

LESSON 8

KING JOSIAH

OBJECTIVES

- To learn King Josiah turned to God with all his heart, mind and soul.
- To understand that the word of God is a mirror that reflects the condition of our hearts.
- To know we should remove all impurity and sin within our heart completely and diligently.

MEMORY VERSE

“Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might.”

(2 Kings 23:25a)

PRAYER

Thank You, Lord, for gathering us before You on this holy Sabbath to learn Your words. Your words are precious, as they teach us how we should live a life that is pleasing to You. Through them, we receive eternal life. Give us a tender, humble, and repentant heart to receive Your words and to practice them in our daily lives. May we love Your laws and follow them with all our heart, as Josiah did.



Overview

1. Bible Discovery and Spiritual Teaching

- Josiah Purges the Land
- Josiah Responds to the Book of the Law
- Josiah makes a Covenant with the Lord and Observes the Passover
- Josiah Dies in Battle

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—The Holy Bible

3. Life Application

- Respond to God's Word
- Desire to Follow God's Word
- Get Rid of Sins

4. Activity—Thy Word Have I Hid In My Heart



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Josiah was only eight years old when he became king. His grandfather, Manasseh, had been an evil king for the majority of his fifty-year reign, making Judah even more wicked than the other nations who did not know God or His word. He had built altars to star gods and practiced witchcraft, placed an idol in God's temple, sacrificed his son to an idol, and killed many innocent people (2 Ki 21:2-9). Consequently, Josiah's father Amon had also been an evil king who worshipped idols and did not walk in God's ways (2 Ki 21:20-22). His officials assassinated him a short two years after he succeeded the throne, so Josiah, a young boy, became king.

Miraculously, Josiah did not turn out like his father or grandfather. Guided by a good mother and God-fearing advisers, Josiah found his way to God at the age of 16. By age 20, he had made massive reforms throughout Judah to rid the kingdom of idols. When he was 26, 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 Hilkiyah came across a copy of the Book of the Law, which is believed to be the Book of Deuteronomy.

Josiah is known as one of the best kings of Judah and there was no king like him.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Josiah held onto his faith for his entire life. He is a wonderful example to our students. He set the stage at a young age, showing that it is never too early to live out your faith in God. 1 Timothy 4:12 records: "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." Our youth is not an excuse for our wrongful behavior. Everyone, including our six- to eight-year-old students can glorify God. Motivate your students by asking them how they can set examples for others in the areas of speech, actions, love, spirit, faith, and purity. By discussing concrete ideas, students will know how to apply this verse to their lives. When they can successfully demonstrate an active faith at a young age, it will become a natural part of their lives as they mature.



Opener

5 Minutes

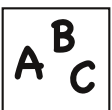
[Before the class, prepare building blocks that can snap into place, such as LEGO bricks.]

Instructions

1. Divide the class into two teams. The game will be played in three rounds, and each team will play once in each round.
2. Line up the first team along one side of the room. The second team will wait to the side.
3. Place the building pieces on the opposite side of the room on the ground or on a table.
4. When you give the signal to begin, one student from the first team will run to the other side of the room, grab a piece, and place it on the ground, run back, and tag the next student to repeat.
5. Give the first team 45 seconds to build as tall a structure as they can.
6. Then, allow the second team 45 seconds to follow the same pattern as the first, except this time, the team will take apart the structure one piece at a time. [Emphasize the last bit of instruction.]
7. For the second round, each team has 30 seconds to repeat their actions, starting with the first team.
8. For the last round, each team has 15 seconds to repeat their actions.

This constant building and tearing down of the structure is similar to the faith of the kings of Israel and Judah. When a righteous king reigned, he would try to build up the faith of the Israelites by getting rid of the altars and idols in the land. But when a wicked king came along after him, he would start to destroy the good work of the previous king. He would rebuild altars and idols and lead the people into idol worship. Then, when a good king came back into power, he would try to rebuild the nation's faith all over again. God's people were in a cycle of building and tearing down, building and tearing down. But God eventually had enough! As a consequence for their wickedness and unfaithfulness, God caused them to be captives in a foreign land.

Today, our story is about a righteous king called Josiah who did all he could to rebuild the faith of the Israelites.



Vocabulary

- reform:** to improve (someone or something) by removing or correcting problems
- shrines:** a place where people go to worship
- Molech:** god of the Ammonites; the worship of Molech involved killing one's children as an offering
- Baal:** false god whose name means "lord" or "master"; Canaanites believed that Baal had absolute control over nature, such as the harvest and the weather
- Asherah:** Canaanite goddess of fertility made of wood and associated with sacred trees or groves
- Topeth:** district in the Valley of Hinnom, southeast of Jerusalem, set aside for child sacrifice
- convicted:** the state of being guilty of committing a wrong



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

King Josiah

Josiah became king at an age close to yours—eight! He reigned for 31 years in Jerusalem. Josiah came from a line of wicked kings. His grandfather Manasseh and his father Amon were exceptionally wicked kings who sacrificed to idols and sinned greatly against God. Despite this, Josiah turned out completely different from his forefathers. Let's read 2 Chronicles 34:1-2 to learn what kind of a young man Josiah was. Josiah was a godly person who did what was right in God's eyes. At age 16, Josiah began to search for the God whom King David worshipped to find out who this God was.

1. Josiah Purges the Land

Let us continue to read 2 Chronicles 34:3-7. Here it tells us that at the age of twenty, after seeing the evil practices throughout the country, Josiah decided to bring the kingdom of Judah in line with God's commands. This meant that he had to clean and remove all the sinful articles from the land from top to bottom. This was no easy task. It would require great courage, determination, and strength.

[Teaching Tip: Divide the class into groups of 2-3. Give each group a sheet of poster paper and markers. Divide the passage recorded in 2 Kings 23:4-20 into sections and assign a section to each group. Have each group read the Bible passage and then write or draw the actions that Josiah took. Invite each group to share their answers.]

Josiah's Reforms (2 Ki 23:4-20)

1. He destroyed all the equipment used to worship Baal, Asherah, and the host of heaven (4).
2. He killed the idolatrous priests who burned incense to Baal and other idols (5).
3. He removed the idol Asherah from the Temple of God (6).
4. He tore down the houses of the perverted people in the Temple (7).
5. He brought back the priests of the Lord who were living in other cities of Judah and tore down the shrines (8).
6. He destroyed the altar of Topheth that was used to burn sons and daughters to the god Molech (10).
7. He removed the horses and burned the chariots that had been dedicated to the sun god (11).
8. He tore down the altars that were on the palace roof and in the Temple courts (12).
9. He removed the shrines that King Solomon had built for the gods (13).
10. He broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men (14).
11. He tore down, burned, and crushed to powder the altar that was at Bethel. This was the altar that King Jeroboam built when he led Israel to sin (15).
12. He took out the bones that were in the tombs on the mountain and burned them (16).
13. He destroyed the shrines built by the wicked kings of Israel (19).
14. He executed all the false priests upon their own altars (20).

Why did the Bible describe Josiah's actions in such detail? By listing down all his actions, we can see that Josiah was diligent in digging out and ridding Judah of every sin and wickedness. These sinful practices had been continuing through the reigns of different kings and Josiah was careful not to leave anything remaining.

In order to draw near to God, we need to be diligent to remove every sin that is within us. We cannot keep sinning, thinking that it is just a small sin that is of no consequence. No sin is a small sin. God wants us to wholeheartedly repent and cleanse ourselves of all that is evil and obey His laws.

2. Josiah Responds to the Book of the Law

Later, when he was at the age of 26, King Josiah told his scribe Shaphan to instruct Hilkiah the high priest to hire men to repair the temple of God. While the temple was being repaired, Hilkiah found the Book of the Law. Because of the long line of evil kings, God's laws had been lost and forgotten. As a result, the lives of the leaders, prophets, and the people were filled with sin and did not reflect the lives that God had told them to live.

Today, have we forgotten about God's laws? Where can your Bible be found? Perhaps our Bibles may not be lost, but is it sitting in our bookcase collecting dust or is it something we pick up and read every day?

When God's word was rediscovered, Shaphan the scribe read the scroll to Josiah. How did Josiah respond to God's words? Let us read 2 Kings 22:10-13. When Josiah heard God's words, he tore his clothes. He immediately sent messengers to inquire of the Lord. They left and traveled to Huldah the prophetess to ask about what they should do. God sent a warning to Josiah: Because the people of Judah had rejected God and worshipped other gods, His

wrath would burn against the land and would not be stopped. But as for Josiah, because he had torn his clothes and humbled himself before God, he would not see or experience the destruction and evil that was to come upon the land.

With one reading of the law, Josiah responded immediately to God's laws. How have we responded to God's laws? Are we touched by God's words or do we remain hardhearted? 2 Kings 22:19 tells us that to be sensitive to God's words, our heart needs to be tender, humble, and repentant.

3. Josiah Makes a Covenant with the Lord and Observes the Passover

After this, Josiah summoned the elders, priests, and Levites, and all the people, great and small, to the Temple. There, he read the scroll to them and, together with the people, Josiah made a pledge to the Lord to follow His commandments. Josiah then issued an order for the people to observe the Passover feast. Josiah gave 30,000 lambs and young goats and 3,000 young bulls for the people as their Passover offering. The king's officials and the Levite leaders also offered many animals so that the Levites and the priests had Passover offerings. Everyone in Jerusalem took part in the Passover and no Passover had been celebrated like it.

4. Josiah Dies in Battle

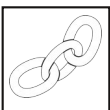
[Teacher Tip: Prepare a map to show the locations of Egypt, Judah, Assyria, and Carchemish.]

Afterward, King Necho of Egypt led his army north to help the Assyrians fight against the Babylonian army at Carchemish. To get to Assyria, King Necho had to pass through Judah, but King Josiah refused to let him pass and instead declared war against King Necho. Let's read 2 Chronicles 35:21 to see what King Necho's messengers said to Josiah. Necho said, "I don't want to fight with you. I have come only to fight my enemy. Leave me alone! God has told me to hurry! Don't meddle with God or He will destroy you for He is with me."

King Necho understood that it was God who wanted him to fight with the Babylonians, but Josiah refused to turn back. He did not believe that Necho's message was from God because Necho was a Gentile king, so Josiah led his army into battle against the Egyptian army. During the battle, an enemy arrow struck King Josiah and he was fatally wounded. He was taken back to Jerusalem, where he died and all of Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him.

FOR TEACHERS

First discuss "Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs" and "Check for Understanding." Then hand out the Spiritual Teaching and Life Application worksheet to the students. Ask students to refer to the worksheet after you discuss each Life Application point.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

The Holy Bible is the standard for living a life pleasing to God.

Josiah recognized that the writings in the Book of the Law were not men's words, but words inspired by God. This understanding was manifested in his love, reverence, and complete obedience to God and His words. The Holy Bible is inspired by God and should be the compass for all our thoughts, words, and actions.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **How old was Josiah when he was crowned king?** Eight.
2. **What does it mean to have idols in our heart?** In our hearts, we hold these things or people as more important than God.
3. **What are some of the idols that people may have in their hearts today?** Friends, family members, celebrities, athletes, media, etc.
4. **What did Hilkiah the high priest find in the temple?** The Book of the Law.
5. **How did King Josiah respond to the hearing of God's law?** He humbled himself, tore his clothes, and sent messengers to inquire of the Lord.
6. **What did Josiah do that showed he wanted to obey God's commandments?** He cleansed and rid the land of idol worshipping and wickedness. He turned the people back to worshipping God.
7. **What can we learn from the way Josiah completely cleansed Judah of idol worship?** We need to remove the sins and weaknesses in our hearts completely and diligently.
8. **How did Josiah respond when King Necho of Egypt told him that he needed to pass through Judah because God wanted him to fight the Babylonians?** He did not believe that the message was from God, and consequently died during the battle with Necho.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. Respond to God's Words

The Bible that we hold in our hands is our most treasured possession. It is God-breathed; it instructs and teaches us how to live our lives; and it will make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Today, many people read the Bible, but few respond to the Bible as Josiah did. How did Josiah respond to the laws of God? Yes, he was appalled to see how distant his and the Israelites' lives were from God's words. He was so ashamed and grieved that he tore his clothes.

Josiah did not treat sin lightly; he didn't make excuses, blame somebody else, or pretend that Judah's sins were not so bad. God's words pricked his heart, and he responded immediately.

The word of God is a mirror that reflects the condition of our hearts. This means that when we listen to God's words, we should always ask ourselves, "What is God saying to me? What does God want me to change in my life?" The Bible stories we hear are not for our entertainment. They carry life and power, convict us of our wrong, cleanse our inner filth, and revive our soul.

Let us look at examples of Bible characters that responded or failed to respond to God's words.

- a. Acts 2:36-37
When the multitude heard the word of God on the Day of Pentecost, they were cut to the heart and immediately asked Peter what they should do.
- b. 2 Samuel 12:7, 13
As soon as the prophet Nathan rebuked King David for committing adultery and murder, David recognized that he had sinned against the Lord and fully repented for his sins.
- c. Acts 8:26-30; 35-38
After Philip preached to the Ethiopian eunuch, the eunuch believed and was instantly baptized.

- d. **Jonah 3:3-6**
After Jonah preached to the city of Nineveh but for one day, the entire city—from the king to the animals in the stalls—put on sackcloth, fasted, and repented of their sins.
- e. **Jeremiah 36:23-24**
When Jehoiakim king of Judah heard the word of God that was read to him, he cut the scroll up with a knife and tossed it into the fire. He neither feared nor repented at God's judgment.
- f. **Matthew 26:14-16**
Although Jesus gave Judas many reminders to turn from his wicked ways, Judas chose to ignore them and eventually betrayed him.
- g. **1 Samuel 15:1-3, 7-9**
Saul was instructed to kill the Amalekites and everything that belonged to them. Yet, Saul chose to disobey God and follow his own will.

* * * * *

2. Desire to Follow God's Words

Josiah followed God's words not because he had to but because he wanted to. When we realize how much our parents have loved and done everything to provide for us, our desire would be to make them happy. What are some ways that we can please our parents? [Allow students to respond.] When we love and obey them and do special things for them, our parents know that we love them. This is the same with God. Josiah obeyed God not because he was afraid of being punished, but because he recognized how great, loving, and powerful God was. He wanted to make sure he and his people led lives that would please and glorify God.

Scenario

Nico loves to play basketball and was hoping to try out for the school team. The only snag is that the team meets on Saturdays for practices and games. Nico's parents told him that he could play sports any day of the week except Saturday, which was for the Lord.

Nico still wants to join the basketball team, yet, he feels compelled to go to church. His parents and teachers have reminded him that if he misses church, God will not be pleased and he might be punished. As Nico's friend, how would you help him?

* * * * *

3. Get Rid of Sins

Josiah knew that to draw near to God, he had to remove all the idols from Judah.

If we wish to draw near to God, we also have to remove the idols and the obstacles that separate us from God. The idols are the things that we hold in our hearts as more important than God. Are there things that we hold most dear in our hearts?

Scenario

Mateo's friends at school love rap music. At first, Mateo was not interested, but when his friends played the songs and showed him some cool dance moves, he grew to like it more. Soon, Mateo would listen to the music whenever he could, even while doing his homework. He knew the lyrics so well that they would sometimes pop into his head during an RE lesson or even prayer. His friends at church have noticed a change in Mateo and are worried about his behavior. As Mateo's friend, what would you do to help him?



Activity

Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To create a visual reminder on how to study the word of God.

Materials

- Light-colored construction paper, one sheet per student
- Pencil
- Markers
- Scissors

Instructions

1. Pass out a piece of construction paper to each student.
2. Without spreading fingers too far apart, have the students trace around their hand and then cut out the shape.
3. Have volunteers read the provided verses. As a class, discuss each one.
4. As the verses are discussed, have each student write the words (Hear, Read, Study, Memorize, Meditate) on the fingers, as illustrated.
5. On the other side of the hand, write the corresponding verse references.
6. Have students decorate their hand. When finished, encourage the students to keep this in their Bibles to use as a bookmark. It will serve as a reminder to do all five steps to understand the Bible fully so that the word of God can enrich their lives.

Bible Verses

- Hear (Rom 10:17) So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
- Read (Rev 1:3a) Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy.
- Study (Acts 17:11) These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.
- Memorize (Ps 119:11,13) Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth.
- Meditate (Ps 119:15) I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways.

Hear

Read

Study

Memorize

Meditate



HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False; Josiah was a good king who did what was right in God's eyes. There was no king in Judah like him.
2. False; Josiah was eight when he was crowned king.
3. True
4. False; To obey God's laws means to follow them at all times.
5. A
6. C
7. B
8. C
9. Answers may vary.

KING JOSIAH

Respond to God's Words

Match up the Bible verses with the characters who responded or failed to respond to God's words.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| a. Acts 2:36-37 | King Jehoiakim cuts up the scroll and throws it into the fire. |
| b. 2 Sam 12:7, 13 | Saul does not obey instructions to kill the Amalekites. |
| c. Acts 8:26-30; 35-38 | The Ethiopian eunuch believes in the gospel and is baptized. |
| d. Jonah 3:3-6 | The multitude at the Day of Pentecost ask Peter what to do. |
| e. Jer 36:23-24 | King David repents of his sin with Bathsheba. |
| f. Mt 26:14-16 | The city of Nineveh repents of their sins. |
| g. 1 Sam 15:1-3, 7-9 | Judas did not repent of his plans to betray the Lord. |

Desire to Follow God's Words

Nico loves to play basketball and was hoping to try out for the school team. The only snag is that the team meets on Saturdays for practices and games. Nico's parents told him that he could play sports any day of the week except Saturday, which was for the Lord.

Nico still wants to join the basketball team, yet, he feels compelled to go to church. His parents and teachers have reminded him that if he misses church, God will not be pleased and he might be punished.



As Nico's friend, how would you help him?

Get Rid of Sins



Mateo's friends at school love rap music. At first, Mateo was not interested, but when his friends played the songs and showed him some cool dance moves, he grew to like it more. Soon, Mateo would listen to the music whenever he could, even while doing his homework. He knew the lyrics so well that they would sometimes pop into his head during an RE lesson or even prayer. His friends at church have noticed a change in Mateo and are worried about his behavior.

As Mateo's friend, what would you do to help him?

E2 Year 3 Book 4 Lesson 8—King Josiah

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 Kings 23:25a)

True or False

1. Josiah's grandfather and father were wicked kings; Josiah also turned out to be a wicked king. _____
2. Josiah was 10 years old when he was crowned king. _____
3. The idols in our lives are the things or the people that are more important than God. _____
4. To obey God's laws means that we listen to God's words and do them only when we want to. _____

Multiple Choice

5. _____ : When the temple was being repaired, Hilkiah the high priest found _____.
 - a. The Book of the Law
 - b. A jar of manna
 - c. A wooden idol
6. _____ : When Josiah heard the laws of God _____.
 - a. He became angry and threw the scroll into the fire.
 - b. He completely ignored God's words and blamed the people for worshipping idols.
 - c. He humbled himself, tore his clothes, and sent messengers to inquire of God.
7. _____ : When King Necho of Egypt told Josiah that he needed to pass through Judah because God wanted him to fight the Babylonians, _____.
 - a. Josiah allowed him to pass through Judah freely.
 - b. Josiah did not believe that the message was from God, so he fought with King Necho.
 - c. Josiah asked King Necho to prove that God gave him a message since he was a Gentile king.
8. _____ : When Huldah the prophetess told Josiah that because he humbled his heart, he would be spared from the disasters that would come upon Judah,
 - a. Josiah was glad and relieved that he would not be punished.
 - b. Josiah left the people to bear the punishment alone.
 - c. Josiah rid the land of idol worshipping and wickedness and turned the people back to worshipping God.

Short Answer

9. What are the idols that can be found in people's hearts today? What idols might be in your heart that need to be removed?