



JOSIAH THE BOY KING

Young Preschool • #OT21 • October 29, 2023

Concept

God is the best leader.

Goal

Children will learn that God is the best leader; if they follow God they can be good leaders even when they are very young. They will learn that they begin to follow God when they ask Jesus to forgive their sins.

Passage

2 Kings 21:26-23:30; 2 Chronicles 34 & 35

Key Verse: "Josiah led everyone in Israel to serve the Lord their God."

2 Chronicles 34:33b

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>2 bright tunics</i>• <i>2 plastic crowns</i>• <i>2 sturdy instruments</i>• <i>4 noisemakers</i>• <i>White or blue sheet</i> <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Crown</i>• <i>Bible</i>	<p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Die-cut crowns – gold, silver or yellow cardstock, 2 strips/child• Key verse printed on labels, 1/child• Gem stickers, 8/child• Crayons, markers• Stapler

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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How often do we consider what it takes to be a good leader? Do we take time to learn how to lead well? Do we look for biblical character in those who lead us—or do we follow blindly?

Josiah became king of Judah when he was only 8 years old. Idol worship had infested the land for over 50 years and the Law was lost. In the midst of all this Josiah became the leader of a great revival in Judah, turning the hearts of the people back to the Lord. How did this happen?

When Josiah was 16 years old he decided to follow the Lord with all of his heart. He set his eyes on the best leader of all and he carried out that decision by taking action wherever he could. The idols were destroyed—even in Israel. The Temple was repaired and, because Josiah did the little he knew to do and did it faithfully, the Law was found in the rubble. Josiah shared the Law with all of the people of the land.

"... hope is passed from person to person. God-given visions of hope are shared—shared by leaders who see the vision with people who don't. But sharing is more than talk. Hope bursts into flame when leaders begin to act. As they follow their vision, clearly and openly facing the difficulties, God mobilizes the many by the challenging actions of the few." [1] Because of Josiah's leadership Judah returned to worshipping God alone, as long as Josiah lived.

"Josiah wasn't a perfect leader. Apparently he neglected to teach his children to love the Lord, because when his son became king he turned the country back to idolatry. Still, there is much to learn from Josiah and much that our children need to learn. They are tomorrow's leaders. Maybe some of them will become great leaders in the decades to come!

"There has always been a true elite of God's leaders. They are the meek who inherit the earth (Mt 5:5). They weep and pray in secret, and defy earth and hell in public. They tremble when faced with danger, but die in their tracks sooner than turn back. They are like a shepherd defending his sheep or a mother protecting her young. They sacrifice without grumbling, give without calculating, suffer without groaning. To those in their charge they say, 'We live if you do well.' Their price is above rubies. They are the salt of the earth." [2]

[1] John White, *Excellence in Leadership*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1986), p. 48.

[2] John White, *Excellence in Leadership*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1986), p. 89.

Set Up

In classroom before class: Pray with other teachers for the class time. Cut apart stickers for Learning Activity #1.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Stations:

- **Game – Leader Says**
- **Goal: Develop the concept of leader**
 - **Instructions:** Gather a small group of children to play Leader Says, using the same rules as for the game Simon Says. Talk to the children about leaders. A good leader teaches others to follow God because God is the best leader.
- **Creative Play – Kings and Queens**
 - **Instructions:** Use the provided crowns and tunics for the children to dress like kings and queens. Set a couple of chairs together as thrones and cover with the sheet. Give other children the musical instruments to play the fanfare for the king and queen. Join with them in creative play.

Introduction Lg. Group

Some of you played Leader Says a little while ago. Today we're going to talk about a boy in the Bible named Josiah. Can you say, "Josiah?" Josiah was a king and he was a good leader because he followed God and taught the people to follow God. The Bible says that "Josiah led everyone in Israel to serve the Lord their God." Listen while I tell you about him.

Lesson Lg. Group

Instructions: As you tell the children about Josiah, follow the instructions in ()s.

Can you imagine becoming a king when you are eight years old? Some of you have brothers or sisters who are eight years old. (Put the crown on your head.) Even though Josiah was just a boy, he wanted to be a good leader. He knew that to be a good leader He would have to follow God because God is the best leader. The people in Israel had forgotten about God. But Josiah found the book of God's Word. (Wipe dust off your Bible and hold it up, smiling.) No one knew what it said because it had been lost and they had forgotten that God is the best leader.

When Josiah read God's Word, he knew that no one was following God. They had forgotten God, the best leader. This made Josiah very sad. (Make a sad face.) Josiah prayed and told God that he was very sad. He responded to God and humbled himself before God (2 Chronicles 34:27)! (Explain the word "humbled".) Josiah then also chose to follow God!

God forgave him, just like he forgives any person who asks for the forgiveness God offers us through Jesus. (Make a happy face.)

Lesson Continued

The Bible says “Josiah led everyone in Israel to serve the Lord their God.” Josiah was a good king because he loved and served God. They had a big feast, a party with lots of food, to celebrate God and His goodness. They celebrated that God is the best leader. God had rescued them from their bad choices and they loved and served God.

You and I can be like Josiah. First you can choose to ask God to forgive your bad choices. And right now even while you are just children, God will help you to be a good leader. He loves all people and wants people to know that Jesus died on the cross for them. “Josiah led everyone in Israel to serve the Lord their God” (2 Chronicles 34:33b). When we follow God we learn to be good leaders and we will lead people to serve God, too.

Let's pray and thank God that He is the best leader. Let's ask Him to show us what it means to serve and follow him as our leader!

Transition

Let's make a crown to remind us that Josiah was a good king who taught the people to serve God who is the best leader.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Craft – Crown

Instructions: Give each child two crown strips to decorate. Add the Bible verse label. Use stickers and crayons or markers to decorate it. Try the crown on the child, mark the correct size, and staple or tape it together.