same willingness and power to forgive is available now as it was to Manasseh and to *anyone* who humbly comes to God through faith in Christ.

— Mark Kolchin

To obtain additional copies at no charge contact:



*Know the Word Ministries, Inc.  
PO Box 305, Lanoka Harbor NJ 08734  
or e-mail us at [knowtheword@comcast.net](mailto:knowtheword@comcast.net)  
[www.knowtheword.com](http://www.knowtheword.com)*

**You will cast  
all our sins  
into the  
depths of the  
sea.**

**Micah 7:19**

The Depth of  
**GOD'S**  
Forgiveness

Mark Kolchin



Located off the coast of the Philippines in the North Pacific Ocean is the Marianas Trench. It is the lowest place on earth. At a depth of more than 35,000 feet, it is deeper than the highest place on earth Mt. Everest. It is the result of the convergence of oceanic plates colliding with each other long ago in earth's history. Its discovery in 1951 proved that nothing on earth is deeper—as far as trenches are concerned. But as far as God is concerned, there is. It is His love and forgiveness, and it goes even deeper. Perhaps no person illustrates the truth more clearly than King Manasseh, whose rebellion and life and miraculous transformation is recorded for us in two places in the Bible; one in 2 Kings 21 and a complete account in 2 Chron. 33.

**“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is His ear heavy that it cannot hear....”  
Isaiah 59:1**

Of all the kings of Judah, there was perhaps no one more evil than King Manasseh. Tradition tells us that he was the most likely the one who gave the gruesome order to have the prophet Isaiah sawn in two (see Heb. 11:37). Apart from being the son of good King Hezekiah, there is very little evidence to indicate that his life would have turned out for the better. And yet it did, despite the way he was

Raised in a royalty, Manasseh had the enviable privilege of being born to a godly father in Hezekiah. It was King Hezekiah who had accomplished great things for God during his prosperous reign. Under his leadership Hezekiah rebuffed Assyrian attempts to subjugate Israel. He successfully fended off two sieges by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, with the latter campaign ending in a glorious victory through the intercession of Isaiah, prompting a sweeping revival across the land. So great was the reverence for Hezekiah that upon his death “all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him”, a rare instance in those days (2 Chron. 32:33). What a tremendous example and heritage Hezekiah left for his son as Manasseh came to the throne at the tender age of twelve.

But rather than following in the ways of his father as might have been expected, Manasseh went in the opposite direction. The Bible says that he “did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel” (2 Chr. 33:2). He rebuilt the idolatrous altars that

father had so diligently worked by their sin, they did not listen. Deliberate rebellion to eradicate from the land and that magnitude can only be corrected through severe correction by the hand of God. Consequently, the LORD worshiped the host of heaven (v. 3), brazenly setting carved images brought upon Judah, the powerful nation of Assyria which in Solomon’s temple which should now saw their opportunity to conquer the sin-distracted nation. The prize spoil—Manasseh, who was carried away to glory of God. So evil was King Manasseh in humiliation to Babylon. What a striking picture of the ultimate consequences and destructive price tag of sacrifice, witchcraft, and sorcery. Here was a king of one of the most powerful nations on earth at the time, being led about like a common barnyard animal. How deceptive sin can be! Little did Manasseh and the inhabitants of Judah realize when he started out in life that these “little” choices would be bring him so low in life. But such are the ways of sin. Allowed to have its way, it mocks its victims and proves how utterly helpless they are against its powerful pull.

What caused Manasseh to so flagrantly disregard the ways of his father? Modern psychologists would tell us that such behavior is the result of poor parenting or insufficient education. But that most certainly was not the case in Manasseh’s case. From an economic standpoint, Manasseh probably had the best childhood that money could buy. Raised in royalty, he undoubtedly had good parents and a thorough education. But unless personal responsibility is taken, there is always a vulnerability to the alluring influences of the world. Over a dozen times we read of Manasseh’s deliberate and godless actions for which God held him personally accountable-- “he did evil, knew that the LORD was God” (v. 13). No doubt the words of the prophet whom Manasseh had killed rang in his ears: “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is His ear heavy that it cannot hear....” (Isaiah 59:1).

Until this point, all that he had heard about God fell on deaf ears without any personal application, spiritual interest or true relationship with the living God. But now with his “spiritual” eyes and ears opened and aware of a deeper need in his life, Manasseh cried out to God who heard his impassioned plea and forgave his sin, restoring both his life and his kingdom. A forgiven and cleansed life like Manasseh’s does not soon forget the debt it owes. With the same intensity of his former life, Manasseh set out to make good for all the evil he had previously committed. He repaired the walls of the city of David, (v. 14), “he took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD” (v. 15). “He repaired the altar of the LORD... and commanded Judah

to follow the ways of the LORD” (v. 16). Manasseh now ran the course in his life. But God is never silent during a time like this, whether with a person or a nation. His voice is always be heard and He does not leave Himself without witness, even in the midst of open rebellion. “And the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets...” (2 Kings 21:10), but because he and the nation were so anesthetized