Salt and Daylight – Guided by The Word

10/25/26

If you remember the other week, Elon Musk had the new Tesla Roadster demonstrated. It was the car that drove up a steep grade still it was upside down and then it flew a little bit, turned around, and then made a soft landing. The first thought that came into my mind was that vehicle empty or did it have a driver inside. I Google it and the vehicle was driven by computer / AI. So, the computer / AI directed that vehicle perfectly. The vehicle didn't go too much to the left or to the right. The computer / AI guided that vehicle till the mission was accomplished. We are like that flying vehicle. We need daily guidance because if we go too far to the right or too far to the left, we may get into trouble. We always have to remember that we are salt and daylight to this world. We are ambassadors for Jesus to this world. We are not ambassadors for this world to Jesus. The Church has gotten this mixed up in our time period. To be ambassadors for Jesus, we must make sure we are not allowing the world to trip us or lead us in different directions. Also, when the world throws new events into our life, we need guidance on how to view and deal with the events. We have to be careful on who we go to for guidance and direction. If someone is an ambassador for Jesus and wants guidance on what to do that they feel uncomfortable with, would they go to the writings of Karl Marx, the socialist writer, who thought people were animals and who didn't not believe in Jesus Christ / God? Should they watch or listen to podcasts to get the right information about being an ambassador for Jesus? They can, but most podcasters have an agenda or reason they are doing a podcast – to promote themselves. How trustworthy is their information? True followers of Jesus need absolute truth when dealing with the world so they can find out what is good and what is bad. To find that absolute truth, the Bible is our resource through the Holy Spirit. So far, the Bible has been translated into 4,170 different languages worldwide. There's about 900 English Bible translations and paraphrases. Americans purchased 19 million Bibles last year, which was a 12% increase from 2024. Barna Group does Christian polls and they say so far in 2025, about 50% of Christians read their Bible at least once a week, which is higher than 2024. The increase is driven by the growing number of young people who are reading the Bible. There

is hope there. Still, only 50% of Christians are linked to the best resource on absolute truth. What is the other 50% relying on? If you are not tapped into the best resource, before long, you will be so far from Jesus; you'll no longer will be salt and light to the world. A good example of this can be found in the Old Testament.

Let's turn to 2 Kings 22: 1-4 where we read this, "**22** Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned for thirty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.[2] He did what was right in the sight of the LORD and walked [a]entirely in the way of his father David, and did not turn aside to the right or to the left.[3] Now in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan, the son of Azaliah the son of Meshullam the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,[4] "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, and have him [b]count all the money brought into the house of the LORD, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people. (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)"

I find it interesting that Judah and Israel had a long history of having bad kings. We talked about a good king last week – Hezekiah. This week, we'll look at a king that started when he was 8 years old. Verse 2 is very important here. King Josiah did what was right in the sight of the Lord. Not only did he do what was right, he walked entirely in the way of his ancestor, David. David had a heart for God. Josiah, it appears, has some of the same character traits as David. Plus, even being at a young age, Josiah did not turn aside to the right or to the left. With the long history of bad kings, this young king walked in the ways of the Lord. This young king wanted the money collected to be used for the repair of the Temple, which had become in disrepair. This tells us that the people at this time were not close to God. This young king had his hands full in trying to get the whole nation focused on God. We notice that the king did not turn aside to the right or to the left. He stayed focused on God. He was not like Peter when the disciples were on the lake and a storm came up. He saw Jesus walking toward the boat and Peter wanted to walk to Him, but Peter focused on the waves from the storm instead of Jesus. This young king stayed focused on God. This would not be easy for a young king because I'm sure there would be those within his own cabinet who did not like what he was doing in religious reform. He didn't waver under the pressure even though Israel struggled throughout its history in trying to be close and

obedient to God. They had become very pagan and loveless. So, this Scripture gives us a picture into the character of King Josiah. Let's continue on.

Let's turn to 2 Kings 22: 8-20, as we continue into this story, "[8] Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, who read it.[9] Then Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king and said, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have handed it over to the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD."[10] Moreover, Shaphan the scribe informed the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it in the presence of the king.[11] When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes.[12] Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, [d]Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying,[13] "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for the wrath of the LORD that burns against us is great, because our fathers did not listen to the words of this book, to act in accordance with everything that is written regarding us."[14] So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of [e]Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (and she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her.[15] Then she said to them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: 'Tell the man who sent you to Me,[16] "This is what the LORD says: 'Behold, I am going to bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants, all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read.[17] Since they have abandoned Me and have burned incense to other gods so that they may provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be quenched.'"[18] But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD, this is what you shall say to him: "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says: '*Regarding* the words which you have heard,[19] since your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become an object of horror and

a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I have indeed heard you,' declares the LORD."[20] Therefore, behold, I am going to gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes will not look at all the devastation that I am going to bring on this place.'" So they brought back word to the king. (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)"

So, while repairs are being done in the Temple of God, the high priest finds the Book of the Law. This book may have been entire Pentateuch (Gen – Deut.) or just the book of Deuteronomy. What is tragic is what we find in verse 13 where the king asks his advisors and priests to go back to the Temple and speak to God about the words in the Book. I can imagine for a moment when the king first hears the words from this old book. He tears his clothes because he realizes how far his nation had drifted from those God laws. Since they were no where close to following God's laws, drastic reforms would have to be made. It wasn't just his generation that was guilty here, it was the past generations that had handed down the Temple deterioration. Not only had the building been neglected, but the laws that were meant to help the people with their relationship to God had been put away. The leaders and the people no longer had a hunger to read God's laws anymore. Plus, it got worst with each passing generation – got further and further away from God because they no longer had a Book that guided them into the knowledge of right and wrong. When this happens, right can become wrong and wrong can become right. Isaiah, the prophet, tells us this in Isaiah 5: 20, "Destruction is certain for those who say that evil is good and good is evil; that dark is light and light is dark; that bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter. (NLT)" This describes the time period of King Josiah. Maybe we could say this sounds like today as well. Good has become evil and evil has become good even within the Church itself. No longer do many within the Church have faith in the Word of God. When that happens, many find a storage place for their Bible and store it away. Why read it, if you don't really believe it? Some go the other direction by reading the Bible, but put in or take out what they like or don't like to fit the culture they live in. King Josiah didn't try to change the Word of God or the Book of Law to fit his time period. He went straight to God because his nation had not been doing what the scroll said. The same can be said for the Church today. Each passing

generation is drifting further and further away from the Lord and the past generations will be held guilty. Plus, it's the past generations that will cause much suffering and pain for the future generations as did the generations before King Josiah's time if they turn from God. We know this because God has the priests and advisors take back a message to King Josiah and God tells him in verse 16 – 20 that the old book that was put away for storage told the people what would happen to them if they worshipped false gods, which was what they were doing before King Josiah had all their pagan alters torn down. The Book of Law said the nation would be destroyed and King Josiah believed in God and he wanted God's final answer on what he read because the Book had been stored away for so long. The king wanted to make sure that this would happen. God tells him it would, but because the king showed repentance and shame for the sin of the people, God would hold back the destruction till after his death. The people had sinned for so long against God, punishment had to come. This is why it is so important we make sure our faith in Jesus and the Word of God stays strong, even if we're told the Bible does not fit into today's world. God is till the same as He was during King Josiah's time and He is still holy and righteous and He wants us to be the same. Maybe we need to start to ask Jesus to help us to have faith in His Word. I'll end this sermon with several pieces of Scripture that will shine light on the importance of not storing away or changing the Word of God to fit into this evil world. Remember, for us to be real salt and daylight to this world, the Word of God is needed to help us to keep salty and bright as our culture changes.

Hebrews 4: 12 – "For the Word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are."

Isaiah 40: 8 – "The grass withers, and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever."

Jeremiah 23: 29 – "Does not my word burn like fire?" asks the Lord. "Is it not like a mighty hammer that smashes rocks to pieces?"

John 17: 17 – "Make them pure and holy by teaching them your words of truth"

Psalm 119: 105 – "Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path."

Matthew 4:4 – "The Scriptures say, 'People need more than bread for their life; they must feed on every Word of God'". (Deut. 8:3)

Isaiah 55: 11 – It is the same with my Word, I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it."

NLT Life Application Study Bible. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.: Wheaton, 1996