

Part 1: King Josiah

Divide the class into four groups. Each group should have at least three children, but there can be as many as ten or more in a group if necessary. Each group will act out one section of the King Josiah Bible account. The teacher will be the narrator. (If you have a very small class, divide into two groups and have each group do two sections instead of one, or just act out two sections and read/tell the other two sections.)

Give each group one section of the drama script and have them read it, deciding who is doing what. (Make sure volunteers know reading is involved in case there are struggling readers.) There are two or three main parts per section. Other ideas are listed if there are more kids. If you have a longer teaching time, provide

a few props or offer some props that all can use. Allow five minutes for the groups to read their sections and decide on a plan of action. Then begin sharing the four sections in order with the kids acting it out.

Possible props: paper crowns for those playing King Josiah or wicked kings, simple costumes, a throne for King Josiah (high-back chair with material over it), a scroll for the Book of the Law, a messy area to represent the temple (possibly with papers, clothes, photocopied pictures of idols strewn around)

Note: A shorter, simpler script is in the Primary Guide if you have a small class or short time span.

Scene 1: Josiah is crowned king.

Three or more parts: Narrator (teacher), wicked king or kings (including King Amon), Josiah, crowd (if you want more kids involved)

Narrator: At the time this account begins, which was about 700 years before Jesus came, a nation called Israel, which was God's chosen people, was ruled by wicked kings. The narrator tells the wicked king or kings to laugh wickedly.

As a result, the whole nation was not doing right. They were not obeying God's commands. The narrator tells the crowd to pretend to be angry.

And the temple, called the house of the Lord, was falling apart. The people quit caring about God, so they quit caring about his house. The narrator tells the crowd to point and laugh at the temple.

Then wicked King Amon died. The narrator tells King Amon to do so. Perhaps have the crowd carry him off.

At that point in 640 BC, his young son, Josiah, became king. The narrator can stick a crown on Josiah.

Josiah: I was just eight years old when I became king. Can you imagine being a king when you're eight? Pretty cool, huh?

Narrator: The Bible records that Josiah lived righteously, meaning he did what was right in God's sight. He stayed on God's good path. Read 2 Kings 22:1a, 2.

Josiah: Even though I was younger than you, I decided I wanted to be a good king and follow the King of kings. It was a choice I made in my mind to follow him and do what he said.

Scene 2: Josiah orders the house of the Lord to be restored. The book of the law is found.

Four or more parts: Narrator (teacher), King Josiah, Shaphan (the king's scribe), Hilkiah (the high priest), servants (if wanting to involve more kids)

Narrator: A number of years went by, and King Josiah continued to live RIGHTeously. At one point, he decided on a project.

Josiah: Hmmm, the temple's in bad shape. We need to get it repaired.

Narrator: King Josiah sent his scribe, Shaphan, to the house of the Lord with these instructions:

Josiah: Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him count the money the people have given for the house of the Lord. Give it to the carpenters and builders so they can buy wood and stone to repair all the damages.

Shaphan the Scribe: Very well, good king. It shall be done. The narrator tells Shaphan and the servants to go off to the temple.

Narrator: So off went Shaphan and other faithful servants to God's house. When they got there, Shaphan found Hilkiah the priest. Hilkiah said:

Hilkiah: I've found the Book of the Law, God's Word! Take it and read it! The narrator tells him to pass an imaginary book, and everyone acts excited.

Narrator: This was quite exciting—a real treasure! It was especially exciting because the people didn't have their own copy of God's Word back then and copies were rare. So Shaphan and the servants took the precious book back to King Josiah. Do so.

Scene 3: Josiah hears the book of the law and sends his team to Huldah, the prophetess.

Four or more parts: Narrator (teacher), King Josiah, Shaphan, Huldah, servants (if wanting to involve more kids)

Narrator: When they got back home, Shaphan read to King Josiah from God's Word. When King Josiah heard it, he tore his clothes and wept, showing how terribly upset he was.

Josiah: *The narrator tells Josiah to pretend to tear a shirt and cry, then say:* Our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book and done what is written in here. They haven't lived right!

Narrator: You see, Josiah realized that everything they needed to know about how to live righteously was in God's Word, but they hadn't been reading it. It was a

scary and horrible feeling to know God's Word had just been sitting there, not being used.

Josiah: Shaphan, go and ask Huldah the prophetess what's to be done. *The narrator tells Shaphan and the servants to go off.*

Narrator: So, Shaphan and the others went off to Huldah the prophetess. She said:

Huldah: Those who haven't followed and obeyed God's Word will be very sorry. But as for you, King Josiah, you genuinely want to *do right* and obey God. God knows that, and God won't let you see all the trouble that'll come on this place. *Your life* will be peaceful, and the trouble will come *after* you die.

Scene 4: Josiah reads the Word and makes a commitment, along with the rest of the people.

Four or more parts: Narrator (teacher), King Josiah, the crowd (at least two)

Narrator: King Josiah gathered all his kingdom at the house of the Lord. All the people were there, both great and small. And King Josiah said:

Josiah: I'm going to read in your hearing all the words of the Book of the Law which has been found in the house of the Lord. *The narrator tells Josiah to pretend to silently do so.*

Narrator: So King Josiah read the Book of the Law. When he finished, he stood by a pillar and said:

Josiah: I'm making a promise, a covenant, before the Lord, to follow God and obey his commandments with all my heart and all my soul and to do everything written in this book.

Crowd: *The narrator tells the crowd to cheer and say:* Me, too! Me, too!

Narrator: *Hold up the KING JOSIAH POSTER.* And that's exactly what King Josiah did. He chose to *do right* all the days of his life. He read God's Word and obeyed God's commands. This doesn't mean he perfectly obeyed every time, of course, but in his heart, he desired to do right, and in his actions, God helped him to grow in obedience.

Teacher 2: So you see how important reading God's Word is to living right and wearing that breastplate of

RIGHTeousness for every child of God. But it's not just about reading God's Word. We show our love for our King by desiring to obey what we read in his Word. When you read something in God's Word, God knows you know about it, and he wants you to do it. Of course, he understands you're going to stumble at times and mess up (sin). He understands you can't obey perfectly in your own self, but he gives each of his children the gift of the Holy Spirit to help you grow in obedience.

Let's take a minute to think of as many commands as we can from the Bible. *As they call them out, quickly record them on a dry-erase board or chalkboard.*

Teacher 1: So putting on the armor is about first putting on Jesus' righteousness (becoming a child of God), and then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, growing in obeying God and doing right. We're vulnerable to Satan's attacks if we don't obey. This doesn't mean we're children of God *because* we do good, right things. We can't ever be good enough to earn our way into God's kingdom. That's why we need Jesus! What it does mean is that *because* we're children of God, we *want* to do good, right things.

For any of us who are part of God's kingdom, let's make a commitment right now to be people who want to *do right*, and let's ask the Holy Spirit to help us desire to obey what we learn in God's Word. *Do so.*