



Josiah

Track 40

Lover of God's Word

King Josiah looked up. He saw a wooden face with a wooden smile and two big wooden eyes staring back at him. It was Asherah! She wasn't real – she was a fake god carved out of a pole.



“Tear down the Asherah pole!” yelled Josiah to his men.
“Israel must get rid of idols and worship the one true God.”

The men cut down the pole and burned it. Then Josiah and his men charged through the lands of Israel and Judah.

Whack, whack! Smash!

They shattered the statues of fake gods and crushed them into powder.

Chop, chop! Crash! They broke all the altars of the fake god Baal into pieces.

King Josiah was glad to clean up the land for his God. But back in Jerusalem there was still more work to do.

“Now let’s fix up God’s temple,” ordered Josiah. He loved God, and he wanted the Israelites to love Him again too.

Tap, tap! Bang! The men started working on the temple.

Brush, brush! Sweep! The priest cleaned up the temple rooms.

Suddenly the sweeping stopped. The king’s servant, Shaphan, rushed to the palace.

“King Josiah!” called Shaphan. “The priest just found something in the temple. Look!”



Idol Smashers Inc.



Name: _____
Josiah

Location: _____
Jerusalem

Job: _____
King of Judah

Shaphan lifted up an old, dusty scroll.

Josiah gasped. This was the Word of God! It had been lost for many years. The people had forgotten what it said.

Shaphan unrolled the scroll and started to read.

As Josiah listened, his eyes opened wide. Then he let out a loud cry and ripped his clothes in two (which was what people in the Bible times did to show they were very upset).

“We have not loved God like this book says!” Josiah started to weep. “God is angry with us because of our sin.”

Then King Josiah sent a message to everyone in the land.

“All people – young and old, great and small – come to the temple and hear the Word of the Lord.”

At the temple, Josiah stood up before the people. He opened the scroll and read every single one of God’s words to them. Then Josiah promised to love the Lord and obey His Word always. He told the people to make the same promise, and they did.

As long as King Josiah lived, the Israelites obeyed the Lord. Josiah hoped they would *always* love God's Word – just as much as he did!

But they wouldn't. Soon they would sin again and worship idols.

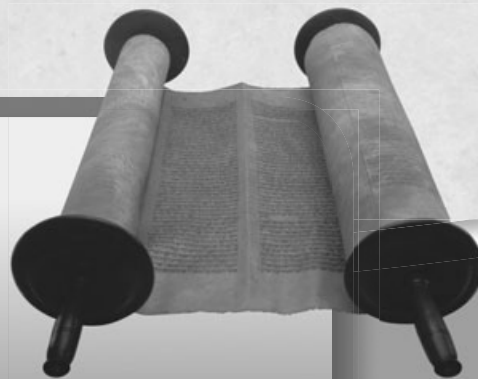
The punishments God warned about in His Word would come true. Their city, Jerusalem, would be destroyed. The Israelites would have to leave their homes because of their sin.

Once again, they would become slaves – and this time it would be in a far-off land called Babylon.

In spite of their sin, God would not forget them. God would keep on loving them. And one day, He would send a Savior to rescue them from sin forever.

Learn from King Josiah's biography:

- God's Word lasts forever – even when we forget about it.
- We sin and don't always love God's Word like we should. That's why God sent the Savior, Jesus Christ.



Parent Ideas

Josiah, Lover of God's Word

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 34; 2 Kings 22-23:28

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- God's Word lasts forever – even when we forget about it.
- We sin and don't always love God's Word like we should. That's why God sent the Savior, Jesus Christ.

1. Read-together activity –

Gather visual aids to enhance your reading. First, make a simple idol from a thick stick or block of wood. Tape or glue a paper face to the top of the stick or block, and attach arms sticking out at the sides. (If it's easier, you can also make an idol from modeling clay.) When you read about Josiah destroying the idols, knock your idol down or break it in half and rip off the paper pieces.

Also, hide a Bible or a scroll (see scroll craft in Application activity) somewhere in the room. In your biography reading, before you reveal what the priest, Hilkiah, found, ask your child to search around the room for the hidden treasure (the Bible).

2. Discussion activity – Ask the following questions:

- Why was it wrong for the people to worship idols like Asherah?
- Why was Josiah so sad and upset after the scroll was read to him?
- What promise did Josiah and the people make?
- Did the people keep their promise? What did they do wrong?

Parents, help your child to understand that worshipping idols is wrong because God says not to do it – and because God is the one true God. Josiah was upset because he and the people had not

obeyed God's Word. Josiah and the people promised to obey the Lord, but the people did not keep their promise. They sinned and started worshipping idols again.

3. Application activity – Talk about why God's Word is such a treasure to us. You may want to begin by telling your child why *you* treasure God's Word. Point out that our Bibles may rip apart and get dusty, but the words inside, God's words, last forever (1 Peter 1:25). They will always be true.

Together, make a scroll with God's Word inside. You can make it in one of two ways.



For a *smaller scroll*, use clear tape to attach two plastic drinking straws, one at the top and one at the bottom of a sheet of paper. The ends of the straws should stick out past the edges of the paper in equal lengths. For a decorative look, place a bead on each straw end. (Be sure the hole in the bead is small enough so the straw end fits snugly inside the bead, and the bead does not move around. You could put dots of glue on the beads to keep them in place.) To close the scroll, roll both ends in towards the middle of the paper, so equal lengths of paper are on both rolls. Tie the rolls together with a ribbon.

For a *larger scroll*, use clear tape or glue to attach two empty paper towel rolls, or two wooden dowels, along the short ends of a large sheet of sturdy paper (11 x 17 inches [28 x 43 cm] or longer). If you use towel rolls, fill them with crumpled newspaper to keep them firm. Roll both ends in towards the middle and secure with a ribbon.

When the scroll is made (and any glue has dried), your child can write inside the scroll. Help her to write a summary of the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:6-21) and (or) Deuteronomy 6:5, which is the greatest commandment.

Note: It is very probable that the book of Deuteronomy, or at least parts of it, was contained in the scroll that Josiah read (see Deuteronomy 31:24-26). The curses for disobedience, in Deuteronomy 28-30, were likely the cause of Josiah's deep distress.

4. Application activity – Each evening after dinner, stand up (like Josiah did) and read one of the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5 either from your homemade scroll or the Bible. Be sure to rephrase commandments in terms your child can understand. For example, explain committing adultery (Deuteronomy 5:18) as breaking a promise one made to love only one's spouse.

Discuss a few of the commandments that seem especially relevant to your child and family members. Talk about ways each of you have obeyed or disobeyed those commandments. (You may want to look at Jesus' explanation of the commandments in Matthew 5.) Then thank God for the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. We could never obey God's law perfectly! Pray that God's Spirit will help you to grow to love God, others and His Word more (Deuteronomy 6:5, Mark 12:30-31).