

Who was Huldah the prophetess in the Bible?

Huldah the prophetess lived in Jerusalem during the reign of King Josiah, who was one of only a few good, God-fearing kings of Judah. There are not many details about Huldah other than where she lived and the fact that she was “the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe” (2 Chronicles 34:22). But Huldah’s prophecy and the events that precipitated it are quite amazing.

During what was apparently a routine bookkeeping task being performed for the king, the high priest, Hilkiah, found a copy of the Book of the Law (which had been lost) and brought it to the king to be read. The details of this story make it clear that the Book of the Law had not been seen in many years, perhaps generations. The Book of the Law, given to the people by God through Moses, was the foundation of Israel’s entire religious and political system. The fact that it could have been lost for years is almost inconceivable. The neglect of the Law shows the depth of the apostasy during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon.

When the scroll was read, King Josiah discovered the extent of Judah’s disobedience and saw they were in danger of God’s wrath. The king was devastated, so much so that he tore his clothes in mourning (2 Chronicles 34:19). Imagine Josiah’s shock, considering that this book came from God Himself and warned of severe repercussions for the entire nation that Josiah governed. King Josiah needed guidance on what to do, so he sent his advisers to Huldah the prophetess, asking for a word from the Lord (verse 21).

Huldah the prophetess gave the king’s men a message from God: disaster would strike the nation because they had forgotten God and instead worshiped idols (2 Chronicles 34:23-25). But God had a different message for Josiah. Despite the absence of the Law, King Josiah had honored God by getting rid of idol worship in Judah and Jerusalem (2

Chronicles 34:1-7). As a result of Josiah's action, the destruction of Judah would not occur during Josiah's lifetime. Through Huldah the prophetess, God said, "Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the Lord. Now I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place and on those who live here" (2 Chronicles 34:27-28).