

# JOSIAH, THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD KING

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: 2 CHRONICLES 34:1-33



*God's Word will never pass away.*

## The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

### Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

**Josiah's heart for the Lord brought good changes to the nation** – Josiah was only eight years old when he became the King of Judah. When he was sixteen, he began to seek the Lord. Four years later, he attempted to remove all idols from the land. Josiah did not just knock down the idols, he ground them into powder and scattered the powder over the idol worshippers' graves. He further defiled the false altars by burning dead men's bones on them. This would have made them unfit for pagan worship forever.

**The book of the Law was found in the house of the Lord** – When Josiah was twenty-six years old and the job of restoring the temple was about to begin, Hilkiah found the Book of the Law (2 Chronicles 34:15). When Josiah heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes. Josiah realized just how wicked God's people had become. The prophetess Huldah returned to Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:26) and prophesied Judah's destruction. But she also told Josiah that God heard his cry and that the destruction would not come in Josiah's lifetime.

**The Passover is restored like never before** – When Josiah was twenty-six years old and the job of restoring the temple was about to begin, Hilkiah found the Book of the Law (2 Chronicles 34:15). When Josiah heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes. Josiah realized just how wicked God's people had become. The prophetess Huldah returned to Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:26) and prophesied Judah's destruction. But she also told Josiah that God heard his cry and that the destruction would not come in Josiah's lifetime.

No Passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet. None of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as was kept by Josiah (2 Chronicles 35:18)

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### Where Is Jesus?

*Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.*

Jesus said,

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:17-20 (ESV)

Though Amon forgot the Word of the Lord and it was lost for a season, God ensured that it would not be lost for good. It was God's mercy to allow Amon to be killed and young Josiah to be made king. It was God who gave Josiah a heart for righteousness and it was God who led him to preserve the Word of God and the promise of a coming deliverer, Jesus.

Jesus is called "the Word" in the Gospel of John. God in His faithfulness would not let His Word pass away because His Word is all about His son, Jesus. The Word of God describes the sinfulness of man and the promise of redemption by God through His son Jesus. Not the smallest portion of God's Word will pass away until it is accomplished. God's Word will never be lost but it can be forgotten by sinful men.



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### ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

**Bible Passage: Daniel 7:13-14**

**Connecting the passage to Christ:**

Jesus repeatedly called Himself the Son of Man, see Mark 2:10 and Matthew 16:13. Jesus also claimed the kind of authority spoken of in Daniel 7:14, see Matthew 28:18.

**Questions for reflection:**

- How does Jesus fit the description of the person about whom Daniel is prophesying? (Jesus was called the Son of Man and He had the kind of authority spoken of in Daniel 7:14.)
- Why couldn't this passage refer to any other man? (No other man comes from the clouds or has dominion, glory or a kingdom.)

### SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

**BE A DOER OF THE WORD**

*Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.*



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### ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

*Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?*

#### THE LAW IS FOUND

##### Supplies

- the attached sheets of verses cut into on strips of paper
  - candy for prizes
- (Exodus 20:12, John 3:16, Ephesians 6:1, Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 4:1, Psalms 1:1-3, Psalm 119:9, Psalm 119:33-34, Psalm 119:105)

This is a fun exercise to help the children understand how important it is to remember God's Word.

Fold the strips of paper with the verses printed on them and hide them around the class. Read the account of the finding of the book of the Law from 2 Chronicles 34:8-18.

Then tell the children that God's Word is hidden all over the classroom. Release them to find the strips of paper and bring them up for a prize. Read the verses and talk to the class about how important it is to keep God's word in our hearts.

Explain to the class that the kings before Josiah were wicked and did not follow God's Word so therefore it was disregarded and lost.



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### SEEKING IS THE KEY TO FINDING

#### Supplies

- a box that can be locked with a key
- sign that says, "Seek After the Key"
- a bag of miniature chocolate bars (enough for each person to receive one).

Be aware of food allergies among your children and provide an alternate snack for those who might be affected.

The object of this lesson is to illustrate how Josiah's reforms began when he sought the Lord, see 2 Chronicles 34:3.

Place the candies in a paper bag on a shelf in an inconspicuous place. Write a note disclosing the location of the candy and place it inside the locked box. Hide the key in the classroom. Display the box in a prominent place but withhold the sign until you are ready to begin the activity.

Read the story of Josiah and discuss the amazing events that began with Josiah seeking the Lord.

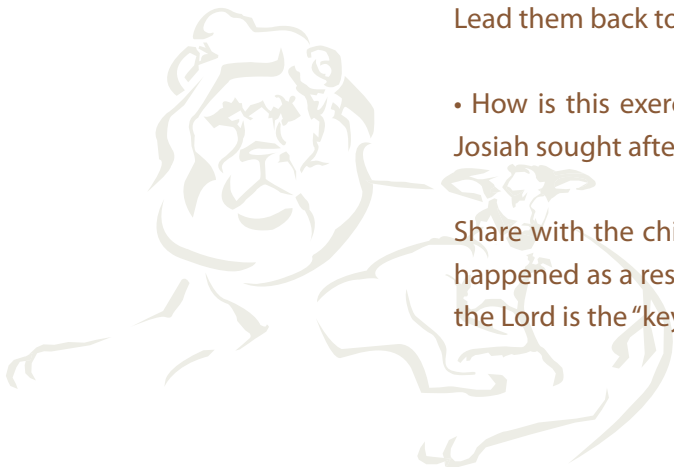
Place the sign on the box and when the class has inquired or you read the sign, have them seek after the key. Be sure to use the word "seek" as it will serve to connect the lesson with Josiah seeking after the Lord.

When the key is found have one of the children unlock the box and read the enclosed note. When the bag of candy is found pass a piece to each member of the class.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- When you first came into class, did you know what was in the bag on the shelf? (No, we didn't know. This is just like Josiah not knowing the Lord when he began his reign.)
- How did you find out about the candy? (They will likely say that it was in the note. Lead them back to the key and their seeking of the key.)
- How is this exercise like Josiah's life? (We sought after a key to open the box, Josiah sought after the Lord and discovered the Word and God's will.)

Share with the children Jeremiah 29:13. Then ask the children all the things that happened as a result of Josiah seeking the Lord. End by telling them that seeking the Lord is the "key" to following God.



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### TENDER HEART, HARD HEART

#### Supplies

clay that can be baked  
and hardened in the oven  
and a heart-shaped cookie  
cutter

This exercise is designed to help the children understand the benefit of a tender heart.

Get enough clay so each person gets a small piece. Prior to class make a small heart out of the clay (you can use a cookie cutter) and bake it in your oven to harden it.

Read 2 Chronicles 34:22-33. Ask the class how the Bible describes Josiah's heart. Remind them of Pharaoh's hard heart and ask them how Josiah is different from Pharaoh.

Pass out a small portion of clay to each child. Have them form a heart with the clay and then using a pencil press a design into the heart. Pass around the hard heart and ask the children to notice the difference and how the hard heart can no longer receive any image or mark.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- What do you think it means to have a tender heart toward God? (A tender heart toward God allows His Word to make its mark in our lives. That means that when we read something in the Bible we should make sure that when we walk away from that word that it remains impressed on our hearts and when people see us they can see God's Word at work in our lives.)
- What kinds of things did Josiah do which demonstrate that he had a tender heart toward God? (He tore his clothes and cried when he realized how they had not followed God, he cleared the land of idols, and he restored the House of God.)

Take the hearts home and bake them and then return them to the children.



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### PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

### IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of the discovery of the Book of the Law.

### FOR OLDER GRADES

**Supplies:**

pencil and paper

Have the children read through the story of Josiah (all of 2 Chronicles 34).

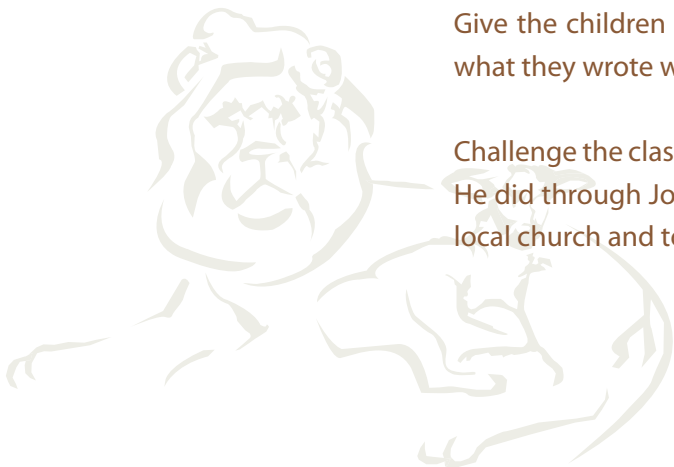
Have the children answer the following question.

- How does Josiah's life challenge you to live differently?

Encourage the children to consider where their hearts are before the Lord and how they treat the Word of God. Ask the children to write their names on their papers and mention that you will be passing the papers back to their parents at the end of class.

Give the children 10-15 minutes to write, and then invite some of them to share what they wrote with the class.

Challenge the class to trust that God can do great things through their lives just like He did through Josiah's. Encourage them to look for opportunities to serve in the local church and to read their Bibles.



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### A LITTLE BIT MORE

**The Book of the Law** – In 2 Chronicles 34:14, Hilkiyah found the “Book of the Law given through Moses”. Later, in verse 30, it is called the “Book of the Covenant”. The first five books of the Old Testament are called the Pentateuch and are what Jesus refers to in Luke 24:44 as the Law of Moses. In John 5:47, Jesus emphasizes the importance of believing what Moses wrote by saying if we do not believe Moses then we will not believe Jesus.





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SIGN FOR BOX

**Seek  
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### — VERSES FOR “THE LAW IS FOUND” —

**Exodus 20:12** – Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

**John 3:16** – For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

**Ephesians 6:1** – Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

**Proverbs 3:5-6** – Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

**Proverbs 4:1** – Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight,

**Psalms 1:1-3** – Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

**Psalms 119:9** – How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.

**Psalms 119:33-34** – Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes; and I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

**Psalms 119:105** – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

