

# LESSON 7

## KING MANASSEH

### OBJECTIVES

1. To learn from the mistakes of King Manasseh by reflecting on our sins and mistakes.
2. To remember that no matter what wrong we have committed, God always wants us to turn back to Him, acknowledge that we have sinned, and repent from the bottom of our hearts.
3. To understand that we must bear the consequences of the sins that we've committed.

### MEMORY VERSE

“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

(2 Corinthians 7:10)

### PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, we thank You for gathering us together to worship You. Today, we are learning about King Manasseh, who did very bad things. He disobeyed God and did so many evil things. God, we have all done wrong and we do not deserve Your love and grace. Yet, You wait with open arms of love, waiting for us to humble ourselves and turn back to You with our whole heart so that You can pour Your grace on us. God, please help us to realize our sins. Please help us remember that You are always waiting for us to find our way back to You. Thank You for your great love and mercy. Amen.



### Overview

#### 1. Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

##### a. Manasseh's Life

- Manasseh's Background
- Manasseh's Sins
- Warning & Discipline from God
- Manasseh's Repentance

#### 2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—Salvation

#### 3. Life Application

- a. Circle of Obedience
- b. Hand of Prayer

#### 4. Activity—Family Traffic Signs



### Background Knowledge for Teachers

Prophet Isaiah told the dying King Hezekiah, “Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.” Upon hearing this, Hezekiah turned to God in prayer. God heard Hezekiah's prayer and added fifteen more years to his life (Isa 38:1-5). After his life and death experience, and knowing he only had fifteen more years to live, Hezekiah had much to teach his young son (Isa 38:19).

Instead of the ways of God, Manasseh preferred pagan Gentile traditions and rituals. He rebuilt the high places and the altars for Baal worship that his father had destroyed. He made a wooden image of Asherah and placed it in the temple of God. He worshipped the stars instead of the God of heaven—he even built altars for them in the two courts of God's temple in Jerusalem! In addition, Manasseh dabbled in witchcraft and sorcery. He caused his sons to pass through the fire, which was, at that time, a sacrifice to the god Molech. As if his actions were not already evil enough, he also killed the prophets of God and shed so much innocent blood that the Bible said it filled Jerusalem from one end to the other.

As king, Manasseh's poor character corrupted and ruined the entire nation of Judah, not just during his reign but also for generations after him. He was described as the king who did more evil than the nations that God had destroyed. To fully understand the extent of Manasseh's sins, we need to look further down in history. The repercussions of his sins echoed throughout the reign of his descendants.

- Jeremiah declared during his time that Manasseh's sins had yet to be expiated (Jer 15:4; 2 Ki 23:26).
- From Ezekiel's vision of the glory of God departing the temple (Eze 8), it's clear that the influence of over half a century of pagan cults and idol worship was slow to disappear.



## Reaching Out to Your Students

Manasseh's example teaches us many lessons about parents and children. It also highlights the importance of praying, attending religious education classes, and helping each child find roots in his/her faith.

Hezekiah was one of the few good and godly kings in the history of Judah, so it makes us wonder why his son turned out so bad.

We need to remember that while parents have a great responsibility to train their children in the ways of God, ultimately, each person must answer to God for himself or herself. Most of our RE students are most likely growing up in a Christ-centered home. Their parents may teach and model the things of God. However, there will come a point where the students must yield their selves to Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord in the choices they make. Our parents' faith will not get us into heaven.

Hezekiah was a great example of a godly person, but Manasseh rebelled against his father and against God during his teenage years. The teenage years are a period of intense growth, not only physically, but also emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. This is the time when children start to "try on" different looks and identities. They also start to separate from their parents and yearn for independence. During this awkward period, students go through many struggles, and tend to butt heads with their parents as they start to form and assert their own opinions. Therefore, a good role model outside of the family for them to turn to for guidance and advice is more critical than ever.

As their RE teacher, we should open a line of communication with them right now, before they hit the teenage years. Alongside their parents, help them establish good habits in praying and reading the Bible so that when the time comes, they will be able to form a moral code in accordance with the teachings of the Bible.



## Opener

*5 Minutes*

While King Hezekiah made mistakes, he was a good king in that he did many good things to guide the people of Judah to God. This lesson focuses on the reign of his son, Manasseh.

### Sin & Repentance Glass

#### Materials

- Glass of water
- Food coloring
- Bleach
- Spoon

*Note:* Before showing this to the class, conduct the activity on your own to find the right balance of dye and bleach.

1. Show the class a glass of water. "When we receive baptism, we are cleansed of all our sins, so we are like this clear cup of water."
2. "Unfortunately, throughout our lives, we make mistakes and sin against God." Add one drop of food coloring and watch as the food coloring spreads in the water. "We become stained and are no longer clear and clean."
3. "However, if we truly repent from our hearts, God in His loving mercy will forgive us." Slowly pour in the bleach and stir gently with a spoon until the water turns clear again.
4. "God may have forgiven us. However, after we sin, our lives will not be the same again. Sometimes, even the lives of other people around us may be affected." Smell the water; it appears clear, but now it smells of bleach.

Our lesson today about King Manasseh is one such example. He started off as a clear glass of water. Everyone starts off as a clear glass of water after we believe and are baptized. However, his glass of water was dyed darker and darker by the sins he committed. Yet, God's love and grace are greater than all our sins. As long as we turn back to Him with all our heart, He will forgive us of our sins. We can be like the clear glass of water again.

However, we must know that even though God may forgive us, there will be consequences after we sin. Just as the glass of water smells different now after the dye has been cleared away; it is no longer the same clear glass of water as before. If we are truly repentant, then we will accept the consequences and try our best to live a life worthy of God's calling. Today, we will learn about Manasseh's life: his reign as king, the mistakes he made, and his return to God.



## Vocabulary

**abomination:** (adj.) exceptionally loathsome, disgusting, hateful, sinful and wicked; (n.) something that is forbidden, a very serious offense

**host of heaven:** In most Bible passages, the "host of heaven" refers to heavenly bodies—the sun, moon, and stars—in general, or to stars in particular (Neh 9:6). God specifically told His people not to worship them (Dt 4:19). In some instances, the "host of heaven" refers to angels (1 Ki 22:19).

**soothsaying:** the practice of foretelling future events by use of supernatural powers; fortune-telling

**sorcery:** the practice of casting spells or magic, using supernatural powers or powers of evil spirits

**spiritist/medium:** a person thought to have the power to communicate with the spirits of the dead

**seduce:** to attract or lead someone away from proper behavior or thinking

**calamity:** a disaster or event that brings terrible loss and suffering



## Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

### FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet to the students. Ask the students to follow along as you go over the lesson, pausing where necessary to allow students to write the answers. Go over the worksheet at the end of the section to ensure completeness and correctness. Keep a copy of the worksheet for reference.

After King Hezekiah passed away, his son Manasseh succeeded him as king of Judah. Was Manasseh a good king like his father Hezekiah?

### Manasseh's Background

King Manasseh's story can be found in:

- 2 Kings 21
- 2 Chronicles 33

Read 2 Kings 21:1-2 and 2 Chronicles 33:1-2, then fill in the information:

- Manasseh's father: Hezekiah
- Manasseh's mother: Hephzibah
- He began ruling as the age of: 12 years old
- His reign lasted for: 55 years

At twelve years of age, Manasseh was just a boy when the kingdom was handed over to him for ruling. The Bible tells us that he did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than the other nations that God had destroyed because of their evil doings (2 Ki 21:9). Does it seem strange that such a good king as Hezekiah could have a son who did such evil things? [Let the students think and respond.]

If Manasseh was so evil, why was he able to reign for fifty-five years? This is the longest reign recorded in the history of Judah!

### Manasseh's Sins

What were some of the sins that Manasseh committed as king? Read 2 Chronicles 33:3-7 and 2 Kings 21:3-7, 16, and write them down.

1. Built altars/high places to Baal and idols (vv. 3, 5):

His father Hezekiah had just torn them all down when he was king, now Manasseh was bringing Judah back into idolatry.

2. Carved wooden images of idols and worshipped false gods (vv. 3, 7):

The worst king of Israel, King Ahab, worshipped the false gods Baal and Asherah. Manasseh worshipped

both of those and more. 2 Kings 21:3 says he worshipped and served all the host of heaven.

3. Set the altars and wooden images of idols in the house of God (v. 5):

It's bad enough that Manasseh worshipped idols and carved images of them (breaking the first and second commandments). However, that was not enough for him. He went one step further and put the false idol images and altars inside the courts of the house of God. He corrupted the place meant only for worshipping the one true God.

4. Made his sons pass through fire (v. 6):

This was a practice of the Canaanites. They worshipped the false god Molech by sacrificing and burning their children.

5. Practiced soothsaying and witchcraft and consulted mediums and spiritists (v. 6):

By doing this, he was inviting Satan into the nation of Judah. All these practices have the influence of Satan; that's why God has strict commandments to forbid His people from practicing these.

6. Killed innocent people (v. 16):

Although the Bible does not specifically say which people he killed, we are told that they were innocent. Maybe they were prophets who warned Manasseh about the evil he was doing. Maybe they were just general people who wanted to worship God and would not follow Manasseh in worshipping idols. Whichever the case, the Bible clearly states that the people were innocent and not deserving of death.

How wicked and grievous were Manasseh's sins! 2 Kings 21:9 says that Manasseh seduced the people to do more evil than the other nations that God had destroyed. Manasseh practiced evil, and he led the children of God to follow him. God wanted the kings to lead His people to be separate and holy to God, to be different from the other nations. Now, not only were they not separate and holy, but they also committed more evil than the other nations.

### Warning & Discipline from God

It's important to note that even though Manasseh did such great evil, God never gave up on him. [Ask students to read 2 Kings 21:11-15 aloud.]

God spoke to Manasseh and the people and warned them of the consequences of their sins. He warned them of the calamity that would come upon them if they continued in their ways.

Did Manasseh heed God's warning? Let's continue to read 2 Kings 21:16 and 2 Chronicles 33:10.

Despite these warnings and God's patience, Manasseh refused to listen and change. Not only did he ignore the warnings, he persecuted and killed the faithful servants of God. Seeing that there was no other way to change Manasseh's heart, God released severe discipline upon Manasseh and the nation of Judah.

Let's read 2 Chronicles 33:11 and see what happened. God sent the king of Assyria to punish Manasseh and the nation of Judah. They took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters and carried him off to Babylon. The terrible condition that Manasseh suffered at the hands of the Assyrians made him realize the severity of his sins. He realized that none of the false gods he built altars for or carved wooden images he created could save him. It was then that he finally decided to turn back to the one and only true God—the God his father had taught him to worship.

### Manasseh's Repentance

In pain and suffering, Manasseh finally turned back to God. What did he do to show that he had learned his lesson? Let's read 2 Chronicles 33:12-13.

Manasseh humbled himself greatly and prayed in humility a prayer of repentance. God, with His everlasting love and mercy, gave Manasseh another chance. We may wonder why God would forgive such an evil king and all the abominations and great wickedness he did. Yet, it is this loving nature of God that saved every one of us today as well.

We should not think we are better than Manasseh. We have all made mistakes and will continue to make mistakes. There is still one thing that we can learn from Manasseh. When we make mistakes, we must turn back to God whole-heartedly and accept our punishment, the consequences of our sins.

Manasseh truly learned his lesson this time. After returning to Jerusalem, he built up the city and removed the false gods, idols, and all the altars that he had built for them (2 Chr 33:14-15). He repaired the altar of God and tried to turn the nation back to worshipping God (2 Chr 33:16). However, Manasseh learned that it's much easier to corrupt people than to lead people to obey God. As we can read in verse 17, despite all his efforts, the people did not truly turn back to worshipping God.

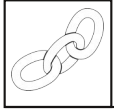
Just as the glass of water from our activity will never be the same again because of the food coloring and bleach, after we sin, even if God forgives us of our sins, there will



still be consequences.

Manasseh had to face the humiliation of being taken by a hook and bound, but that was not all. More importantly, he had to face the consequence of returning to the nation of Judah where the whole nation was already corrupt, evil, and worshipping numerous false gods now.

His decisions in the early years of his reign had a lasting effect of the nation of Judah. No matter how much effort he put towards trying to turn the people back to God, the people only worshipped God in appearance and not with a true heart. The effects of the evil influence at the start of his reign affected the nation until Manasseh's grandson, Josiah, and to the last king of Judah, Zedekiah!



## Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

**Salvation** is given by the grace of God through faith. Believers must rely on the Holy Spirit to pursue holiness, to honor God, and to love humanity.

We have already received the greatest gift from God in saving grace. However, most of us take it for granted. In Philippians 2:12, Paul reminds us, "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." We need to **work out** our own salvation with **fear** and **trembling**.

What do you think it means to "work out"? [Allow students to respond; possible answers: put forth effort, train, sweat, have a goal in mind to achieve, etc.]

Why do you think Paul tells us to do it with **fear** and **trembling**? [Allow students to respond.] The road to salvation is narrow and difficult, so we need to remind ourselves to be watchful and to watch every step.



## Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **How old was Manasseh when he became king?** He was twelve years old.
2. **How long did Manasseh reign as king in Judah?** He reigned for fifty-five years.
3. **Who was Manasseh's father?** His father was King Hezekiah.
4. **What did Manasseh do that was evil?**
  - Built high places, built altars for Baal and other idols, made wooden images, made and set carved image of Asherah in the house of God
  - Worshipped the host of heaven – even built altars for them in the courts of the house of God
  - Made his sons pass through fire
  - Practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, consulted spiritists and mediums
  - Killed many innocent people
5. **Which nation did God send to invade Judah and what did they do?** He sent the Assyrians. They came, captured Manasseh, took him with hooks, bound him in bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.
6. **Why did God forgive Manasseh?** Manasseh humbled himself, prayed to God, and truly repented.
7. **How can you tell Manasseh truly repented?** Manasseh removed all the idols, repaired the altar of the Lord, offered sacrifices to God, and commanded the people to worship God.
8. **Did Manasseh's efforts to turn the people back to God work?** No. The people didn't worship God with their hearts, and offered sacrifices to God on the high places meant for idols.



## Life Application

10 Minutes

### Circle of Obedience

We are not that different from Manasseh and the people of God in the Old Testament. We may not have prophets who come with warnings, but we do have preachers, teachers and... our parents! Was there ever a time when one of your teachers or your parents warned you to help you avoid punishment, but you ignored them? Use a hula-hoop to make a circle on the floor. If a hula-hoop is not available, use masking tape or painter's tape to create the circle. Have a student come up for each scenario/question.

#### QUESTIONS

If students disagree, they must stand outside of the circle.

If students agree, they must stand inside the circle.

- When Jesus was a child, He always obeyed His human parents.  
*[Agree – the Bible tells us that He grew up in favor with God and men. Favor with “men” shows that he was an obedient child.]*
- When Jesus was a grown-up, He always obeyed His “Father in heaven.”  
*[Agree – whether as a child or as an adult, Jesus was obedient to His parents on earth and to God, our Father in heaven.]*
- Once you disobey, you aren't allowed back inside the circle.  
*[Disagree – you can always repent, change, and obey to get back in the circle (have student go inside).]*

#### SCENARIOS

First explain to the students that the circle on the floor is called the “circle of obedience.” After reading each scenario, ask the student if they are inside or outside of the “circle of obedience.”

If they are outside, ask them to share why they are outside, and how they can get back in the circle.

If they are inside, ask them what they have done to be in the circle.

- You come home after playing sports after school and you are famished. After having a drink, you see a bowl of hard candy on the table. You look around and see that your mother is not around, so you quickly grab two handfuls and eat them all.  
*[Outside the circle. You have disobeyed your parents by eating the candy. Even though your parents are not there to say no, you know that they would say no if you asked them for the candy. Knowing that they would say no and still eating it anyway is a form of disobedience.]*
- There is a new student in your class and the teacher has asked you to help him and show him around the school during lunch. You want to go join your friends at lunch, but don't want to bring him, so you point to the direction of the main building at school and quickly leave to go find your friends.  
*[Outside the circle. You did what the teacher asked, but unwillingly and poorly. God cares what kind of attitude we have when we obey.]*
- You really want to level up in the game you are playing on your phone, but your parents tell you to do your homework first before playing. You feel you can do both, so you keep your phone under your homework book. You play your game for five minutes and then do your homework for ten minutes.  
*[Outside the circle. Your parents said to do homework first, before playing games. The point is not whether or not you can finish your homework. This kind of obedience is like the people of Judah, obeying in appearance but not with their whole heart. You hide your phone because you know it's wrong and you want your parents to think you are doing your homework first.]*

- You spent all your pocket money this week, but there's a new vending machine at school with your favorite chocolate bar. You ask your mother for more money, but she says no. Next morning before school, you see some coins on the table. Even though no one will miss them, you decide not to take them.  
*[Inside the circle. When you obey your parents and do what is right, your life may not go the way you want. You may not get everything you want, but it's through small acts of obedience that we learn. If we disobey in such a small matter because we think no one is watching, then over time, we will disobey on bigger and more serious things.]*
- You have a new teacher this year at school. You feel like he picks on you a great deal. You don't like the way he always seems to point out your faults and order you around. One morning, you are in a bad mood and when the teacher orders you to do something, you reply, "Why should I listen to you?"  
*[Outside the circle. When your parents allow you to attend school, they are putting you under the care and authority of your teachers. Honoring your parents means obeying your teacher, too. Teachers are there to help, guide, and teach you, even if their methods are harsh at times. You will meet all sorts of people throughout your life, and you will not get along with all of them, but your job now is to be respectful and do your best.]*

### "Hand" of Prayer

From the story of Manasseh, we can see how much a king can affect a nation. Our leaders, of the church and of the country, will also have a big impact on us. Most of the time, our prayers are filled with requests for ourselves. How do we remind ourselves always to pray for other people, especially our leaders?



1. **Thumb** – For the people who are closest to you (family).
2. **Index Finger** – For the people who point you in the right direction, to whom you turn for wisdom or support (teachers, preachers).
3. **Middle Finger** (tallest finger) – For the people who lead us (government, church leaders).
4. **Ring Finger** (weakest finger) – For those who are weak, in need or in pain.
5. **Pinkie** (smallest finger) – For our selves and our own needs.

Write in your "hand" of prayer the names of people for whom you will pray. Remember to go through each finger before you end your prayers!



### Activity

#### Family Traffic Signs

10-15 Minutes

Why does the government place traffic signs on the road? They are in place to keep us safe and to prevent accidents. God's rules are the same. The commandments are for our benefit, not for God's benefit. If people don't follow the traffic signs when they drive, the road would be chaotic and dangerous. In our lives, if we don't follow God's commandments and teachings in the Bible, we would not know where to go and how to live. God also gave us parents to help guide us. We must obey our parents, because it is one of God's commandments that we obey our parents in the Lord. More importantly, if we can't even obey our parents, how can we learn to obey God?

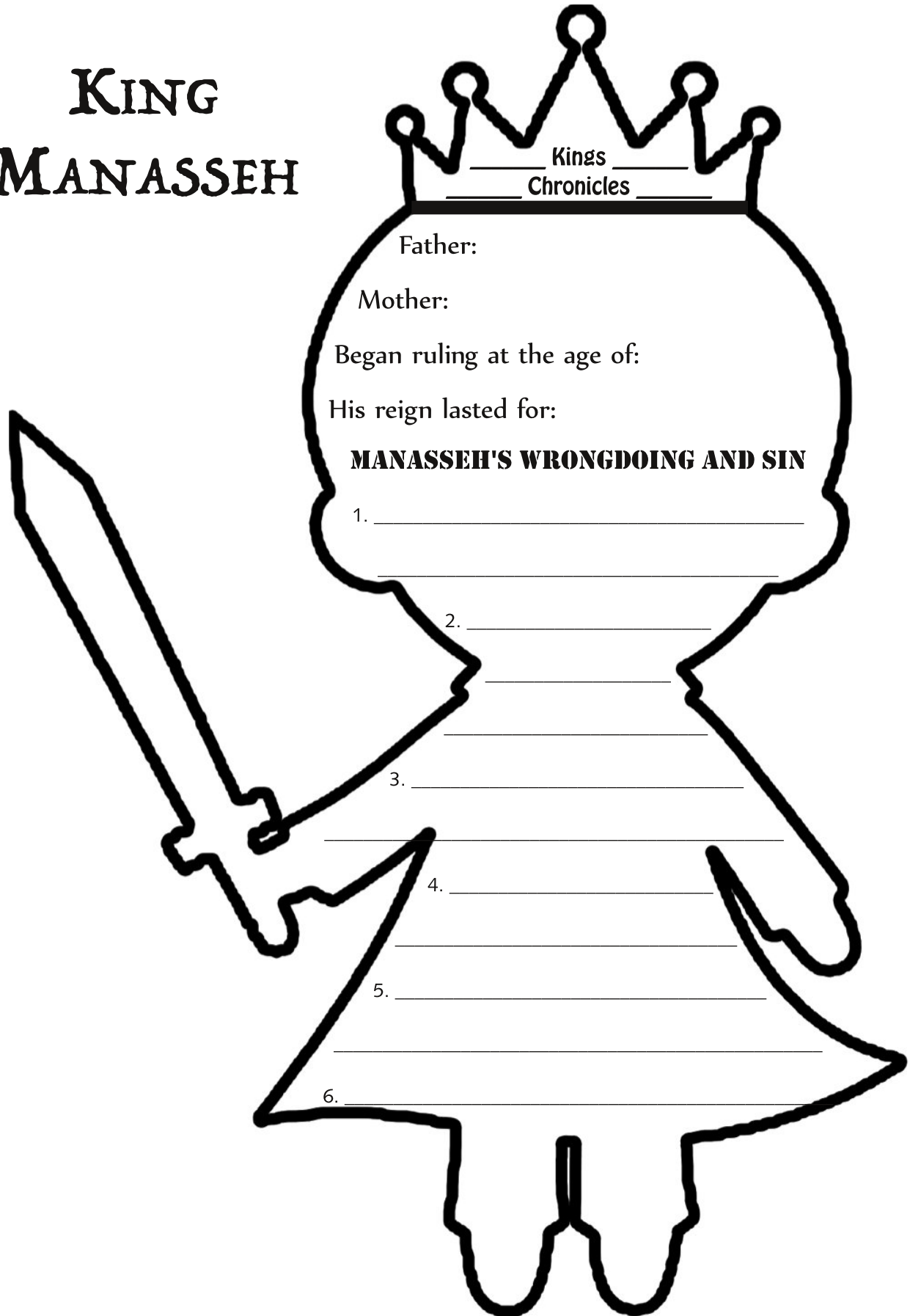
Here are a few traffic signs. Do you know what they mean? Why do drivers need to follow them? Can you list a few family rules at home? Can you think of a reason why these rules are in place?

Split the students into groups to fill in the worksheet and report back to the class what they have discussed.

#### HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. C
2. D
3. C
4. Because Manasseh humbled himself, prayed to God, and truly repented.
5. He removed all the idols, repaired the altar of the Lord, offered sacrifices to God, and commanded the people to worship God.
6. The people continued to offer sacrifices to God on the high places meant for idols because they didn't worship God with their hearts. It's easier to teach and lead people to do evil than to teach and lead them to do good.

# KING MANASSEH

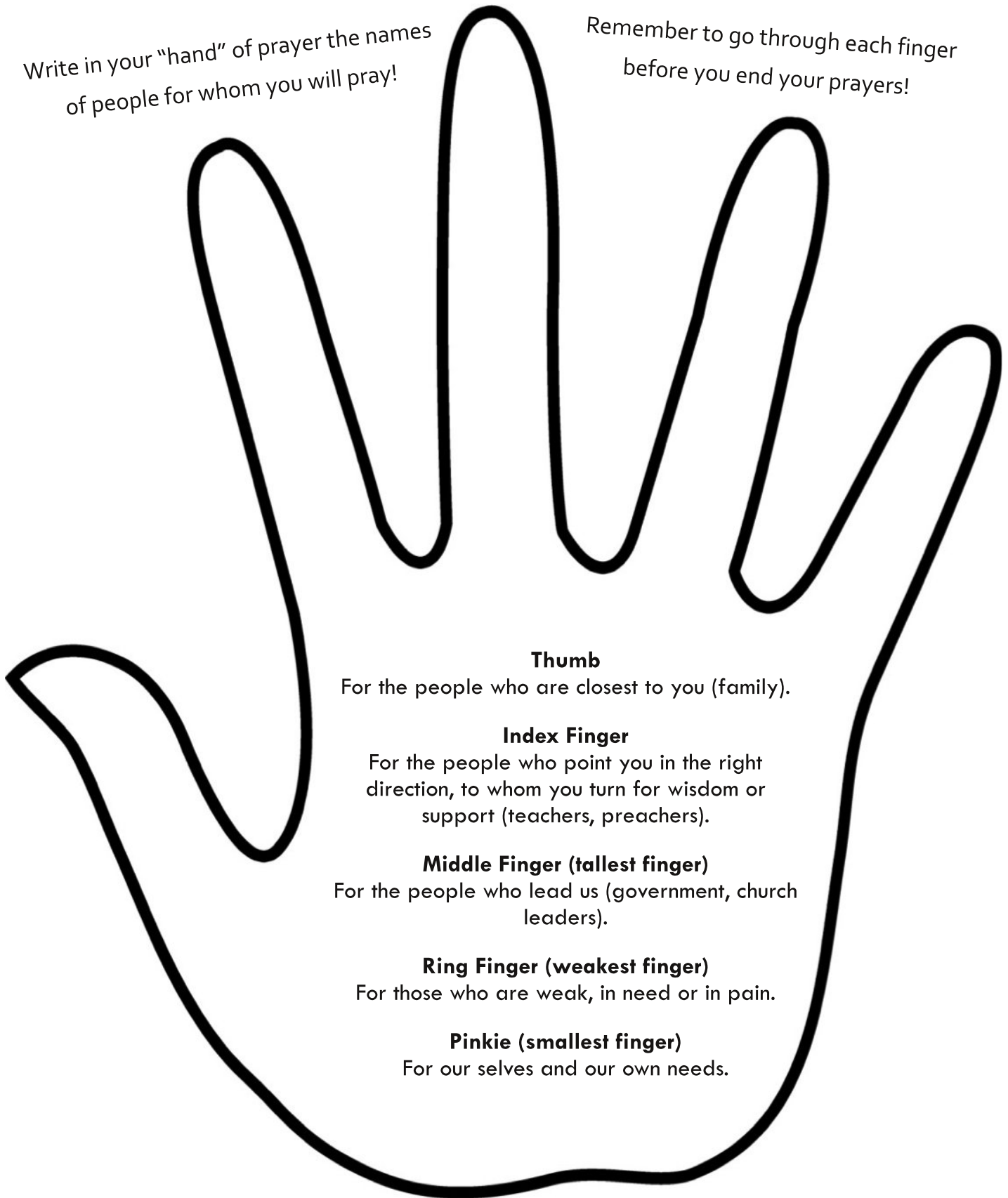




# Hand of Prayer

Write in your "hand" of prayer the names of people for whom you will pray!

Remember to go through each finger before you end your prayers!



**Thumb**

For the people who are closest to you (family).

**Index Finger**

For the people who point you in the right direction, to whom you turn for wisdom or support (teachers, preachers).

**Middle Finger (tallest finger)**

For the people who lead us (government, church leaders).

**Ring Finger (weakest finger)**

For those who are weak, in need or in pain.

**Pinkie (smallest finger)**

For our selves and our own needs.

## FAMILY TRAFFIC SIGNS

Why does the government place traffic signs on the road? They are in place to keep us safe and to prevent accidents. God's rules are the same. The commandments are for our benefit, not for God's benefit.

If people don't follow the traffic signs when they drive, the road would be chaotic and dangerous.

If we don't follow God's commandments and teachings in the Bible, we would not know where to go and how to live.

God also gave us parents to help guide us. We must obey our parents, because it is one of God's commandments that we obey our parents in the Lord. More importantly, if we can't even obey our parents, how can we learn to obey God?

Here are a few traffic signs. Do you know what they mean? Why do drivers need to follow them?

Can you list a few family rules at home? Can you think of a reason why these rules are in place?



Family Rule #1

Reason for this rule:



Family Rule #2

Reason for this rule:



Family Rule #3

Reason for this rule:



Family Rule #4

Reason for this rule:

## E2 Year 3 Book 4 Lesson 7—King Manasseh

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Weekly Bible Reading:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Reading:** Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

**Prayer:** Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pray	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (2 Corinthians 7:10)

\_\_\_\_\_

### Multiple Choice

1. \_\_\_\_\_ : How long did Manasseh rule for?
  - a. 12 years
  - b. 30 years
  - c. 55 years
  - d. None of the above
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ : What sins did Manasseh commit?
  - a. Created altars and carved images for false gods
  - b. Practiced sorcery, witchcraft and consulted mediums
  - c. Killed innocent people
  - d. All of the above
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ : Which nation did God send to punish Manasseh?
  - a. Babylon
  - b. Egypt
  - c. Assyria
  - d. None of the above

### Short Answer

4. Why did God forgive Manasseh?
  
5. What did Manasseh do after he repented?
  
6. Why didn't Manasseh's efforts turn the people back to God?

## Manasseh's Prayer of Repentance

The Bible doesn't record what Manasseh said in his prayer of repentance. If you were Manasseh, how would you have prayed to ask God to forgive and help you?

Write your prayer of repentance:

A large, rounded rectangular box with ten horizontal lines inside, intended for writing a prayer of repentance.

