



Use Week of:

## Unit 15 • Session 2

# Hezekiah and Josiah

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

2 Chronicles 29; 34–35

### STORY POINT:

Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God.

### KEY PASSAGE:

2 Chronicles 7:14

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.

**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
(10–15 MINUTES)  
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**APPLY THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)  
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Additional resources are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject](http://MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject).

## LEADER Bible Study

After God's people split into two kingdoms—the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah—each nation was ruled by a series of kings. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was ruled by mostly bad kings (like Ahaz who worshiped idols and did not respect God, God's law, or God's prophets) and a handful of good kings. Hezekiah and his great-grandson Josiah were two notable reformers who had a lasting impact on Judah.

Hezekiah took the throne after evil Ahaz. During Hezekiah's reign, the kingdom of Israel—which had endured more than 200 years of bad kings—was captured by Assyria and ultimately destroyed. Hezekiah “did what was right in the LORD's sight just as his ancestor David had done” (2 Chron. 29:2) He destroyed the places of idol worship and cleansed the temple. The Lord was with Hezekiah, and Hezekiah prospered.

Then Hezekiah's son Manasseh became king. For 55 years, he led the people of Judah away from God, essentially reversing the progress Hezekiah had made. Manasseh's son Amon followed in his father's evil ways but was assassinated by his own servants. The people of Judah made Amon's son Josiah king when he was just 8 years old.

Unlike his father, Josiah began to seek God. He tore down the altars and idols of false gods, and he initiated the repairing of the Lord's temple. During the temple repair, the discovery of the book of the law of the Lord led Josiah to make a covenant to follow God and obey His commands. Those who heard the law vowed to do the same. When Josiah died, he was remembered as the greatest king in Judah. (2 Kings 23:25)

Hezekiah and Josiah loved God and wanted to follow His commands. They wanted God's people to love God and obey the law too. When Jesus came to earth, He fulfilled the law by obeying it perfectly.

# The BIBLE Story

## Hezekiah and Josiah

*2 Chronicles 29; 34–35*

The Southern Kingdom of Judah had many kings. Most of the kings were evil; they did not follow God. Kings like Ahaz set up places to worship idols, and the people forgot about God.

When King Ahaz died, his son Hezekiah became king.

**Hezekiah was not like his father. Hezekiah did what was right.** He trusted God and obeyed

His commands. **Hezekiah** made some changes around the kingdom. He **led the people to worship God again, and God blessed him.**

After Hezekiah died, his son Manasseh (muh NASS uh) became king. **Manasseh was the most evil king of Judah.** He set up the idols Hezekiah had destroyed and led the people to worship false gods. He ruled for 55 years.

**Then his son Amon (AM uhn) became king. He was evil too, and he ruled for two years. Then**

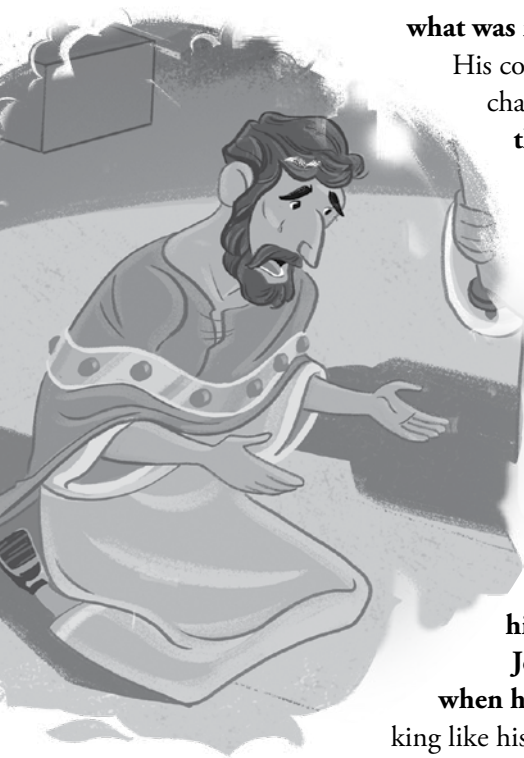
**his son Josiah became king.**

**Josiah was just eight years old when he became king.** He was a good

king like his ancestor David. **Josiah lived**

**in a way that pleased God. When Josiah was**

**a teenager, he started to follow God.** Then he made some changes around the kingdom. Josiah decided to get rid of the things that were



not pleasing to God. He **got rid of idols and the places where people worshiped false gods.**

**When Josiah was a young man, he wanted to repair the Lord's temple. As the temple was being repaired, the high priest found a very important document. "I have found the book of the law in the Lord's temple!" the high priest said. When King Josiah heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes! "God is very angry with us!" Josiah said. "Our ancestors did not obey God!"**

A prophetess brought a message from God. God said, "I am going to punish the people of Judah because they turned away from me and worshiped other gods." But God had a special message for Josiah: "Because you were humble and were sorry for your sin when you heard the law, you will die in peace. You will not see the punishment I am bringing on the people."

**Josiah went to the temple and read the words of the law to all the people. Then Josiah promised to follow God and obey Him like the book of the law said to do. The people at the temple also agreed to follow God and obey Him. As long as Josiah was king, the people followed God and obeyed Him.**

*Christ Connection: Hezekiah and Josiah loved God and wanted to follow His commands. They wanted God's people to love God and obey the law too. When Jesus came to earth, He fulfilled the law by obeying it perfectly.*

## **Bible Storytelling Tips**

### **• Invite**

#### **interaction:**

Instruct kids to give a thumbs-down when you describe a bad king and a thumbs-up when you tell of a good king.

- **Role play:** Wear a crown as you tell about Josiah. Speak Josiah's words loudly and move your body to play out his actions.

# INTRODUCE the Story



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**KEY PASSAGE:** 2 Chronicles 7:14

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.

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## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to name something they treasure. What evidence shows that they treasure that thing? Do kids treasure the Bible? Why or why not?

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Kid King” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Kid King” on the activity page. Guide kids to list laws they would make if they were king over a country. Invite kids to share their ideas.

**SAY** • If those laws you thought of were put into place, would people think you were a good king or a bad king? Do you think it would be hard to be king at your age? In the Bible story we will hear today, one of the kings who ruled over Judah became king when he was just 8 years old!

## LOW PREP

- paper
- pencils
- timer (optional)

## Session starter (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** B-list

Form two or more teams of up to four players each. Give each team a piece of paper and a pencil. Instruct teams to

designate one player on each team as the *Writer*. The *Writer* should list the numbers from 1 to 10 down the left side of the paper. Explain that you will name 10 categories.

For each category, teams should record an answer that begins with the letter *B*. Read the categories one at a time, allowing about 15 seconds for kids to write an answer. Then begin with the first category and invite teams to share their answers. Award a point for each unique answer.

**SAY** • Great job! One thing I treasure is the Bible. In the story we will hear today, two kings of Judah—Hezekiah and Josiah—ruled in a way that showed they treasured God’s Word.

**Categories:**

- girl’s name
- animal
- breakfast food
- movie title
- name of a city
- fruit
- boy’s name
- things in the ocean
- color
- something you treasure

**OPTION 2: Bible book hunt**

Before the session, write the names of the Bible books on separate index cards. Mix them up and remove up to 10 of the cards. Hide the removed cards around the room.

- index cards
- marker
- Bibles

Give kids the stack of index cards and challenge them to sort the cards in the correct order. Provide Bibles if kids want to refer to the table of contents. Explain that several of the cards are missing. When kids recognize that a specific card is missing, prompt them to search the room until they find that specific card. Play until kids arrange all of the Bible books in order.

**SAY** • We can read the Bible every day. Today’s Bible story is about two kings of Judah who recognized the importance of God’s Word. They made big changes in the kingdom so God’s people would know Him more. We’ll find out what they did.

## Transition to teach the story

# TEACH the Story



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## Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- shoulder bag
- envelopes
- Bible

*[Leader enters wearing dark pants, a light blue shirt, and a hat. He or she is carrying a bag across the shoulder that contains envelopes and a Bible.]*

**LEADER** • Hi, everyone! Beautiful day today, isn't it? It's so good to see you again. If you weren't here last week, it's nice to meet you! My name is *[your name]*. I was recently accepted into the training academy to become a mail carrier. I've started my classes, and wow—who knew this is such hard work? Sure, you could show up and do the bare minimum, but to be a good mail carrier, you have to know how to solve problems, pay attention to details, navigate new routes, and interact with all kinds of people.

I'm glad they don't send newbies like me out alone. In addition to training classes, I'm practicing deliveries with a mail carrier who has been doing this job for more than 15 years. She's one of the best.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

[*Reach into bag and pull out the Bible.*] That makes me think of the Bible story I want to share with you today. It's about two men who were kings over Judah. Many of the kings before them were bad kings, but these guys were actually good kings.

## Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Before we start our story, let's review our big picture question and answer. The question is, ***How did God plan to fix what sin broke?*** Now that is an important question to consider. We know that the people couldn't just stop sinning; they were slaves to sin! Not even their kings could lead them back to God. So here's the answer: ***Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.***

## Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. -Giant Timeline

**LEADER** • Remember, the Bible is made up of smaller stories, and all of the stories fit together to tell one bigger story. Do you remember what that big story is about? [*Allow kids to respond.*] Yes! The Bible is about God's plan to rescue sinners through His Son, Jesus. Last week we heard about the prophet Isaiah, whom God sent to warn the people of Judah that the kingdom of Israel was going to fall and, later, Judah would fall too.

The kingdom of Israel did fall. The Assyrians destroyed the kingdom and scattered the people. This happened while Ahaz was the king of Judah. That's

where today's story picks up. It's about two kings who reigned after Ahaz. Their names were Hezekiah and Josiah.

## **Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)**

Open your Bible to 2 Chronicles 29; 34–35. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Hezekiah and Josiah.”

**LEADER** • The Southern Kingdom of Judah had been ruled by many kings over a few hundred years. Ahaz was the sixteenth king of Judah, and he was not a good king. The Bible says he did not do what was right like his ancestor David; instead, he was like the kings of Israel who worshiped idols and trusted in other nations for protection.

When Ahaz died, his son Hezekiah became king. Hezekiah was 25 years old when he became king. Was Hezekiah a bad king like his father? (*No.*) Hezekiah started making changes in Judah. He led the people to worship God again. When he died, his son Manasseh became king. Do you think Manasseh was a good king like his father? (*No.*) Manasseh was not a good king; neither was his son Amon. Finally, Amon's son Josiah took the throne. Was Josiah a bad king like his father and grandfather? (*No.*) Josiah was a good king like his great-grandfather Hezekiah.

Do you know how old Josiah was when he became king? [*Allow kids to respond.*] He was just eight years old! Josiah decided to repair the Lord's temple, and what important thing was found? (*the book of the law*) Those Scriptures revealed what God wanted from His people. Josiah realized the people of Judah

- Bibles
- “Hezekiah and Josiah” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

had not been obeying God, so Josiah shared God's law with the people. Both **Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God.**

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • Hezekiah and Josiah loved God and wanted to follow His commands. They wanted God's people to love God and obey the law too.

Sadly, when Josiah died, the kings after him did not lead God's people well. When Jesus came to earth, He fulfilled the law by obeying it perfectly.

***How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.***

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 149 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

## Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 15, Session 2" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how they read the Bible. Guide them to discuss why the Bible is important and what plans they have for reading God's Word regularly.

• "Unit 15, Session 2" questions from kids video



## Missions moment (3 minutes)

**LEADER** • Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God. That's what missionaries today do, too. They lead people to Jesus. Sean, a Christian coach in Baltimore, enjoys football and loves Jesus. Football is the way he builds relationships with teenagers.

Then he teaches them the Bible and tells them that Jesus loves them. Let's watch how Coach Sean led a teenager named Jordan to Jesus.

Show the "10:12 Sports (Part 1)" missions video.

• "10:12 Sports (Part 1)" missions video

- Key Passage Poster
- "I Will Hear" song

## Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together 2 Chronicles 7:14.

**LEADER** • In today's story, **Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God.** God wants us to turn away from our sin and turn back to Him! Work this week to memorize our key passage. We'll practice it together for the next few weeks. Let's sing.  
Lead boys and girls in singing "I Will Hear."

- "Once and For All" song

## Sing (4 minutes)

Open your Bible and read aloud Ezekiel 18:23.

**LEADER** • The kingdom of Judah had many bad kings, but Hezekiah and Josiah were good kings. **Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God.** God loves when people turn back to Him!  
Sing together "Once and For All."

## Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Lord God, thank You for Your Word. We confess that we often look to other things and people for comfort, security, and hope. Lord, turn our hearts back to You! Thank You for faithful pastors and leaders who remind us what is true. Amen.

## Dismiss to apply the story

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# APPLY the Story



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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- plastic spoons
- permanent marker

Before the session, write each word of the key passage on a separate plastic spoon. Then mix up the spoons.

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 2 Chronicles 7:14. Scatter the prepared spoons on a floor or table and challenge kids to arrange the words in the correct order. Prompt kids to say the key passage together.

**SAY** • God wants sinners to turn back to Him! This was His plan all along. *How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.*

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- “Kings of Israel and Judah” printable
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)
- tape

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to 2 Chronicles 34. Direct kids’ attention to the lists of kings from the “Kings of Israel and Judah” printable. Keep the lists in view for the remainder of the volume. Show the Old Testament Kingdoms map and prompt kids to recall which kingdom Hezekiah and Josiah ruled over. (*Judah*) Tape the arrow next to Josiah’s name.

**SAY** • The kings of Israel and Judah usually led God’s people away from Him. As we saw in today’s story, *Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God.*

Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Chronicles 34:30-31.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why is the Bible important for knowing God? *Guide kids to identify the Bible as the Word of God. Lead them to think of the Bible as God's love letter to His people. It tells us what God has done to rescue sinners. We know who God is and who we are because of what God has said in His Word.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 119:9-11.)

2. How can we show we treasure God's Word? *Invite kids to discuss evidence that the Bible is important to a person. Help them identify ways to treasure God's Word through reading the Bible regularly, studying the Scriptures, memorizing Scripture, telling others about the Bible, and so forth.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 119:103.)

3. Why is it good news that Jesus obeyed God perfectly? *Prompt kids to recognize that Jesus never sinned. When we trust in Him, we—who have failed to obey God perfectly—are counted righteous before God. Jesus' perfect obedience is credited to us and our sins are forgiven. Emphasize that we obey God not to earn His acceptance but in response to the acceptance we already have through Christ.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:8.)

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

## Activity choice (10 minutes)



### OPTION 1: Sitting ball

Form two teams and assign each team one side of the room as an “end zone.” Guide each team to spread out and sit on the floor. Each team should try to score by tossing the ball to their teammates to get it to their end

**LOW  
PREP**

- foam or inflatable ball
- Bible

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

Option: Distinguish teams by providing colored wristbands or pinnies.

zone. The other team can block or intercept the ball, but all players must stay seated. Encourage players as they participate. After a few minutes of play, call time.

**SAY** • Sometimes it's easy to score and sometimes it's hard to score. Your friends on the other team kept getting in your way! It's like that in missions. Sometimes it's easy to tell people about Jesus and sometimes it's harder. Things get in our way.

Coach Sean in Baltimore uses football to try to make it easier to share Jesus. He spends a lot of time with his players and uses that time to teach them about Jesus and the Bible. The football league is called 10:12. This comes from the Bible verse 2 Samuel 10:12.

Ask a volunteer to read 2 Samuel 10:12 aloud. Pray that kids would all find ways to lead people to God.

### **OPTION 2:** Bible story bingo

Write the following 24 key words on a dry erase board or large sheet of paper: *Judah, kingdom, Hezekiah, good, evil, king, idols, Josiah, temple, priest, law, sin, punishment, obey, Jesus, God, follow, son, trusted, commands, Manasseh, David, changes, read.*

Give each kid a piece of paper and a marker. Instruct kids to draw a 5-by-5 grid on their papers. Explain that they should draw a star in the center square and then write the key words in the remaining squares in any order they choose, one word per square. Explain that the goal of the game is to mark off five spaces in a row (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal).

Read the Bible story script, pausing briefly after each paragraph for kids to mark off spaces. When someone

- paper
- markers
- dry erase board or large sheet of paper

shouts “Bingo!” prompt that player to list the words she marked off to check her answers. Continue playing through the end of the story.

**SAY** • Hezekiah and Josiah were two kings of Judah. They lived hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Both *Hezekiah and Josiah led the people back to God.* God wants all people to turn from their sin and turn to Him!

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

### Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for His love for us. Pray that God would reveal Himself to kids through His Word.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Compare Kings” on the activity page. Kids should look up each Scripture reference and make notes to compare and contrast Judah’s kings Hezekiah and Josiah.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “Compare Kings” activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.