



# The Word Calls Us Back to God

## SUPPLIES Needed



### TO PRINT:

- Large Memory Verse to hold up (1 copy)\*

### TO GATHER:

- Hymnal/lyrics for songs\* (Optional: guitar or music to sing along with)
- Basket for offering\*
- Scroll prop (Make before class—see instructions.)
- Supplies needed for Hearing the Word activity: 1-2 pictures per child to color and crayons/markers

### OPTIONAL:

- Kid's Activity Sheet (1 copy/child)
- Elements of Worship Icons\* (Found in the introduction section.)

\*These items will be needed every week.

## LEADER'S Review

With a fruit tree you want the lovely fruit and goodness that comes from it, but you can't have them unless you remember to water and cultivate that plant. It is much like our reading the Word each day.

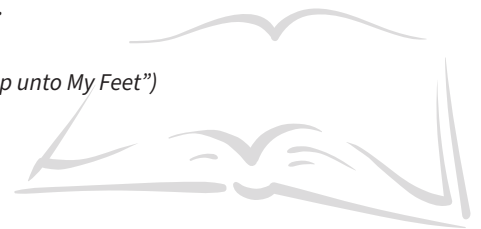
When we really read God's Word, making time for it and embracing it, there is nothing we can do but be changed by it. God's Word is living and active—it either opens your heart to the wellspring of life or shuts it down to harden. God's Word can't remain a bystander as it is read. It moves in our world as the Holy Spirit penetrates our souls. Perhaps that's the main reason we stay away from the Word at times; we don't want that soul penetration.

The Israelites had done just that—lost the Word in the ruins of the temple. Their world became murky with false gods, wrongly placed altars, and man-made idols. Josiah had seen a world without obedience to God's instruction, and he made a move to change it all. Outward changes had been made, so all that was left was to move inward.

The Bible tells us God's people celebrated the Passover with more grandeur and heart than had been done since the time of Samuel. What a change from those who followed other gods! Their "fruit tree" was beginning to grow. Their hearts were changing.

*I will not forget Your Love for me and yet  
My heart forever is wandering....  
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet  
And a Light unto my path.*

(Verse from "Thy Word Is a Lamp unto My Feet")



# THE Lesson

## Call to Worship – “O Worship the King”

*Sing the first verse of “O Worship the King” that we learned in Unit 1. (1 minute)*

*O worship the King all glorious above,  
O gratefully sing His power and His love;  
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,  
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.*

## Praise

*Sing a worship song with the children. (5 minutes)*

- “Thy Word Is a Lamp unto My Feet”

## Tithes and Offerings

*Recite the following prayer before passing around the offering basket. (2 minutes)*

We give Thee but Thine own, whate’er the gift may be:  
All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord from Thee.

(vs. 1 of “We Give Thee But Thine Own”)

## Confession of Faith

*Lead the children in confessing their faith by teaching the following verse with hand motions. (3 minutes)*

“**All Scripture** is **breathed out by God** and profitable for **teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training** in **righteousness**, that the **man** of **God** may be **complete, equipped** for every **good work**” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

*Optional: Use the following gestures to learn the verse:*

- **All Scripture** – open hands like a book
- **Breathed out by God** – blow out a big breath
- **Teaching, reproof, correction, and training** – mark with 1, 2, 3, 4 fingers
- **Righteousness** – big personal hug
- **Man** – draw hands down body
- **God** – point to heaven
- **Complete** – clasp hands tightly together
- **Equipped** – muscle arms
- **Good work** – thumbs up





## Reading of the Word

*Read Scripture. (3-5 minutes)*

### 2 Chronicles 34

Josiah was eight years old when he became king. He ruled for thirty-one years in Jerusalem. He behaved well before God. He kept straight on the path blazed by his ancestor David, not one step to the left or right. When he had been king for eight years—he was still only a teenager—he began to seek the God of David his ancestor. Four years later, the twelfth year of his reign, he set out to cleanse the neighborhood ... Throughout Israel he demolished the altars and Asherah groves, pulverized the god and goddess figures, chopped up the neighborhood shrines into firewood. With Israel once more intact, he returned to Jerusalem.

One day in the eighteenth year of his kingship, with the cleanup of country and Temple complete, King Josiah sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the mayor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz the historian to renovate The Temple of God.

While the money that had been given for The Temple of God was being received and dispersed, Hilkiah the high priest found a copy of The Revelation of Moses. He reported to Shaphan the royal secretary, “I’ve just found the Book of God’s Revelation, instructing us in God’s way—found it in The Temple!” He gave it to Shaphan, who then gave it to the king. And along with the book, he gave this report: “The job is complete—everything you ordered done is done. They took all the money that was collected in The Temple of God and handed it over to the managers and workers.”

And then Shaphan told the king, “Hilkiah the priest gave me a book.” Shaphan proceeded to read it out to the king. When the king heard what was written in the book, God’s Revelation, he ripped his robes in dismay. And then he called for Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan the royal secretary, and Asaiah the king’s personal aide. He ordered them all: “Go and pray to God for me and what’s left of Israel and Judah. Find out what we must do in response to what is written in this book that has just been found! God’s anger must be burning furiously against us—our ancestors haven’t obeyed a thing written in this book of God, followed none of the instructions directed to us.”

The king acted immediately, assembling all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, and then proceeding to The Temple of God bringing everyone in his train—priests and prophets and people ranging from the least to the greatest. Then he read out publicly everything written in the Book of the Covenant that was found in The Temple of God. The king stood by his pillar and before God solemnly committed himself to the covenant: to follow God believingly and obediently; to follow his instructions, heart and soul, on what to believe and do; to confirm with his life the entire covenant, all that was written in the book.

Then he made everyone in Jerusalem and Benjamin commit themselves. And they did it. They committed themselves to the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors the days.

[*The Message*]



## Prayer

*Have a prayer of confession asking God for forgiveness for not following His Word. (3-4 minutes)*

Dear Lord, there are so many times each day that we are disobedient to Your Word, sometimes on purpose and sometimes without even knowing we are. Please forgive us. We ask Your Holy Spirit to help us obey and follow Your Word. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

## Hearing the Word

*Teach the lesson to the children using the text below as a guide. (9–11 minutes for lesson; 7-15 minutes for activity)*

Last week we talked about God giving the words to write, so the people would know God and be guided by Him. Do you remember the names of the first five books of the Bible Moses wrote? (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*) What did God want His people to do with the Word He had given them? (*Read it. Wear it on their bodies. Put it in their houses. Talk about it all the time. Tell it to their children.*)

Even after God commanded His people to know and talk about His Word, there have been times in their history, when they forgot it. At times, they did not even know the written Word of God existed. Today's lesson is about a time when God's Word had been lost, but when it was found, some major changes occurred.

Let's pray before we begin: "Dear Lord, help us to hear Your Word. Help us not to keep it hidden. Use it to change our lives. Thank You for sending us Your Word so we can know You. In Jesus's name, amen."

Josiah became king when he was only eight years old. The Israelites had stopped following God's laws. They were supposed to worship God with their sacrifices and holy places only in Jerusalem at the Temple, but they made idols and did not obey any of the laws God had put into place—the ones Moses had written down.

Remember the covenant God had made with the Israelites? He would be their God, and they would be His people. If they followed Him, He would bless them. His Word helped them. That is why they were to keep it in front of them all the time.

By the time Josiah became king, the Word of God had been lost to the people; they had forgotten it. Then the boy king, who had been taught the promises of God, wanted to make sure all God's people followed God as they should. Josiah sent workers out into the entire kingdom to clean up. They smashed down all the idols and false places of worship. He was so serious about it, he himself led the people in proper worship for ten years.

Still, the Temple, the place where God had commanded them to worship, was in ruins. It had also been filled with idols to false gods. Josiah directed his best carpenters and workers to repair the Temple. They collected money throughout the land (Remember the command to give our tithes and offerings to God's house?), and everyone set to work to get the Temple back as it once was—a beautiful place fit to worship the only true God.

*(Hearing the Word—Continued)*

While Josiah's men were cleaning up the ruins of the Temple, they found God's Word. In that day the entire Bible had been written on a scroll. **Show students a scroll and illustrate how it was read.** The scroll they found was the Book of the Law written by Moses. It was written to tell them Whom to worship and how to worship. The workers took it to Josiah.

Well, when Josiah heard the Law of God being read to him, he tore his clothes he was so upset. He realized he and his people had not been following God's laws. They had neglected what God had told them to do. They had not kept their part of the covenant.

God saw King Josiah's sadness over this disobedience. He decided to forgive the people for not obeying His laws. He had mercy on them for as long as Josiah lived, and He again committed to keep His covenant promise—to be their God and to never leave them or forsake them.

Josiah brought all the people together to listen to the reading of the Word. The king read God's Word, and then he led them in committing again to keeping God's law. He promised to obey God's decrees and to follow God with all his heart and soul. He directed all his people to do the same. They celebrated the Passover for the first time in many years. The Bible says that never since the time of Samuel, before David was king, had there been a Passover celebration like the one King Josiah had. The reading of the Word changed everything for Josiah and his reign as king.

This doesn't mean they were all perfectly obedient from then on. None of us can do that. That is why God's promise of a perfect Savior is so important. We find and come to understand the promised Savior in God's Word.

Throughout the Bible, God's Word is called many different things, all precious, life-giving things. Let's look at a few of them. **Show the students pictures illustrating names that are given to the Word:**

- **Bread (John 6:27)**
- **Fire (Jer. 23:29)**
- **Pearl (Matt. 7:6)**
- **Mirror (1 Cor. 13:12)**
- **Hammer (Jer. 23:29)**
- **Road Sign (Ps. 119:1)**
- **Sword (Eph. 6:17)**
- **Gold (Ps. 19:9-10)**
- **Lamp (Ps. 119:105)**
- **Solid Food (Heb. 5:13)**
- **Honey (Ps. 19:9-10)**
- **Treasure (Ps. 119:162)**
- **Milk (1 Peter 2:2)**
- **Seeds (Luke 8:11)**

Is God's Word like honey to you? Is it sweet? Is it like a treasure? Why? Is it like a seed that grows inside of your heart to produce good fruit? Is it like a road sign showing you which way to go? How is the Word like a sword? Gold? A hammer? **Let the children answer after each question.**

*(Hearing the Word—Continued)*

One thing that we should always remember is the Word points us to Jesus. He is our only hope to know God and find our way through this life. The Word can change us just like it changed the people in Josiah's kingdom. It is powerful. It is life-changing. It is God's truth given to us.

**ACTIVITY:** *Let each child choose one or two favorite “Word” pictures to color.*

## Benediction

*Recite the following verse. (1 minute)*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit (Phil. 4:23).



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