

# The Watford Word

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## What's on

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**Sunday 16 July - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking.**

**Sunday 23 July - 10:30AM. Mike Desouza speaking**

Wednesday 26 July - Men's gathering

Friday 28th July - Women's gathering

**Sunday 30 July - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking.**

**Sunday 27 August - 10:30AM. Barry Lamb speaking.**

**Sunday 17 Sept - 10:30AM. Dr Andy Boakye**

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## Farewell Notes from Tanya

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Today is Tanya, Roman and Anna's final Sunday service with us. They return to Ukraine and Alex with our prayers. After church today we will have refreshments together, so please plan to stay after the service. Tanya has written a note to thank us.

Dear brothers and sisters!

I sincerely thank you for becoming a spiritual family for me and my family over the past year. You have sheltered us, served us, and we have not been in need of anything. And through your ministry - kind words, sympathy, prayers, practical and financial help - we felt the love and care of our Heavenly Father. We are especially grateful to Barry and Kate Edwards, who not only opened the doors of their home to us, but also constantly poured their hearts and souls into us.

Let me share three main lessons I have learned during this time:

1) Appreciate today. No one knows what will happen tomorrow. There is today, and it is important to live, not to survive. We also had many other plans when we woke up to the explosions of Russian missiles on the morning of February 24, 2022. And everything has changed. Now we are returning to Ukraine, where a

nuclear power plant is mined, and no one knows what will happen tomorrow. But gratitude for what we have now gives us strength.

2) Remember that Jesus stretches out his hand in the midst of the storm. Unfortunately, or fortunately, only a crisis reveals what is in our hearts. And Jesus does not condemn me when I am weak, when the waves of emotions and experiences and pain are too high. He, like Peter, who doubted and began to sink, lovingly saves me every time.

3) Accept help. In fact, it is difficult for me. It's easier to give, it gives you a sense of confidence and control. But only when you realise that you can't do something, do you become modest and humble

God has no hands other than human hands - you have become these hands of God for us. You will always be in our hearts and prayers. Please continue to pray for my husband, who is now at the front, and for Ukraine's soonest victory.

With much love and gratitude,

Tanya, Roman and Anna

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## Huldah and Josiah

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Next Sunday we will take a look at an unlikely Biblical partnership — that between Huldah and Josiah. Have you heard of them? What do you know? Have a look at 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34 for background.

### The Situation

Josiah was king of Judah (the southern part of the divided kingdom). Israel (the northern part) had already gone into exile. Assyria was the dominant political power and Judah was effectively a vassal

state. Josiah became king at 8 years old and reigned from around 640-609 BC.

### The Book

When he was 26 Josiah was startled to be given a book. The high priest Hilkiah had found it in the process of refurbishing the temple. He gave it to Shaphan the king's secretary who read it to the king. It turned out to be 'the book of the law'. Josiah's response to the reading was remarkable,

*"When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. Then the king commanded the priest Hilkiah, Abikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary, and the king's servant Asaiah, saying, "Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our ancestors did not obey the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." 2 Kings 22:11-13*

### Huldah comes onto the scene

Of all the people in Israel at the time, who did they go to in order to discern the will of the LORD? [The king could] consult Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, or Huldah. The first four have books in Israel's collection of prophets. But he chooses Huldah above the rest. Huldah is not chosen because no men were available; she is chosen because she is truly exceptional among the prophets.' The Blue Parakeet, Scot McKnight

She replies confidently and forthrightly.

*"So the priest Hilkiah, Abikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harbas, keeper of the wardrobe; she resided in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter, where they consulted her. She declared to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel:" 2 Kings 22:14-15*

Her prophecy is bad news for Israel but good news for Josiah who will not see the disaster to befall Israel in his lifetime "because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place," (2 Kings 22:19)

### The response

Take some time to read 2 Kings 23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35 for Josiah's inspiring reaction. He purges the temple, Jerusalem and all of Judah from the idols, false altars and pagan priests. His actions look extreme to our western modern sensibilities, but it was a matter of life and death. At the end of all his purification efforts the Passover is celebrated. As it tell us, "No passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; none of the kings of Israel had kept such a passover as was kept by Josiah, by the priests and the Levites, by all Judah and Israel who were present, and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this passover was kept." (2 Chronicles 35:18-19 NRSV)

### Questions

- What does Huldah's example say to you about conviction, courage and the role of women?
- What does Josiah's example say to you about conviction, courage and the role of men?

God bless, Malcolm

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### AIM UK&I

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