

Story Time - Read the story to the children

Lesson 116: JOSIAH

2 KINGS 22:1-2; 23:1-30

Josiah was eight years old when he began to rule. He ruled 31 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. Josiah did what the LORD said was right. He followed God like his ancestor David. Josiah obeyed God's teachings--he did exactly what God wanted. King Josiah told all the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem to come and meet with him. Then the king went up to the LORD'S Temple. All the people of Judah and the people who lived in Jerusalem went with him. The priests, the prophets, and all the people--from the least important to the most important--went with him. Then he read the Book of the Covenant. This was the Book of the Law that was found in the Lord's Temple. Josiah read the book so that all the people could hear it. The king stood by the column and made an agreement with the LORD. He promised to follow the LORD and to obey His commands, the laws, and His rules. He promised to do this with all his heart and soul. He promised to obey the agreement written in this book. All the people stood to show that they promised to follow the agreement too. Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the other priests, and the gatekeepers to bring all the dishes and things that were made to honor Baal, Asherah, and the stars of heaven out of the LORD'S Temple. Then Josiah burned those things outside Jerusalem in the fields in the Kidron Valley. Then they carried the ashes to Bethel. The kings of Judah had chosen some ordinary men to serve as priests. These false priests were burning incense at the high places in every city of Judah and all the towns around Jerusalem. They burned incense to honor Baal, the sun, the moon, the constellations, and all the stars in the sky. But Josiah stopped those false priests. Josiah removed the Asherah pole from the LORD'S Temple. He took the Asherah pole outside the city to the Kidron Valley and burned it there. Then he beat the burned pieces into dust and scattered the dust over the graves of the common people. Then King Josiah broke down the houses of the male sinners who were in the LORD'S Temple. Women also used these houses and made little tent covers to honor the false goddess Asherah. At that time the priests did not bring the sacrifices to Jerusalem and offer them on the LORD'S altar in the Temple. The priests lived in cities all over Judah. They burned incense and offered sacrifices at the high places in those cities. The high places were everywhere, from Geba to Beersheba. And the priests ate

their unleavened bread in those towns with the ordinary people--not at the special place for priests in the Temple in Jerusalem like God commanded them. But King Josiah destroyed the high places and brought the priests to Jerusalem. Josiah also destroyed the high places that were on the left side of the city gate, by the Gate of Joshua. (Joshua was the ruler of the city.) Topheth was a place in the Valley of Hinnom's Son where people killed their children and burned them on an altar to honor the false god Molech. Josiah ruined that place so that no one could use it again. In the past the kings of Judah had put some horses and a chariot near the entrance to the LORD'S Temple. This was near the room of an important official named Nathan Melech. The horses and chariot were to honor the false sun god. Josiah removed the horses and burned the chariot. In the past the kings of Judah had built altars on the roof of Ahab's building. King Manasseh had also built altars in the two courtyards of the LORD'S Temple. Josiah destroyed all the altars and threw the broken pieces into the Kidron Valley. In the past King Solomon built some high places on the Mount of Corruption near Jerusalem. The high places were on the south side of that hill. King Solomon built one of these places of worship to honor Ashtoreth, that horrible thing the people of Sidon worship. He also built one to honor Chemosh, that horrible thing the Moabites worship. And King Solomon built one high place to honor Milcom, that horrible thing the Ammonites worship. But King Josiah ruined all these places of worship. He broke all the memorial stones and Asherah poles. Then he scattered dead men's bones over that place. Josiah also broke down the altar and high place at Bethel. Jeroboam son of Nebat had made this altar. Jeroboam caused Israel to sin. Josiah broke down both that altar and the high place. He broke the stones of the altar to pieces. Then he beat it into dust and he burned the Asherah pole. Josiah looked around and saw graves on the mountain. He sent men, and they took the bones from the graves. Then he burned the bones on the altar. In this way Josiah ruined the altar. This happened according to the message from the LORD that the man of God had said. The man of God announced these things when Jeroboam stood beside the altar at the feast. Then Josiah looked around and saw the grave of the man of God. Josiah said, "What is that monument I see?" The people of the city told him, "It is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah. This man of God told about the things you have done to the altar at Bethel. He said those things a long time ago." Josiah said, "Leave the man of God alone. Don't move his bones." So they left his bones and the bones

of the man of God from Samaria. Josiah also destroyed all the temples at the high places in the cities of Samaria. The kings of Israel had built those temples, which had made the LORD very angry. Josiah destroyed them, just as he had destroyed the place of worship at Bethel. Josiah killed all the priests of the high places that were in Samaria. He killed the priests on those altars and burned men's bones on the altars so that they could never be used again. Then he went back to Jerusalem. Then King Josiah gave a command to all the people. He said, "Celebrate the Passover for the LORD your God. Do this just as it is written in the Book of the Covenant." The people had not celebrated a Passover like this since the days when the judges ruled Israel. None of the kings of Israel or the kings of Judah ever had such a big celebration for Passover! They celebrated this Passover for the LORD in Jerusalem during Josiah's 18th year as king. Josiah destroyed the psychics, wizards, the little gods that people made and kept in their houses, the idols, and all the horrible things people worshiped in Judah and Jerusalem. He did this to obey the law written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the LORD'S Temple. There had never been a king like Josiah before. Josiah turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength. No king had followed all the Law of Moses like Josiah. And there has never been another king like Josiah since that time. But the LORD did not stop being angry with the people of Judah. He was still angry with them for everything that Manasseh had done. The LORD said, "I forced the Israelites to leave their land. I will do the same to Judah. I will take Judah out of my sight. I will not accept Jerusalem. Yes, I chose that city. I was talking about Jerusalem when I said, 'My name will be there.' But I will destroy the Temple that is in that place." All the other things that Josiah did are written in the book, The History of the Kings of Judah. While Josiah was king, Pharaoh Neco, the king of Egypt, went to fight against the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. Josiah went out to meet Neco at the place called Megiddo. Pharaoh saw Josiah and killed him. Josiah's officers put his body in a chariot and carried him from Megiddo to Jerusalem. They buried Josiah in his own grave. Then the common people took Josiah's son Jehoahaz and anointed him. They made Jehoahaz the new king.

116. JOSIAH
(2 KINGS 22:1-2; 23:1-30)



“And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.” **2 KINGS 22:2**

116. JOSIAH

2 KINGS 22:1-2; 23:1-30

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 23:25

TRUE OR FALSE

1. Josiah was eight years old when he became king. TRUE or FALSE
2. Although he was a good king, he did not do what the LORD commanded. TRUE or FALSE
3. Josiah went to the LORD's temple and read to all the people the words of the Book of the Covenant that they found in the house of the LORD. TRUE or FALSE
4. Josiah stood by a pillar and made a covenant, or promise, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments. TRUE or FALSE
5. But none of the people stood to show that they also promised to follow the LORD's commandments. TRUE or FALSE

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. Did Josiah follow all the commandments of the LORD?
2. What did he do to the false gods and idols? Did he break them and burn them?
3. Did he have the priests and people take all the bad things out of the Temple?
4. Were there a lot of high places and altars that other kings before Josiah had built?
5. What did he do when he saw the graves of people on the mountain? Did he command that their bones be dug up and burned?
6. Where did he have their bones burned? Was it on the altars of the false gods? Why did he do that? Was it to ruin those altars so they couldn't be used any more?
7. Do you think God was pleased with King Josiah?

PRAYER Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to obey and serve the Lord. May God fan the flame of genuine revival in our hearts. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

Lesson 116

Help Josiah get to the wood to burn the false altars.

Start

