



# About a Book

The story of Josiah  
By Bob Hartman

## INTRODUCTION

I think everyone loves a good story, and the place where lots and lots of books are kept is the library. When you go into the library you have to be quiet and respectful, so people can look at the books and choose which one they want. There are lots and lots of great books in the library.

The word Bible means book or books. The Bible is like a library of many books all in one big book. In the Bible there are stories of action and adventure, there is drama and mystery. There are so many amazing stories.

Today's story is all about finding a special book so let's find out more as we Open the Book and read 'The Story of Josiah'.

## CONCLUSION

Josiah had learnt what God had said about how to love one another and how to respect each other. He had learnt that loving and trusting God was the best way to be King and to lead his people, all through looking in the book.

## REFLECTION

Close your eyes and think about why people still look into the Bible today.

## PRAYER INTRODUCTION

Now I'm going to say a prayer and if you want to make it your prayer say 'Amen' at the end after me.

## PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for the amazing stories in the Bible. Thank you that we can learn more about how much you love us through your amazing book. Amen.

## STORYTELLERS NEEDED

**Essential:** Narrator, King Josiah, Shaphan, Hilkiah, Huldah

**Additional:** builders, carpenters and stone masons

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PRESENTATION (INCLUDING ALL THE CHILDREN)

- This story provides guided actions at the reading of the book in the story.
- There could be two locations for this story – the King's Palace and the destroyed/rebuilding of the temple site.
- Select some children to come and join team members to be builders, carpenters and stone masons.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR VISUAL IMPACT

- You may like to use bricks and cardboard pillars (perhaps made from carpet rolls) and some dustsheets for the destroyed temple. An old sheet with stonework painted on it, draped over the backs of some chairs, would suggest a broken down temple wall.
- Crown and kingly robes.
- Large book – you can cover it with flour or talcum powder as 'dust'.
- Hide the book under boxes/bricks or other rubbish and rubble.
- A distinctive hat for each will help identify the high priest, the Secretary and a headdress for the prophetess.
- You may like to access a plastic tool kit which has pretend hammers and saws – don't use real ones. You can also reuse the fluorescent builders' jackets from previous stories.

## EXTRA RESOURCES

Download from [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net)

## NOTES

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## The Story of Josiah

Josiah was just eight years old when he became King of Judah. It must have been amazing to be a king at that age. And hard, too. In fact, Josiah could only do it because he believed in God and trusted God to help him.

Sadly, some of his people did not share his beliefs. Instead of going to the temple in Jerusalem to worship, they neglected God and worshipped idols, false gods made of stone and wood instead. And, as a result, the temple in Jerusalem that had been built by Solomon, David's son, was in a terrible state.

So when he was twenty-six – and had already been king for eighteen years! – Josiah said to Shaphan, his secretary, 'Go to Hilkiah, the High Priest. Tell him to count the money that God's people have given. Then have him give that money to the workmen so they can buy timber and stone and repair the temple.'

So Shaphan went to see Hilkiah, the High Priest. He gave him the king's message. The high priest did what the king asked. He went to the workmen and said, 'Here is money. Buy timber and stone and repair the temple.'

But while the workmen were repairing the temple, they found something. Something they did not expect to find. And what they found was (*the workmen shout*) 'A book!'

And not just any book. But The Book of the Law.

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They gave the book to Hilkiah, the high priest. And Hilkiah took the book to Shaphan. Then he opened the book. And he read it to the king's secretary.

And Shaphan heard the story of how God had made the world (*have the children draw a big circle with their fingers*), and how he had called Abraham to be the father of a nation (*have the children put their hands to their mouth in a calling motion, or wave one hand in a beckoning motion*), and how that nation had been turned into slaves by Pharaoh (*have the children pretend to hold bars, like they are in prison*), and how God had sent Moses to set them free (*have the children let go of the bars and throw their arms in the air*), and how God had given his rules – his Ten Commandments and more – to Moses to pass on to his people (*have the children hold their hands as if they are looking at a book*).

'The king must hear this!' Shaphan shouted.

And he took The Book of the Law to King Josiah. Then he opened the book and read it to the king.

And King Josiah also heard how God had made the world (*have the children draw a big circle with their fingers*), and how he had called Abraham to be the father of a nation (*have the children put their hands to their mouth in a calling motion, or wave one hand in a beckoning motion*), and how that nation had been turned into slaves by

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Pharaoh (*have the children pretend to hold bars, like they are in prison*), and how God had sent Moses to set them free (*have the children let go of the bars and throw their arms in the air*), and how God had given his rules - his Ten Commandments and more – to Moses to pass on to his people (*have the children hold their hands as if they are looking at a book*).

But when King Josiah heard what The Book of the Law said, he was very unhappy. He tore his clothes – which is what people did, in those days, when they were upset – and he said, 'Our parents have not obeyed God's rules. And we haven't either. Surely God cannot be pleased with us.'

Then he sent his very best men to Huldah, the prophetess, to see what God had to say. And, sure enough, What Huldah had to say was not very happy either.

'God is not pleased with His people. They have not obeyed him, but instead have worshipped false gods, idols of wood and stone. And so some very bad things will happen. But because King Josiah was upset when he heard what The Book of the Law said, and promised to follow the book and do what was right, God is very pleased with him. He will live a long and peaceful life and will not see the sad things that will happen to his country.'

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When King Josiah heard this, he sent his soldiers to every corner of the country. They destroyed all of the idols, the false gods of wood and stone.

Then, for the first time in a very long time, King Josiah and his people held a Passover feast, where they remembered how God had made the world (*have the children draw a big circle with their fingers*), and how he had called Abraham to be the father of a nation (*have the children put their hands to their mouth in a calling motion, or wave one hand in a beckoning motion*), and how that nation had been turned into slaves by Pharaoh (*have the children pretend to hold bars, like they are in prison*), and how God had sent Moses to set them free (*have the children let go of the bars and throw their arms in the air*), and how God had given his rules – his Ten Commandments and more – to Moses to pass on to his people (*have the children hold their hands as if they are looking at a book*).

And just as Huldah said, King Josiah ruled his people peacefully for many more years and became one of the best kings God's people ever had.

All because someone took the time to open the book!



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