

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 43

Josiah

Josiah

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective The goal of this lesson is to demonstrate that all people, no matter how righteous, need to repent by looking at the story of Josiah.

Key Verses

2 Chronicles 34—Main Teaching Passage
2 Kings 22:1-23:30 (Parallel Passage)

Memory Verse - Lamentations 3:22 (July Memory Verse)

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed,
Because His compassions fail not.

Hook

Act out for the kids a scene of a police pulling someone over for a speeding ticket (you be the speeder and have your assistant or a student be the cop). Explain to the cop that even though you were speeding, you have never killed anyone or stolen anything, so you shouldn't go to jail. Ask the class what they think about this excuse.

No matter what we have done, we all have committed sin and deserve punishment. This is the topic of today's lesson.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

After Manasseh and his wicked son Amon died, Manasseh's grandson Josiah took the throne at just eight years old. From a young age, he sought the Lord and desired to follow him. He ordered the destruction of all the idols and high places in the land. He also took the money given to the temple and ordered workmen to repair the temple from all the damages done by King Manasseh.

While in the temple, Hilkiah the priest found the book of God's law and brought it to Josiah. Josiah had the book read to him, and he wept when he heard it. He knew that Judah had disobeyed all of God's commandments for years. Josiah told Hilkiah to ask the Lord what they should do. Hilkiah asked Huldah the prophet, and she told the king that Judah was going to face judgment for their disobedience. However, because Josiah had humbled himself and repented, he would live in peace. Judah would be safe all the days of his life.

Josiah called all the people of Judah together and read the law to them. Together, they made a covenant with God to obey all the words written in the law and to follow Him. Josiah continued to follow God and destroy all the idols in the land all the days of his life. In fact, 2 Kings 23 says he burned the idols, beat them into dust, and threw them into a brook. He even destroyed the idols in the northern kingdom, which had been conquered for their idolatry years ago. In one of its darkest hours, Josiah led Judah into one of its greatest spiritual revivals.

LOOK

Josiah was one of the greatest kings who ever lived. In a time when Judah was filled with idols and all sorts of sin, Josiah led the people back to the Lord and destroyed idols throughout the land. If anyone was likely to have had pride in his spiritual accomplishments, it would have been Josiah. This makes what Josiah did when he heard the law read stunning. He wept, tore his clothes, humbled himself, and repented. He knew that he had personally done many great things. He knew that he had led Judah to repentance. However, when he encountered God's Word, he was faced with a grim reality: Judah deserved to be punished. All the good things they had done during Josiah's reign didn't matter. Judah had violated God's law. All the righteous deeds in the world could not undo Judah's idolatry. When Josiah read the law, he realized that he and his kingdom deserved one thing: destruction.

However, Josiah did not use that as an excuse for Judah to continue in sin. He led the nation into repentance. He commanded the people to give up their sinful ways and turn back to God. He destroyed all the idols and sought to repair the house of the Lord. Because He repented, the Lord

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

rewarded Josiah with peace in his time. Yes, Judah would still receive the punishment it deserved, but Josiah would be spared.

Last week, when we studied Manasseh, we saw that even the most wicked of sinners can be saved. Today we get to see the other side of that: even the most righteous of men need grace. It didn't matter that Josiah had done all these righteous things. Judah had sinned, and Josiah realized that they deserved judgment and that he needed to repent. The same way, even the best of people have sin and do not deserve to go to Heaven. None of us do. Like Josiah, we all must realize that no matter what we do, we never can earn or deserve Heaven. That's why the Father sent Jesus to us. He took the punishment for our sins. We have a promise even better than Josiah's because Judah still would face punishment, as we will see next week. However, Jesus took away the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross for us. If we turn away from our sin and turn to God, like we can have our punishment taken away. But all of us need to repent. None of us are good enough to earn God's forgiveness.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

While we did this last week, this lesson can serve as another great opportunity to present the Gospel message to the kids and allow them to ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior.

Pray: Confess to the Lord your need for a Savior. Thank Him for taking away the punishment for our sins.

Parent Question: Why did Josiah need to repent?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Chronicles 34 by David Guzik

JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW

A. The beginnings of Josiah's reforms.

1. ([2 Chronicles 34:1-2](#)) A summary of the reign of Josiah, the son of Amon.

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. And he did *what was right* in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did *not* turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

a. **Josiah was eight years old when he became king:** Unusually, this young boy came to the throne at **eight years** of age. This was because of the assassination of his father.

i. "At last, after more than three hundred years, the prophecy of 'the man of God out of Judah' is fulfilled ([1 Kings 13:2](#))." (Knapp)

b. **He did what was right in the sight of the LORD:** This was true of Josiah at this young age, but it is really more intended as a general description of his reign rather than a description of him at eight years of age.

2. ([2 Chronicles 34:3-7](#)) Josiah against idolatry in Judah and the former kingdom of Israel.

For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which *were* above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered *it* on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And *so he did* in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes. When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

a. **He began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images:** The worship of this great variety of idols was entrenched after the reign of Amon. The late reforms of Manasseh helped against this trend, but since the short but wicked reign of Amon, there was much idolatry in the land.

i. The variety of idols described shows **how deep** idolatry was in Judah. *There were idols dedicated to Baal and to Asherah ([2 Kings 23:4](#)) and to all the host of heaven ([2 Kings 23:5](#)) in the very temple itself ([2 Kings 23:4](#)). From the 2 Kings account, it seems that Josiah began the cleansing reforms at the center and worked outwards.*

ii. "Seeking' in Chronicles describes the habit of looking to God in every situation, and also the attitude which God looks for in those who pray ([2 Chronicles 7:14](#); [30:19](#))." (Selman)

iii. **In the twelfth year:** Payne connects this with "a particular time of chaos that occurred throughout the ancient Near East and that was precipitated by an invasion from the north of barbaric, nomadic horsemen known as the Scythians (628-626 B.C.).... Their incursions wrought terror among complacent Jews ([Jeremiah 6:22-24](#); [Zephaniah 1:12](#))."

iv. “Five or six several words are here used, to show how he mawled them, and made mortar of them, as we say; such was his holy indignation, zeal, and revenge.” (Trapp)

b. **He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars:** Josiah did this both to carry out the prescribed punishment of idolatrous priests in Israel **and** *to defile these pagan altars.*

i. Josiah’s reforms did not only remove sinful **things**, *but also the sinful people that promoted and permitted these sinful things. The idols that filled the temple did not get there or stay there on their own — there were priests who were responsible for these sinful practices.*

ii. Any thorough reformation cannot only deal with sinful things; it must also deal with sinful people. If sinful people are not dealt with, they will quickly bring back the sinful things that were righteously removed.

c. **And so he did in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon... throughout all the land of Israel:** Since the kingdom of Israel had been conquered by the Assyrian Empire and was in the process of being depopulated as a result of exile, Josiah could extend his reforms there also.

i. **“Even unto Naphtali;** *which was in the utmost and northern borders of the kingdom of Israel. For it must be remembered that the ten tribes were now gone into captivity; and those who were come in their stead were weak and few, and not able to withstand the power of Josiah.”* (Poole)

3. ([2 Chronicles 34:8-13](#)) The restoration of the temple.

In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. When they came to Hilkiyah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites who kept the doors had gathered from the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, from all the remnant of Israel, from all Judah and Benjamin, and which they had brought back to Jerusalem. Then they put it in the hand of the foremen who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; and they gave it to the workmen who worked in the house of the LORD, to repair and restore the house. They gave it to the craftsmen and builders to buy hewn stone and timber for beams, and to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed. And the men did the work faithfully. Their overseers were Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to supervise. Others of the Levites, all of whom were skillful with instruments of music, were over the burden bearers and were overseers of all who did work in any kind of service. And some of the Levites were scribes, officers, and gatekeepers.

a. **In the eighteenth year of his reign:** After his energetic campaign to cleanse the land of Judah and Israel of idolatry, then Josiah put his efforts towards restoring the neglected temple, much as his predecessor Hezekiah had done ([2 Chronicles 29](#)).

i. “The Chronicler ([2 Chronicles 34-35](#)) appears to present a two-stage sequence of events: (i) the purification of religious practices in Judah, Jerusalem and Naphtali in Josiah’s twelfth year, and (ii) a continuing reformation stimulated by the discovery of the Book of the Law in the eighteenth year. But this may be a presentation to fit in with the Chronicler’s particular emphases.” (Wiseman)

ii. “If Josiah had not yet seen a copy of this book, (which is not impossible,) yet there was so much of the law left in the minds and memories of the people, as might easily persuade and direct him to all that he did till this time.” (Poole)

iii. It is possible that Josiah was motivated to rebuild the temple after hearing (or remembering) that this was what King Jehoshaphat did many years before ([2 Kings 12](#)).

b. **Then they put it in the hand of the foremen who had oversight of the house of the LORD:** Josiah understood that the work of repair and rebuilding the temple needed organization and funding. He paid attention to both of these needs when he gave **Hilkiyah** oversight over this restoration work of the temple. As a result, **the men did the work faithfully.**

i. According to [Jeremiah 1:1-2](#), the prophet Jeremiah was the son of this particular priest **Hilkiah**. Jeremiah began his ministry during the reign of King Josiah.

4. ([2 Chronicles 34:14-17](#)) The discovery of the Book of the Law.

Now when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD given by Moses. Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. So Shaphan carried the book to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "All that was committed to your servants they are doing. And they have gathered the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen."

a. **Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD:** According to [Deuteronomy 31:24-27](#), there was to be a copy of *this Book of the Law* beside the ark of the covenant, beginning in the days of Moses. The word of God was **with** Israel, but it was greatly **neglected** in those days.

i. "'The Book,' however, seems to have become misplaced during the apostate administrations of the previous kings, Manasseh and Amon, under whom the ark had been moved about ([2 Chronicles 35:3](#))." (Payne)

ii. "Hilkiah's personal announcement, '*I have found the Book of the Law*', stands out sharply.... Secretary Shaphan confirms that the find took place in the context of the workers' faithfulness." (Selman)

iii. "Though a close connection between Josiah's scroll and Deuteronomy had been accepted for a long time, the implications of this for the origins of Deuteronomy are much more uncertain, since neither Kings or Chronicles provides direct evidence for the thesis, advocated repeatedly since 1805, that the scroll was composed as part of a Deuteronomic reform movement." (Selman)

iv. "Was this the **autograph** of Moses? It is very probable that it was; for in the parallel place, [2 Chronicles 34:14](#), it is said to be the book of **the law of the Lord by Moses**. It is supposed to be that part of Deuteronomy, ([Deuteronomy 28-30](#), and [31](#),) which contains the renewing of the covenant in the plains of Moab, and which contains the most terrible invectives against the corrupters of God's word and worship." (Clarke)

b. **Shaphan carried the book to the king:** Here the word of God spreads. It had been forgotten and regarded as nothing more than an old, dusty book. Now it was found, read, and spread. We should expect some measure of spiritual revival and renewal to follow.

i. Throughout the history of God's people, when the word of God is recovered and spread, then spiritual revival follows. It can begin as simply as it did in the days of Josiah, with one man finding and reading and believing and spreading the Book.

ii. Another example of this in history is the story of Peter Waldo and his followers, sometimes known as Waldenses. Waldo was a rich merchant who gave up his business to radically follow Jesus. He hired two priests to translate the New Testament into the common language and using this, he began to teach others. He taught in the streets or wherever he could find someone to listen. Many common people came to hear him and started to radically follow Jesus Christ. He taught them the text of the New Testament in the common language and was rebuked by church officials for doing so. He ignored the rebuke and continued to teach, eventually sending his followers out two by two into villages and market places, to teach and explain the scriptures. The scriptures were memorized by the Waldenses, and it was not unusual for their ministers to memorize the entire New Testament and large sections of the Old Testament. The word of God — when found, read, believed, and spread — has this kind of transforming power.

5. ([2 Chronicles 34:18-21](#)) King Josiah hears the word of God.

Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes. Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, "Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for

those who are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book.”

a. **When the king heard the words of the Law:** The hearing of God’s word did a spiritual work in King Josiah. It was not merely the transmission of information; the hearing of God’s word had an impact of spiritual power on Josiah.

i. “A medieval Archbishop of Canterbury...assumed that Josiah listened to the whole book at one sitting: ‘What a contrast to our present-day kings and magnates! If once a year they hear the word of God preached, they find it nauseating and leave the church before the end of the sermon.’” (Selman)

b. **He tore his clothes:** The tearing of clothing was a traditional expression of horror and astonishment. In the strongest way possible, Josiah showed his grief on his own account and on account of the nation. This was an expression of deep conviction of sin, and a good thing.

i. Revival and spiritual awakening are marked by such expressions of the conviction of sin. Dr. J. Edwin Orr, in *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*, recounted some examples from the great movement that impacted Britain and the world in 1859-1861.

ii. This conviction of sin is the special work of the Holy Spirit, even as Jesus said in [John 16:8](#): “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin.”

c. **Go, inquire of the LORD for me:** It wasn’t that King Josiah knew nothing of God or how to seek Him. It was that he was so under the conviction of sin that he did not know what to do next.

d. **For great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us:** Josiah knew that the kingdom of Judah deserved *judgment* from God. *He could not hear the word of God and respond to the Spirit of God without seriously confronting the sin of his kingdom.*

6. ([2 Chronicles 34:22-28](#)) God speaks to King Josiah.

So Hilkiah and those the king had appointed went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke to her to that effect. Then she answered them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “Tell the man who sent you to Me, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah, because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place, and not be quenched.’” But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Concerning the words which you have heard; because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you,” says the LORD. Surely I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants.’” So they brought back word to the king.

a. **Huldah the prophetess:** We know little of this woman other than this mention here (and the similar account recorded in [2 Kings 22:14](#)). With the apparent approval of King Josiah, Hilkiah the priest consulted this woman for spiritual guidance. It wasn’t because of her own wisdom and spirituality, but that she was recognized as a **prophetess** and could reveal the heart and mind of God.

i. There were certainly other prophets in Judah. “Though the contemporary prophet Jeremiah is not mentioned, he commended Josiah ([Jer. 22:15-16](#)) and the prophet Zephaniah ([1:1](#)) was at work in this reign.” (Wiseman) Yet for some reason — perhaps spiritual, perhaps practical — they chose to consult **Huldah the prophetess**.

ii. “We find from this, and we have many facts in all ages to corroborate it, that a pontiff, a pope, a bishop, or a priest, may, in some cases, not possess the true knowledge of God; and that a simple **woman**, *possessing the life of God in her soul, may have more knowledge of the divine testimonies than many of those whose office it is to explain and enforce them.*” (Clarke)

b. **I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants:** Josiah knew that Judah deserved judgment, and that judgment would indeed come. Judah and its leaders had acted against the LORD for too long, and would not genuinely repent so as to avoid eventual judgment.

c. **All the curses that are written in the book:** God’s word was true, even in its promises of judgment. God’s faithfulness is demonstrated as much by His judgment upon the wicked as it is by His mercy upon the repentant.

i. “Josiah went on with the work of reformation, even when he knew that nationally it was foredoomed to failure.... She distinctly told him that there would be no true repentance on the part of the people, and therefore that judgment was inevitable. It was **then** *that the heroic strength of Josiah manifested itself, in that he went on with his work.... No pathway of service is more difficult than that of bearing witness to God, in word and in work, in the midst of conditions which are unresponsive.*” (Morgan)

d. **Because your heart was tender:** Josiah’s heart was tender in two ways. First, it was **tender** to the word of God and was able to receive the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit. Second, it was **tender** to the message of judgment from Huldah in the previous verses.

i. **You humbled yourself before God when you heard His words:** “Have you ever noticed the difference between being humble and being humbled? Many persons are humbled who are not humble at all.... It is a voluntary humiliation of soul which is inculcated by the example of Josiah, and may the Spirit of God make us willing in the day of his power, that we may willingly humble ourselves before God.” (Spurgeon)

e. **You shall be gathered to your grave in peace:** Though Josiah died in battle, there are at least three ways that this was true.

- He died before the great spiritual disaster and exile came to Judah.
- He was gathered to the spirits of his fathers, who were in peace.
- He died in God’s favor, though by the hand of an enemy.

i. “Though Josiah died in violent circumstances ([2 Chronicles 35:20-24](#)), this does not invalidate God’s promise which really means that the exile would not take place during Josiah’s lifetime.” (Selman)

f. **Your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place:** This was God’s mercy to Josiah. His own godliness and tender heart could not stop the eventual judgment of God, but it could delay it. Inevitable judgment is sometimes delayed because of the tender hearts of the people of God.

i. God delayed judgment even in the case of Ahab, who responded to a word of warning with a kind of repentance ([1 Kings 21:25-29](#)).

B. The honest repentance of King Josiah and the people of Judah.

1. ([2 Chronicles 34:29-30](#)) Josiah reads the word of God to the leaders of Judah.

Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the priests and the Levites, and all the people, great and small. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD.

a. **The king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah:** Josiah heard the promise of both eventual judgment and the immediate delay of judgment. He did not respond with indifference or simple contentment that he would not see the judgment in his day. He wanted to get the kingdom right with God, and he knew that he

could not do it all by himself — he needed **all the elders of Judah** to join in broken repentance with him.

b. **And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book:** The king did this himself. He was so concerned that the nation would hear the word of God that **he read** it to them himself.

i. “It is especially interesting that he regards the written form of God’s word as superior to inherited tradition and is willing to pay the cost of correcting his priorities.” (Selman)

2. ([2 Chronicles 34:31-33](#)) **The covenant is renewed.**

Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. And he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin take a stand. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. Thus Josiah removed all the abominations from all the country that *belonged* to the children of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel diligently serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not depart from following the LORD God of their fathers.

a. **The king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD:** King Josiah stood before the people and publicly declared his commitment to obey the word of God to the very best of his ability (**with all his heart and all his soul**).

i. “[**He**] **made a covenant** is literally ‘[he] cut a covenant,’ which goes back to the practice of cutting the carcass of an animal and separating the parts so the contracting parties could seal their agreement by walking between them (cf. [Genesis 15:17](#); [Jeremiah 34:18](#)).” (Dilday)

b. **And he made all who were present...take a stand:** It wasn’t enough for the king himself to do it and to offer his example to the people. They had to **follow** by taking a **stand** for the covenant themselves. This showed that the work of God’s Spirit went beyond the king and the leaders and extended to the people also.

i. “It is likely that he caused them all to **arise** when he read the terms of the covenant, and thus testify their approbation of the covenant itself, and their resolution to observe it faithfully and perseveringly.” (Clarke)

ii. “The ceremony compares with the basic Mizpah covenant ([1 Samuel 8:11-17](#); [10:25](#)) and the renewal of the covenant at Shechem ([Joshua 24](#)), both of which marked turning points in Jewish history.” (Wiseman)

c. **All his days they did not depart from following the LORD God of their fathers:** The work of King Josiah had a lasting effect among the people of Judah. They stayed faithful to God during his reign.