



**Mustard Seed Sunday School Lesson for March 30, 2008
Released on Wednesday, March 26, 2008**

“Josiah Renews the Covenant”

**Times: probably near 622 B.C.
Place: Jerusalem**

GOLDEN TEXT: “The king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord,... to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book” (2 Chronicles 34:31).

LESSON TEXT

2 Chronicles 34:15, 18, 19, 25–27, 29, 31–33

15 And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan.

.....

18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.

.....

25 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.

26 And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard;

27 Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD.

.....

29 Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

.....

31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.

32 And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

33 And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to

serve the LORD their God. And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

TEACHER'S NOTES ON THE LESSON

King Josiah was a shining light in a dark kingdom. Judah's two previous wicked kings, Manasseh and Amon, had neglected God's law and condoned idol worship. God had commanded that the law be read publicly every year (Deut. 31:10–11). The king was supposed to make a copy of the law for himself (17:18), but apparently this had not been done for a long time.

King Josiah began to seek God in the eighth year of his reign. In the twelfth year of his reign, he began to stamp out idol worship and to collect offerings to restore the temple in Jerusalem.

During temple renovations, workmen found God's law (probably the book of Deuteronomy). When Josiah heard the law, he realized how far Judah had strayed. He deeply repented. The law (cross reference Deut. 28–30) explained God's covenant and enumerated the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience. Josiah realized that his kingdom had destroyed itself.

"Josiah's reign on the Davidic throne for 31 years was the last surge of political independence and religious revival before the disintegration of the Southern Kingdom" (Bryant, ed., *The New Compact Bible Dictionary*, Zondervan).

Question: Does our familiarity with God's Word make us less convicted by it than Josiah was? (No. If anything, it makes us *more* convicted than Josiah because we readily have God's Word available to us, and yet we allow *things* to get in the way of our regularly reading and studying the Bible. What a timely reminder for us to get back on track with our studies.)

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Show that we should read, love, and obey God's Word as Josiah did.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

God's law had been lost, but now it was found.

Josiah believed God's Word and confessed (his and Judah's) sin.

Josiah obeyed God's Word.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS:

For Beginning the Lesson, put a small Bible in the mystery box.

For Telling the Lesson, try to find flannelgraph figures to illustrate the lesson. You need an old rag that will rip easily. Make a paper tulip to put behind the fence. On the tulip print "Josiah Obeyed the Law." You will need tape.

For Telling How to Live, you need a mirror.

For Helping to Remember, you need a black and a white piece of paper for each student. You need glue, a stapler, markers, and pieces of red ribbon.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

(Review items in the mystery box. Show students the Bible.) There were five churches in Brad's town. Brad had three Bibles. Brad seldom read the Bible. He left his Bibles on the floor. The Bibles got dusty. Some pages tore.

Seven-year-old Joo-Chan lived in China. There were no churches in his town. The Bible was forbidden.

Joo-Chan's grandfather, Ng Geiping, heard about Jesus and trusted Him as Saviour. He told Joo-Chan about Jesus. Joo-Chan trusted Jesus. Joo-Chan prayed every day that he could have his own Bible. How careful he would guard it! How he would love and obey it!

It is possible to take God's Word for granted. We should treasure the Bible. We should obey it completely. That is what King Josiah did.

TELLING THE LESSON:

(Use flannelgraph.) Hilkiah the priest told Shaphan the scribe exciting news. When the temple was being repaired, Hilkiah had found the long-missing book of God's law.

Shaphan took God's Word to King Josiah and told him Hilkiah had found it. Shaphan read God's law to the king. When Josiah heard God's law, he tore his clothes to show that his heart felt torn. (Tear rag.)

Josiah was horrified at the way he and his people had disobeyed God. He felt shocked to think of the ruin the people had brought upon themselves by their disobedience. Josiah repented of his sin and of the sin of Judah.

God would punish Judah for sin, just as He had warned in the covenant. The people had left God and worshipped idols.

God gave a message to Josiah. Because Josiah had loved God's law and repented with tears, God heard his prayer. God would bless Josiah.

Josiah called a meeting of the rulers of Judah and Jerusalem. Josiah stood near a pillar in the temple (cross reference 2 Kings 11:14). He made a covenant with God. He promised to obey every word of God's law with all his heart. (Tape tulip behind fence.)

Josiah asked the people to stand and promise to obey God, and they did. They believed God's covenant.

Josiah removed from the land all the idols and places of idol worship. As long as Josiah lived, the people worshipped and obeyed God.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

(Show mirror.) The Bible is like a mirror. A mirror shows dirt on our faces. The Bible shows sin in our souls. The Bible showed Josiah his sin and the sin of his people.

We should not excuse or blame others for our sin. Like Josiah, we should honestly repent of sin (read 1 John 1:9).

God's law was hidden in the temple. If we keep the Bible on a shelf and do not read it, it might as well be hidden or lost. Like Josiah, we should read, love, and obey God's Word. Will you read and obey God's Word every day?

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Each student should fold and staple the black and white papers together to make a Bible. On the white paper he should print "I Will Love and Obey God's Word." He may glue on the red ribbon to make a bookmark.

EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT:

"The king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord,... to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book" (2 Chronicles 34:31).

A covenant is a type of promise made between two parties. It is binding and may be unilateral (one-sided) or bilateral (two-sided).

God made a covenant with His people. He promised to bless them if they obeyed His law and to punish them if they did not obey.

Josiah made a covenant with God. He promised to obey God's law.

MUSTARD SEED LESSON ACTIVITIES:

"Josiah Renews the Covenant"

(2 Chronicles 34:15, 18–19, 25–27, 29, 31–33)

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:

1. "And **(HILKIAH, HEZEKIAH)** answered and said to **(SHALAMAR, SHAPHAN)** the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord." 2 CHRONICLES 34:15

2. "Then Shaphan the **(SCHOOL TEACHER, SCRIBE)** told the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath given me a **(BROWNIE, BOOK)**. And Shaphan read it before the king." 2 CHRONICLES 34:18

3. "And it came to pass, when the **(KING, COLONIES)** had heard the words of the law, that he rent [tore] his **(BREAD, CLOTHES)**." 2 CHRONICLES 34:19

4. "Because they have forsaken me, and have burned **(INCENSE, FORESTS)** unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their **(HEARTS, HANDS)**; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched." 2 CHRONICLES 34:25

TRUE OR FALSE:

5. God sent a message to King Josiah that said because he had a "tender heart" and was "humble," God was going to allow Josiah to not see calamity [misfortune], but would be buried in the land of his own people. 2 CHRONICLES 34:27–28 **TRUE OR FALSE**

6. King Josiah called a meeting and invited all the elders who lived in Jericho and Jezreel. 2 CHRONICLES 34:29 **TRUE OR FALSE**

7. A covenant was made by King Josiah to God to allow the people of Judah to continue to worship idol gods and to not walk in God's commandments. 2 CHRONICLES 34:31 **TRUE OR FALSE**

8. The inhabitants of Jerusalem agreed to do according to the covenant of God. 2 CHRONICLES 34:32 **TRUE OR FALSE**

MATCH THE FOLLOWING SCRAMBLED WORDS:

HILKIAH
SHAPHAN
INCENSE
JUDAH
ISRAEL
HEART
TENDER
HUMBLE
INHABITANTS
CLOTHES
KING
ELDERS
COVENANT
COMMANDMENTS
TESTIMONIALS
STATUTES
JERUSALEM
BENJAMIN
JOSIAH
ABOMINATIONS

a.) SHAJOI
b.) LESLAR
c.) SLAISTIMNOET
d.) BUMLEH
e.) GNIK
f.) HAJDU
g.) SENCEIN
h.) RETDEN
i.) PHASHAN
j.) SLOCETH
k.) STAUETT
l.) JENBINAM
m.) SELRED
n.) TRAEH
o.) KILHAIH
p.) TENVONCA
q.) STNATINHIBA
r.) STIONABAMIN
s.) MENTSCOMDNAM
t.) MULSJERAE

Additional Questions:

**IN THE HOUSE OF GOD
SHAPHAN THE SCRIBE
SAD
KING JOSIAH
HILKIAH THE PRIEST**

- 1. Who found the lost law of God? _____**
- 2. Where did he find it? _____**
- 3. Who did he give it to? _____**
- 4. Who was the ruler of Judah at this time? _____**
- 5. Was the king happy or sad when he heard this news? _____**
- 6. Did the king decide to obey God's Word? (YES)(NO) _____**

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The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books.