

LESSON 4

JOSIAH REPAIRS THE TEMPLE

BEFORE YOU TEACH

A Divided Kingdom

After the reign of Solomon, the Israelite nation was split into two kingdoms, just as God had revealed.

Judah, the southern kingdom, was made up of two tribes: Judah and Benjamin. Sometimes, they were referred to as one tribe because they shared a border and Benjamin was relatively small in number. Judah was led by Solomon's son Rehoboam, and David's kingdom was passed on through this line.

Israel, the northern kingdom, consisted of the remaining ten tribes. It was led by Jeroboam, someone who had once served under Solomon and who had revolted when Rehoboam came into reign (1 Kgs 11:26-12:24). This kingdom overwhelmingly produced evil and corrupt kings.

While Judah had some good kings, it had its share of wicked ones, too. Ironically, two of its worst kings were Josiah's grandfather Manasseh, and his father, Amon.

The following is a list of the kings of the southern kingdom of Judah. These dates are based on E.R. Thiele's summary. Other authorities may differ. Several reigns overlapped because some kings ruled jointly with their families. All dates are BC.

Rulers of Judah

1. Rehoboam	930-913	11. Jotham	750-732
2. Abijam	913-910	12. Ahaz	735-715
3. Asa	910-869	12. Hezekiah	715-686
4. Jehoshaphat	873-848	14. Manasseh	697-642
5. Jehoram	853-841	15. Amon	642-640
6. Ahaziah	841	16. Josiah	640-609
7. Athaliah	841-835	17. Jehoahaz	609
8. Joash	835-796	18. Jehoiakim	609-598
9. Amaziah	796-767	19. Jehoiachin	598-597
10. Azariah	792-740	20. Zedekiah	597-586

Josiah

At the young age of eight, Josiah succeeded his father Amon as king of Judah. At that time, the kingdom was a vassal of Assyria and as a result, Judah was strongly influenced to worship their false gods.

Guided by a good mother and God-loving advisors, Josiah found his way to God at sixteen. By the time he was twenty, Assyrian power had declined and he seized this opportunity to rid the kingdom of idols.

When he was twenty-six, Josiah ordered the repair of the damaged and neglected temple. The idols that had been placed in the temple area were also removed.

During the renovation, the priest Hilkiah came across a copy of the Book of the Law. Many believe that this was the Book of Deuteronomy and may even have been a temple copy of the Pentateuch.

Josiah is known as one of the best kings of Judah since he worked hard at reforming the kingdom and eliminating idol worship.

BIBLE TEXT

2 Kings 22-23;
2 Chronicles 34-35

BIBLE TRUTH

God wants His followers to obey His laws.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To seek to follow God's will by following Him with a pure heart.
2. To be proactive in keeping our church clean and worshipping God with all our heart.
3. To make a covenant with God to "hear and heed" the words of God.

MEMORY VERSE

"Let no one despise your youth."

(1 Timothy 4:12a)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord Jesus, thank You for guiding us through another week safely. We want to learn Your words and obey Your commands. Even though we are still young, help us set good examples for others so that we can give glory to Your name. Let us learn from the story of King Josiah today and apply it in our lives. Thank You for hearing our prayer. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

It is hard to imagine an eight-year-old child becoming the leader of a nation. Even more astonishing is that by the age of twenty-six, this child, now a young man, is able to lead the country out of idol worshipping. But Josiah was able to accomplish all that because he worshipped God.

He was able to rid Judah of the idol worship that had crept back into the hearts of the people and turn them wholly back to God. The Bible says that after Josiah, there was never a king like him again.

Josiah is a wonderful example of a lifetime of faith. Your students can learn many valuable lessons from his life. Josiah set the stage at a very young age and showed that it is never too early to demonstrate your faith in God.

1 Timothy 4:12 states: "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Therefore, there are no excuses that can be given—everyone, including six to eight-year-olds, can glorify God.

Ask your students how they can set examples for others in the areas of speech, life, love, faith, and purity. By discussing real-life situations, they will know how to apply this verse to their lives.

When they can successfully maintain an active faith at a young age, it will become a natural part of their lives as they grow up.

VOCABULARY

scroll: a roll of paper used as a writing surface

prophetess: a female prophet; one who delivers God's messages

scribe: a person who copies and writes text; a government official

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about the downfall of King Solomon. He began his reign as a good king and worshipped God. He was very rich and wise. God had blessed him abundantly.

But he made a big mistake when it came to his wives. He chose to marry foreign women; none of Solomon's wives worshipped God. But Solomon really liked them, and he ended up marrying seven hundred wives and acquiring three hundred concubines. God was not pleased.

Solomon really angered God when he let his wives persuade him to worship idols, too! He even made altars for them. God was so angry that He told Solomon that the kingdom would be taken away from him during the reign of his son.

God had promised to establish Solomon's throne forever if he always followed Him, but because Solomon did not worship God all the way to the end, the kingdom of Israel would no longer be blessed.

Unlike King Solomon, we need to keep our faith until the end. Our goal is to reach the heavenly kingdom and we must always remember to obey God's commands.

BIBLE STORY

King Josiah

After the death of Solomon, the Israelite nation was divided into two smaller kingdoms. The one in the north was called the kingdom of Israel, while the other in the south was called the kingdom of Judah.

There were many evil kings in the northern kingdom of Israel. One after another, the kings continuously failed to worship God. There were also wicked kings in Judah, but some good kings emerged occasionally. In particular, there was one king called Josiah who worshipped God.

Josiah became the king of Judah when he was only eight years old. Boys and girls, can you imagine how a boy of eight years old would feel when he is given this responsibility? But Josiah was a good king. He obeyed God

and followed His commands. Josiah was very different from his father and grandfather, who had both worshipped idols.

When Josiah was still young, he saw that the temple Solomon had built was dirty and broken. He wanted to repair and clean it up. When the people of the land learned about this, they were willing to help and they offered money.

So Josiah sent his scribe Shaphan to take care of this task. The king asked Shaphan to make sure that the money contributed by the people would be used towards the repair. A high priest named Hilkiah was appointed to be in charge of the repair work, making sure that everything would be done properly.

Boys and girls, can anyone share their thoughts on what this action of contributing reminds us of today? Well, it reminds us about offering to God when we come to church. Just like in the time of King Josiah, the money collected will be used to maintain the house of God so that all the believers will have a nice and comfortable place to worship the Lord.

The Book of Law Is Found

Every day, the people worked hard at repairing the temple. Shaphan would make rounds and see how the reconstruction was going every now and then. Then he would report back to Josiah.

One day, after Shaphan surveyed the work, the high priest Hilkiah wanted to speak to him. He had found something special while the people were cleaning out the temple. It was a scroll.

"I found this," Hilkiah said. "It's the Book of the Law."

Shaphan took the scroll and read it slowly. He realized that it contained the laws that God had given to Moses a long time ago. He knew that the king would want to see it so he took it and rushed back to the palace.

When Shaphan saw King Josiah, he showed him the scroll. The king had never seen it before. He asked his scribe to read it to him. As Josiah listened to God's word, he knew that the people had not obeyed God's rules.

Josiah became upset. He stood up and tore his clothes. He did this because he realized that for many years, the people had not followed God's commands. He turned and spoke to Shaphan.

"Go and ask the Lord for me about the words of this book which has been found," said King Josiah. "I know the Lord is very angry because our fathers have not obeyed His laws."

The King was very wise even at this young age because he knew how to seek God's advice when he was facing a serious situation. We should learn from him; whenever we come across a difficult situation, we should first think about praying to God for wisdom and guidance.

So Shaphan, Hilkiah, and three other men went to see a prophetess of God. Her name was Huldah.

Huldah Gives God's Answer

Huldah gave them God's answer. "The Lord says, 'I will bring disaster on this place and on the people who live there because they have forsaken Me.'"

But God had a special message for Josiah.

The prophetess continued to speak, saying, "The Lord says, 'But because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what I spoke against this place, you will go to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see the disaster which I will bring on this place.'" They took the message back to the king.

Josiah's Reforms

When Josiah heard the words of God, he was saddened. Even though God had said that He would spare the land while Josiah was the king, he knew that he had to make changes now. It was his responsibility as king. He realized everyone had to repent for their sins.

King Josiah realized how serious the warnings were and he wasted no time in changing the situation. We can definitely learn from his courage and love for his people.

"I must read God's Law to the people," King Josiah said. So he gathered all the people and they went to the temple. The laws were read to the people. Then Josiah made a promise to the Lord. He promised to obey the words of the Law and to follow God with all his heart and all his soul.

Everyone also joined in the covenant with him. They professed to do everything God told them to do. Josiah also got rid of all the idols that were in the land so that they could worship the Lord faithfully.

He knew that his fathers were wrong for worshipping false gods. Now that he realized the mistakes they had made, he tried his best to change the bad habits of the people. Josiah wanted everyone to be obedient to God.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Fill In the Blank/True or False

1. King Josiah was crowned king when he was _____ (eight) years old.
2. King Josiah wanted to repair the _____ (temple).
3. King Josiah was determined to keep God's _____ (commands/laws).
4. "Let no one despise your _____ (youth)."
5. The Book of the Law was found while the temple was being repaired. True.

Questions to Think About

1. How did Josiah repent before God when he realized the people had not been following God's commands?
2. When we do something wrong today, what can we do to repent?
3. What does it mean to be obedient to God's laws?
4. Have you ever said, "I am too young to do that"? What if you were asked to do the same task again today? What would your answer be?

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

“Let no one despise your youth.” (1 Timothy 4:12a)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

At the age of eight, Josiah became king of Judah (2 Kgs 22:1; 2 Chr 34:1). Despite his young age, Josiah sought after God and led a great example for his people.

1. Josiah pulled down altars and burned all the idols throughout his land.

Josiah showed great courage in pulling down altars and burning all the idols throughout his land. Josiah's father and grandfather were two very bad kings. They did not obey God and His commandments. Because of their influence, the people of Judah worshipped idols for many years. Thankfully, Josiah didn't follow the ways of his father or the entire nation. Instead, he sought to follow God's will. Even though he lived in a culture where no one respected God, Josiah remained a faithful follower of God.

Today, we also live among many people who do not obey God's commandments. How can we learn from Josiah to follow God with a pure heart? Let's hear Jorge and Vivian's testimonies.

1. There's a new video game that Jorge really wants to play. However, his parents told Jorge that he already has many video games and that he doesn't need another new one. Jorge has tried to convince his parents many times, but his parents still won't buy it. One Saturday, Jorge's friend Evan invited him to his house to play video games that afternoon. Evan said to Jorge, "Let me tell you a secret... My parents just got me that new game we really wanted. Even though your parents didn't buy it, you can play it at my house! My mom said that you can come over every Saturday afternoon—that's the day I'm allowed my own free time."

Jorge had been so desperate for this new game and now his friend just told him that he could play it every week without having to ask his parents to buy it for him! But then, all of the sudden, Jorge thought to himself, "Saturday is the day I go to church and it is one of God's commandments to keep the Sabbath. What is more important than obeying the words of God? I shouldn't even think about playing video games on the Sabbath." Immediately, the fear of God came into his heart; Jorge determined to obey God. Immediately, he stopped thinking about the video game and said to Evan, "I'm sorry, Evan. I cannot come to your place on Saturdays because that is the day I go to church for worship. I won't do anything on Saturdays except keep the Lord's Sabbath, even if it means missing out on my favorite video games!"

2. Vivian is a hard-working and goal-oriented student. She has received As in all of her classes so far. Her parents and relatives are all very proud of her and they often praise her for that. However, as time goes by, Vivian's expectations for herself have become unrealistic and stressful. Last week, Vivian had a math exam. Math is her only weak subject. During the exam, she found a few questions to which she didn't know the answers. She began to panic and thought, "What do I do? If I don't answer these questions right, I probably won't get an A on this exam, and my record will be gone! My parents and relatives will be so disappointed in me." At this point, Vivian was tempted to look around and see if anyone else had the answers to the questions she didn't know. But Vivian quickly closed her eyes and said a silent prayer:

"Dear God, I'm really sorry that this thought came to my mind. Your words have taught me so many times that cheating is not right, and I almost made a big mistake! Even though I really want to keep my record, I cannot let it take control of my heart. Lord, please give me strength to keep my heart pure and help me be submissive to Your words. Hallelujah. Amen."

As soon as Vivian opened her eyes, she remembered a few things that she studied last night. The answers were coming back to her! In the end, not only did Vivian give thanks to God for helping her get an A on her test, she also thanked God for placing His wisdom deep inside her heart.

2. Josiah repaired the temple and restored temple worship.

In addition to pulling down altars and burning down idols, Josiah also left us an example of courage by repairing the temple and restoring the temple worship. Josiah did this more thoroughly than any other king before him (2 Kgs 23:25).

Today, how can we take care of God's temple in the same way? Firstly, we can do so by **keeping the church holy**. Our church is a spiritual place for worship, and therefore we must keep it holy. In other words, everything we do at church has to be honorable to God. Imagine that some truth-seekers come to our church one day and they hear some of us gossiping about other members. What do you think the truth-seekers would think about our church? [Let students answer.] They would probably think that our church doesn't teach the words of God! This is not how God wants our church to appear to be. He abides with this church, and He wants anyone who walks in it to feel His presence. Secondly, we can take care of God's temple by **keeping the church clean**.

When people were cleaning up the temple during Josiah's time, it was dirty, messy and unorganized. Imagine if no one ever took the time to clean our church. When we come here on Saturday, we would see everything all over the place and filthy. Would you want to worship God in a place like that? Certainly not! This church is the body of Christ, and we all have a responsibility to take care of it. We can start by helping to clean!

3. Josiah restored the law of God and reinstated Passover.

Now, let's move on to another example of courage Josiah left us—he restored the law of God and reinstated Passover. The Law from Deuteronomy was re-read to the national assembly after Josiah found it at the temple of God. It was a book long lost but once recognized as the standard of authority for the nation. Josiah was not happy to know that his people had not been following the words of God. Upon its discovery, not only did he determine to serve the Almighty, he also started helping others by restoring their faith to God.

The Passover that Josiah reinstated was a Jewish festival that the Lord had commanded His people to keep (Ex 12). God wants His people to commemorate the time when He brought the Israelites out of Egypt with the last plague. Do you remember what happened? [Let students share and revisit the story of the tenth plague.] During the Passover, each household would prepare an offering—the sacrifice of an unblemished lamb. This time, Josiah generously gave thirty thousand lambs for his people from his possessions. Can you imagine how big this festival must have been? Not only was it an example of remarkable planning, this festival also showed how much Josiah wanted to do right in God's sight. The Bible even told us "there had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept" (2 Chr 35:18). You can see that, for many years, Judah was lacking a good leader—a king that was willing to take the challenge and bring all his people back to God. After the reign of two very bad kings, Judah finally had a king who strictly followed the Law of Moses again. Josiah indeed left us a very good example with a shining point in Judah's history.

4. Josiah renewed the covenant with God.

Lastly, Josiah left us an example of courage by renewing the covenant with God. A covenant is more than just a promise. A covenant is an agreement between God and His people to establish a relationship of commitment. In other words, when people make a covenant with God, they are committing themselves to what God wants them to do. Now, this was Judah's last national covenant with God. It includes,

- "To walk in the way of the LORD." The nation promised to worship God with obedience, sincerity, and purity (2 Chr 11:17; 2 Kgs 17:8; 21:22).
- "To keep His commandments."
- "To perform the words of the covenant." The nation was committed to recognizing the word of God as the final authority. They were to follow God's word, not their feelings or imagination.

Students, are you committed to follow God's words? By making a covenant with God, the people of Judah were determined to "hear and heed" the words of God. After the laws were re-read to the people of Judah, the people kept everything in their hearts and allowed God's words to sink deep within them. Not only that, they also diligently applied the words of God into their lives. Have you been using the knowledge you learn from RE class every week? Do you keep this knowledge deep within you? Let me share with you how Julian committed himself to putting the words of God into action.

Julian accidentally broke a vase at home with his remote control racecar when nobody was home. He was very nervous, because he knew that the plate was a gift from a very good friend of his mother's, and his mother had told him numerous times not to play with his racecar inside of the house. Julian frantically put away his racecar while trying to come up with an excuse to get away from his mom's punishment. He thought to himself, "Maybe I can blame it on our dog! There's no way our dog can tell the truth. Mom won't find out that I broke the vase with my racecar!" But suddenly, Julian thought about what the Bible says about lying. He also remembered that he had promised God to be a good Christian! He knew that God would be very disappointed if he still chose to lie even though he knows that it's wrong. Therefore, Julian decided to tell his mom the truth. He has put the words of God deep inside his heart and God knows that he has the right knowledge! While Julian knew what to do, he was too afraid to tell his mom in person, so he decided to write a letter:

"Dear Mom, I have something to tell you. I'm really, really sorry, but I was playing with my remote control racecar at home and I broke your vase with it. I know I'm wrong; I didn't listen to you and broke the vase your friend gave you. I'm really sorry, and I will never do it again. I am writing this letter to you because I'm very nervous but I want to tell you the truth. I've learned from church so many times that we cannot lie, and I want to do this right. I hope you understand and will forgive me."

After Julian's mom read the letter, she smiled at Julian. She accepted Julian's apologies and was very proud that Julian kept the words of God deep inside his heart!

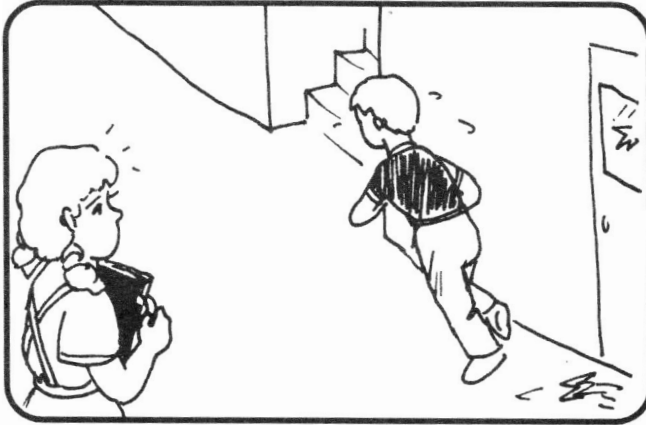
Today, we learned that Josiah left us a great example—an example of influence! There is so much we can learn from him. Like him, we can hate what is evil. For example, worshipping idols is evil. What did Josiah do? [Let students answer.] He took down all the altars and idols in Judah. Like him, we can turn to God without delay. Josiah realized that his people had not been obeying God for many years, so, in no time, he repaired the temple for people to once again worship the only God. Like him, we can do right in God's sight. Josiah trusted in God to make the right decision—that is, to lead the entire nation back to Christ. It was a great challenge, but he did it nonetheless because he was determined to follow God's will. This is something he did not learn from his father or grandfather!

To recap, here are some of the great examples Josiah has left us:

1. When he was only 8, Josiah became king of Judah (2 Kgs 22:1; 2 Chr 34:1). Immediately he began to seek God. He did not turn aside. He was consistent in living for God.
2. At age 16, Josiah began to demonstrate a genuine commitment to God (2 Chr 34:3a). This reveals that Josiah had spent his early years studying about God and understanding His words.
3. When Josiah was 20, he began to get rid of the idols in Judah (2 Chr 34:3b). He knew what was right and began to do it.
4. By the age of 26, Josiah started a reformation in Judah by which true worship would be restored. He repaired and restored the temple of God. The Book of the Law was discovered, and Josiah was moved with a holy fear to once again announce the words of God to Judah (2 Kgs 22:13b)
5. The covenant with God was renewed (2 Kgs 23:3a; 2 Chr 34:31).

ACTIVITIES

1

Let's Take Care Of the Church**Objective:** To encourage students to take care of the church in any way they can.**Instructions:** Sometimes, we feel that we are too young to work for God. But we learned from King Josiah that we are never too young. Read each paragraph carefully. Decide what each child can do to help the church. Share your answers with the class.

Joanne heard a loud noise. Someone had just broken the church window. There was glass all over the floor.

Then Joanne saw Frank.

He was running away and he looked scared. Joanne realized that Frank had broken the window.

What should Joanne do? What should Frank have done?

Pat saw that the church sign was coming apart. Some of the paint was fading, too.

Pat said to Laura,

"I think we should tell the pastor."

But Laura responded by saying, "No way! Let someone else do it."

What should Pat do?

What should Laura have done?



James and Aaron were watching Sister Lee. She was pulling weeds out from the lawn in front of the church.

James said to Aaron, "We can help her pull out the weeds and put them in the trash can."

Aaron replied, "That's a lot of work. Someone else can do the job."

What should James do?

How should Aaron have responded?

2**A Young King**

Objective: To encourage students to obey God's words by role-playing King Josiah.

Materials

- Construction paper
- Pencil
- Tape or stapler
- Glue
- Yarn in assorted colors
- Markers
- Scissors
- Crown pattern

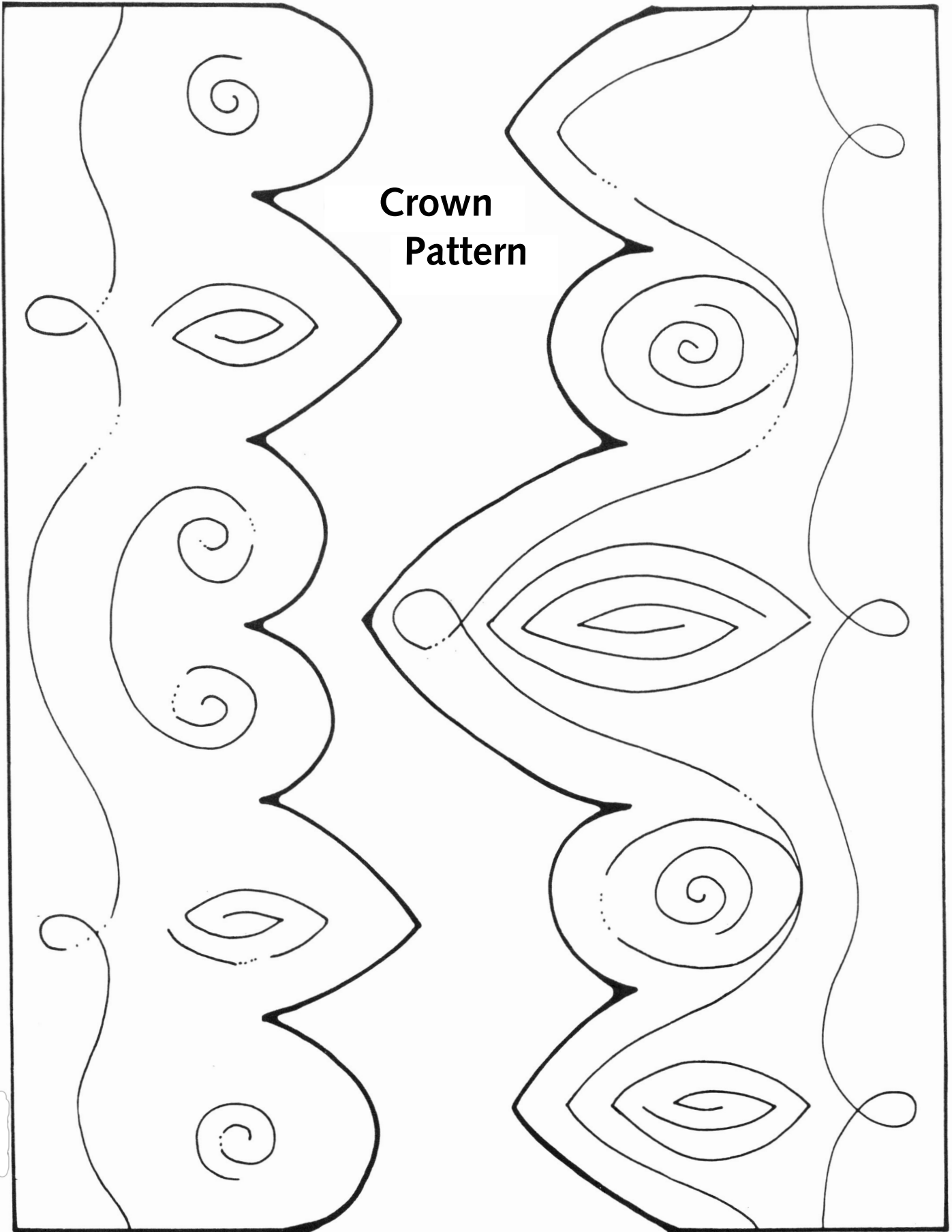
Instructions

1. Cut out the crown pattern and trace it onto the construction paper.
2. Cut out the two crown pieces and decorate them with yarn or with markers. You can coil some yarn to use as jewels.
3. Tape or staple the two crown pieces together so that the crown fits securely on your head.

The students should take turns and pretend that they are young King Josiah. Let each student tell the class how they obeyed God as the king.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. B
2. B
3. False; Josiah's father worshipped idols.
4. False; he consulted God through the prophetess Huldah.
5. He was upset because he realized the people had not been following God's commands.
6. Shaphan, the king's scribe
7. Possible answers: obedient, wise, faithful
8. They said they would follow God's law.
9. Answers may vary.



E1 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 4—Josiah Repairs the Temple

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God wants His followers to obey His laws.

Lesson Objectives: 1. To be courageous in obeying God's laws.
2. To set a good example for others.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(1 Timothy 4:12a)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Multiple Choice

- ____ : King Josiah was the king of which kingdom?
 - Israel
 - Judah
 - Assyria
- ____ : When did God say that He would bring punishment to the people of Judah?
 - Never
 - After the time of Josiah
 - During the time when Josiah was the king

True or False

- Josiah's father was a good king that feared God. _____
- King Josiah consulted generals and elders about what to do after hearing the Law of God. _____

Short Answer

- King Josiah was upset when he heard the contents of the Book of Law because _____
_____.
- Who read the contents of the Book of the Law to King Josiah?

- List out 2 good characteristics of King Josiah:
 - _____
 - _____
- What was the reaction of the people when they heard the Law of God?

Life Application

- As a young person, how do you think you can make a difference in other people's lives?

