



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: 2 Kings 22: 1–2; 2 Kings 23: 1–3

Theme: Josiah the boy king

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning? Please use this section as a reference and information guide for leaders only – we don't expect it to be read out to the children.

As part of the Untold Stories of the Bible series, this session looks at King Josiah. It is rare to find a biblical king who completely obeyed God, but Josiah was such a king. What makes his story even more remarkable is that he became king when he was just eight years old. We would recommend reading both chapters 22 and 23 of 2 Kings to familiarise yourself with the life of Josiah before leading this session.

There are many ideas that could be explored from the account of King Josiah in 2 Kings. This session focuses on how young people can set an example to those around them, no matter what their age. King Josiah's people had not been reading God's word; in fact they had read it so infrequently that the book had been lost. When it was found; King Josiah had it read to him, and he realised that the people in his kingdom had failed to follow God's teachings. King Josiah tore his clothes in grief, and from that one reading set about changing the course of the nation.

The URC has highlighted the importance of intergenerational worship over the last few years, and this biblical account reminds us that young people, both then and now, can make a positive difference and be a force for good within their communities and churches.

Together – prayer and games

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend,

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family.

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN.

(two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

Amen

Active game – Follow the leader

King Josiah wanted to follow God, and King Josiah enabled his nation to also follow the word of God. Play "Follow the leader" as a way to introduce the session.

Allow those gathered to take it in turns to be the leader, allowing them a set amount of time each. Everyone lines up behind the leader. As they move around the room, the leader creates actions for everyone else to copy e.g. jumping hands in the air, star jumps, turn around, on all fours.

Quieter game – Oldest to youngest

King Josiah was eight when he became king. As a quieter way to introduce this session, ask those gathered to line up shoulder to shoulder and without talking, change the order of the line from oldest to the youngest. The session leader will need to inform everyone which side is oldest/youngest. How right are they?

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

When planning the session, the team of writers read many different Bible versions to find the one that is most suitable for the age range. We also look at vocabulary and how God/Jesus is described. We are aware that a lot of churches stick with one Bible version. We appreciate it can be difficult to have many different Bible versions and that access to them online isn't always easy. Therefore, we have provided the passage in the recommended version for your convenience.

For this story we recommend using the International Children's Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%2022%3A%201-2%3B%202%20Kings%2023%3A%201-3&version=ICB>

2 Kings 22:1-2: **Josiah King of Judah**

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he became king. He ruled for 31 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah. Adaiah was from Bozkath. ² Josiah did what the Lord said was right. He did good things as his ancestor David had done. Josiah did not stop doing what was right.

2 Kings 23:1-3: **The People Hear the Law**

¹Then the king gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem together. ²He went up to the Temple of the Lord. All the men from Judah and Jerusalem went with him. The priests, prophets, and all the people – from the least important to the most important – went with him. He read to them all the words of the Book of the Agreement. That book was found in the Temple of the Lord. ³The king stood by the pillar. He made an agreement in the presence of the Lord. He agreed to follow the Lord and obey his commands, rules, and laws with his whole being. He agreed to do what was written in this book. Then all the people promised to obey the agreement.

International Children's Bible (ICB)

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Where can I find the story online?

Under-fives: Josiah, by Saddleback Kids

https://youtu.be/f7wxk0UvLPc?si=_99F0yP4kSj3jcNJ

Five-to-elevens: Josiah, by Crossroads Kids' Club

<https://youtu.be/6C4MEXXbBmM?si=UJ0A8KRXwaOgmyr3>

Songs to support the story

Under-fives: King of Me, by Rend Co. Kids

<https://youtu.be/ks6zl2hL2Uk?si=1HXXOOFmprzchINp>

Five-to-elevens: All through history, by Becky and Nick Drake

<https://youtu.be/hQS2HHayr38?si=kPuMpGzxtDIIT3uN>

Explore – ways into the theme

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

To explore the story today, let's all think about being a ruler for the day. Ask the children to write down on slips of paper one thing they would do as ruler. Put the slips in a hat, then take them out one at a time and explore then. Perhaps put them in order? Discuss if each suggestion would be something you would do or not.

Next, ask each child that wants to to choose a role. It may be:

- King or Queen of a country
- Prime Minister
- The Moderator of General Assembly or Youth assembly
- The church secretary
- The youth and children's worker
- A teacher

Take it in turns to sit on the hot seat. Here are some suggested questions:

- What one thing would you change in your time in this role?
- What one thing would you stop doing?
- How would you make a difference?

Don't spend too much time with each child as you may not have long, so maybe set a time limit to two mins each.

Round up by reminding the children that they are important and can do incredible things even though they may be young. Encourage them to share their ideas and opinions in church, as their voices should be heard in just the same way as the adults'.

If you have time, maybe even show them the charter for children in church and explore it together: <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Children-and-Youth-Charter-for-Children-with-simplified-text.pdf>

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too. If you are to use the modern parable, consider buying a copy or

borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



Incredible You by Rhys Brisenden and Nathan Reed (2020: Tate Publishing) ISBN-10:1849766975

This book is about a young character who sees everyone else and wishes they were like them. By the end of the book they realise that they don't need to compare themselves because they are already incredible.

- I wonder what incredible thing you will do

You can find this story read on CBeebies bedtime stories. <https://youtu.be/-8H3R6NwzAQ?si=qYQ2YXRI0E8QzEHZ>

Talking together: How might we talk about the Bible story together?

- I wonder if you've ever led anything.
- As Josiah was only eight, I wonder if he had others advising or telling him what to do.
- I wonder if Josiah really never stopped doing "all things" right.
- I wonder what the Book of agreements is.
- How did Josiah know what the Lord wanted him to do?

Wondering: ways to reflect on the theme

- I wonder where in life you have responsibility.
- I wonder if you would like to have the sort of responsibility Josiah had.
- How do you feel about taking orders from someone younger than you?
- I wonder what a good king looks like.
- I wonder if it's easy or hard to do what is right.

What's in the box? (for under-fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing, "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- A crown – Josiah was a King of a place called Judah. He was only eight years old when he became King.
- Differently aged play characters – you do not need to be old to do amazing things. We all can make a difference, no matter our age.
- A Bible – the Bible helps us practise and learn to follow Jesus. Josiah read part of the Bible and it made his faith grow.
- A heart – reminds us of God's love for us and that we should do our very best to always love God.

- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!).
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (e.g. stones, felt, twigs etc.).

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity – Post-It note crowns



Ensure everyone has access to Post-It notes and pens. Give some time to write or draw a prayer on a Post-It note. You may want to suggest the types of prayers to focus on – maybe ones which would focus on what purpose God has for each of us. Then pass around a crown (either buy one or make one before the session) and encourage everyone to stick their Post-It note prayer onto the crown and to pass the crown on. When everyone has stuck their Post-It note onto the crown, say “Amen” together. Perhaps at the same time use hands to mimic placing crowns on their heads.

Spoken prayer

Encourage those gathered to know that God hears all voices, whether young or old. Let them know that today they are going to say their own prayer to God. Allow them time to think of a prayer. You may have to help some children: they could repeat a prayer after you if they are unable to think up their own prayer. When they are ready, the children should cup their hands in front of their mouths. When everyone is ready, encourage everyone to whisper their prayers at the same time, and all say “Amen” when the last person has finished their prayer.

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Bookmarks

You will need:

- white card
- colouring pencils or pens

- a template (optional – see the end of this session)

What you do:

In our story this week, Josiah discovers the Book of the Agreement and reads it. It made a huge difference to his faith. Today we are encouraging children to be the best they can be but also to dip into their Bibles.

Ask the children to design a bookmark to help when they read the Bible. They can use the template we have provided.

On one side, have a set of lines for them to write in the passage they have read each day.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

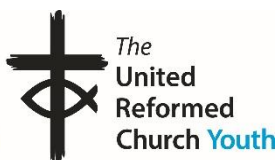
- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them, **I wonder if we can learn from those younger than us and those older than us.**
- I wonder if you can find any other unknown/rarely told stories of the Bible.

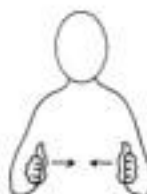
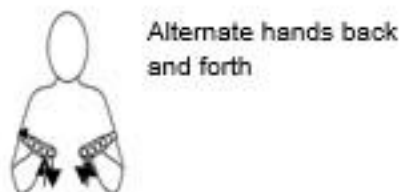
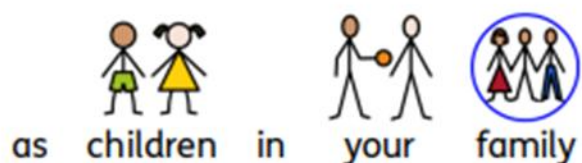
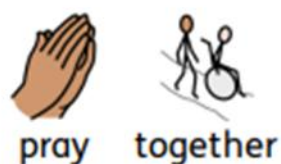
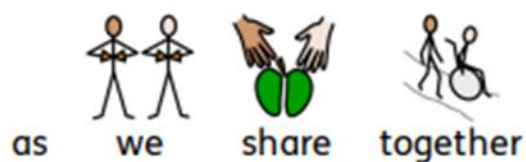
We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of the **boy king** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk**

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Advent in the style of....**





The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our sins As we forgive those who sin against us

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

For ever and ever . Amen



Illustration by lambsongs.co.nz via freebibleimages.com





Bookmark template

