



UNIT 15 | SESSION 1

# JUDAH'S GOOD KINGS

2 KINGS 18–19; 2 CHRONICLES 14–24

**KEY PASSAGE:** Psalm 145:9

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Judah's good kings led the people to God and away from sin. Yet when they died, the people returned to their sinful ways. Jesus is our good King who died and rose again, and always leads us to God and away from sin.

**STORY POINT:** Judah's good kings worshiped God.



## PREPARE

### PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## LEADER Bible Study

Good kings and evil kings—both were seen throughout the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Depending on who was king, the people would either be led to worship the one true God or led the opposite direction toward idolatry and wickedness.

King Asa sought to do what was good in the eyes of the Lord and removed the places of idol worship. He commanded the people of Judah to worship and obey God. But once Asa died, Ahaziah became king and led the people to once again turn to idolatry. When he died, his mother Athalia made herself queen by force. She ruled as queen for six years and did evil in God's sight.

The priest Jehoiada planned to overthrow the evil queen. His men captured her and made one of Athalia's young sons, Joash, king. Following Jehoiada's lead, Joash tore down the temple of Baal and restored worship in the temple to God alone.

After Joash came King Hezekiah. He also sought to do what was right in the sight of the Lord. After cleaning out the temple so the people could worship, Hezekiah invited Judah and Israel to celebrate the feast of the Passover. Afterward, everyone went back to their towns and destroyed their places of worship to false gods.

When the king of Assyria came to attack Judah, King Hezekiah prayed to God, and Judah was saved. God sent an angel to destroy the Assyrian army.

The last good king of Judah was Josiah. King Josiah was only eight years old when he came into power, but he also did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Under his rule, the people renewed their covenant with God and remained faithful to Him.

The good kings of Judah led the people to worship the one true God. The Lord raised up kings who would lead Judah to turn away from idolatry and keep His commands. Judah would serve God under the rule of the good kings but returned to their sinful ways after the good kings died. Yet, despite the people's inconsistent worship of the Lord, God proved faithful to preserve His people. The line of Judah would one day give rise to the King of kings, who would make the way for people to worship God in spirit and truth.



## PREPARE

### THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



## WELCOME

### 10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



## LEARN

### 25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



## LOVE

### 15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



## LIVE

### 15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



## PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



### WELCOME

#### Activity Page

- ☐ "Shadow Match" activity page

#### Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ "Kings of Judah Spinner" printable, 1 per kid
- ☐ metal brads, 1 per kid



### LOVE

#### Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



### LIVE

#### Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ paper crowns in three different colors, 5 of each color

#### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ brown craft paper
- ☐ red construction papers, 1 per kid

#### Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



### LEARN

#### Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

#### Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

#### Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

#### Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Judah's Good Kings" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

#### Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 15, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

#### Missions Moment

- ☐ "North African and Middle Eastern Peoples Intro" missions video
- ☐ world map

#### Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ index cards, 1 per kid



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “If you could make a rule at your home or school, what would it be? Why?”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Shadow Match” activity page.

| **SAY** “In today’s story, we’ll learn about the good kings of Judah who led the people to worship God and follow Him.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### ☐ OPTION 1: KINGS OF JUDAH

Print the “Kings of Judah Spinner” printable on cardstock for each kid. Provide each kid with a printable. Lead kids to cut out both circles. Give kids a metal brad and lead them to push it through the Xs on the circles. Close the brad, leaving some space so kids can spin the top circle. Review each king’s name, sharing how these were the good kings of Judah. Point out Jesus and share how Jesus is the truly good King who came from the line of Judah. Tell kids that while Judah’s kings were good because they worshiped God, only Jesus is the perfect, sinless King.

| **SAY** “Today, we will learn about Judah’s good kings: Asa, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah. We’ll see how **JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD.**”

#### ☐ OPTION 2: WHO WILL YOU FOLLOW?



Select two kids, one to be the “good king” and the other to be the “bad king.” Allow kids to see who each kid represents, then instruct them to close their eyes and listen closely. Explain that the “good and bad kings” will take turns giving the kids instructions. Some examples could be “jump on one leg,” “rub your head and pat your tummy,” “take two steps forward,” etc. The kids are to follow the instructions of the “good king,” but not the instructions given by the “bad king.” Tell kids that if they listen and obey the “bad king,” or don’t listen to the “good king,” you will tap their shoulder and they must sit down. Play additional rounds, choosing different kids to be the “good and bad kings.”

| **SAY** “You needed to listen closely to each voice to tell who was the good and bad king. In the Old Testament, many kings ruled God’s people. Some were good, and some were bad. The good kings told the people to worship God and obey Him. The people were right to listen to them because the good kings led the people to follow God.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## INTRODUCE the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m happy to see you. Did you bring your Bible? If so, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, as we learn about Judah’s good kings, we will be in the Old Testament books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. [Invite kids to find each book in their Bible.]

Do you remember how the kingdom of God’s people was divided in two? Last week, we learned that the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed by Assyria. But the Southern Kingdom of Judah still remained. Israel had wicked kings. Judah had wicked kings too, but they also had some good kings. In our story, we’ll see how **JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, thank You for helping us to do what is right and good. Please help us remember that You alone are worthy of worship. Amen.’ ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

**SAY** “ We have a new big picture question to learn: **What is God like?** What do you think God is like? [Allow responses.] God is so great! We could spend forever learning more about Him and what He is like. To help us summarize what God is like, we will learn the answer: **God is holy, good, and loving.**

God was faithful to His people, providing Judah with good kings who told them to turn back to God. God desires that we turn to Him and worship Him because **God is holy, good, and loving**. The more we learn what God is like, the more we see how God is worthy of our worship. ”

### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “ When God’s people failed to listen to God’s warnings about sin, they became a divided kingdom. Both Israel and Judah began to worship idols. We’ve seen how the Northern Kingdom of Israel was led by wicked kings—not one of them followed God. But the prophets Elijah and Elisha were sent to Israel to display God’s presence and power as the one true God. Even the prophet Hosea warned Israel about God’s coming judgment, but the people didn’t listen. Eventually, God allowed Assyria to destroy Israel because of their sin. Only the kingdom of Judah remained. Today, we will learn that **JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD**. ”



## LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chronicles 14–24. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Judah’s Good Kings.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS

“ The Southern Kingdom of Judah had several good kings that led the people to follow God, worship Him, and turn away from sin.

**King Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of God. He removed the places that the people worshiped false gods. He commanded the people of Judah to worship God and obey His laws.** Asa rebuilt the altar that was in front of the Lord’s temple. Asa and the people of Judah promised to seek the Lord with all their heart and all their soul.

**When an enemy army came, Asa prayed, saying, “Lord, we are counting on you to help us. You can give us victory.” The Lord answered his prayer, and Asa was loyal to God his entire life.**

**Years later, a wicked king named Ahaziah (ay huh ZIGH uh) became king over Judah. When Ahaziah died, his mother, Athaliah (ath uh LIGH uh), made herself queen by force. One of Ahaziah’s young sons, Joash, was hidden from Athaliah by his sister. Athaliah ruled as queen for six years and did evil in God’s sight.**

**The priest Jehoiada (jih HOY uh duh) made a plan to overthrow Queen Athaliah. They captured her and placed a crown on Joash’s head, making him king.** Under the leadership of Jehoiada the priest, Joash tore down the temple of Baal and brought back the proper worship of God in the temple. Throughout the time the priest Jehoiada instructed him, **Joash did what was right in the Lord’s sight.**

**Many years after Joash, Hezekiah became king over Judah. He did what was right in the Lord’s sight just as his ancestor David had done. One of his first acts as king was to clean out the temple so the people could worship and make sacrifices to the Lord.** The people brought so many sacrifices that the priests needed help to prepare all the offerings.

**Hezekiah invited Judah and Israel to celebrate the feast of the Passover.** They enjoyed praising God and feasting so much that they celebrated for two weeks! After the feast, everyone went back to their towns and tore down the altars and places of worship to false gods.

**After this, the same king of Assyria who had destroyed Israel came to attack Judah.** The Assyrians said, “Do you think your God will save you? All the other kingdoms we defeated thought so, too.” **King Hezekiah prayed to God, and God**

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Active listening:** Tell kids to cheer when they hear how the kings led the people to do what was right.

**Review the kings:** If you created the “Kings of Judah Spinner,” invite kids to spin to each king when you tell about them in the story.



## LEARN

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

**sent an angel to destroy the Assyrian army. Judah was saved!**

**The last good king of Judah was Josiah. Even though he was only eight years old when he became king, he did what was right in the eyes of God.** He smashed and tore down the places of idol worship. As he was cleaning out the temple, he found the book of the law from Moses. When Josiah heard the words of the law, Josiah was sad, because the nation was not obeying God's commands. **Josiah read the words of the law to all the people at the temple. Then Josiah and the people promised to keep the commands found in the book of the law.** The people renewed the covenant with God and stayed faithful to God while Josiah was alive.

Christ Connection: Judah's good kings led the people to God and away from sin. Yet when they died, the people returned to their sinful ways. Jesus is our good King who died and rose again, and always leads us to God and away from sin. ”

## 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ The Kingdom of Judah had both good and bad kings. Who were the good kings of Judah? [Allow responses.] Asa, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah were good kings. **JUDAH'S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD.** But Judah also experienced the rule of the evil King Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. What plan did the priest Jehoida make? [Allow responses.] Queen Athaliah was overthrown, and King Ahaziah's son, Joash, became the next king. King Joash made good decisions with the help of Jehoiada the priest. God also wants us to follow Him and obey His Word, but we don't have to do it alone. Can you think of another person who helps you learn more about God and follow Him?

Hezekiah was another good king over Judah who cleaned out the temple so the people could worship God. The King of Assyria came to attack Judah because he did not believe God would save them. What did King Hezekiah do? [Allow responses.] King Hezekiah prayed, and God sent an angel to destroy Assyria's army!

Then we learned that even though King Josiah was young, he wanted to follow God and obey Him. Does being young mean that you cannot understand God's law? [Allow responses.] We have been given God's Word, the Bible, and when we read it alone or with others, we can grow in our understanding of who He is and how He calls all people to obey Him. Even if you are very young or very old, you can know God and obey Him through the Holy Spirit. ”

## 3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

**SAY** “ Judah's good kings led the people to God and away from sin. Yet when they died, the people returned to their sinful ways. Like Judah, we are sinful. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to be the permanent solution for sin. We are forgiven of our sin when we place our faith in Jesus. I'd be happy to share more of what it means to trust in Jesus. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)



LEARN

## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 15, Session 1” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Is there anything we can do to be good enough for God?
2. How does trusting in Jesus help us want to turn away from sin?

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Point to Northern Africa and the Middle East on a world map.

**SAY** “ In Northern Africa and the Middle East, there are more than 800 different people groups present. Many of the people groups are unreached people groups, where people have never heard about Jesus and there are no churches or missionaries to help the people hear about Him. ”

Play the missions video. Note: There is no narration for this video. It is meant to show snapshot images of the people and cultures of North Africa and the Middle East. Ask kids to name some animals they saw in the video. Then ask kids what some of the people were doing in the video.

Tell kids that many countries in this part of the world have governments that are hostile to the gospel and will not allow missionaries to openly tell people about Jesus. Explain that missionaries have to be cautious and creative when trying to reach people for Jesus. Tell kids that missionaries have started sharing the gospel through digital and online platforms in these dangerous places. Pray for missionaries serving in Northern Africa and the Middle East, asking God to give them boldness, courage, and peace. Pray the people in this region will have curiosity about Christ and be open to hearing the gospel.

### 6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

**SAY** “ Our key passage reminds us that God is good and cares for us. We are His creation and are called to obey Him. ”

Provide each kid with an index card and a Bible. Assist kids in finding Psalm 145:9. Lead kids to copy the verse onto their index card. Encourage kids to work with an adult to help them memorize this verse.

Lead kids to sing “The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

### 7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** “ God, You call us to obey You because You love us. Help us turn away from sin and turn toward Jesus, who saves us from sin and death. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

## LOVE God by Applying the Story

### 1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Kings 18. Explain that the book of 2 Kings is found in the Old Testament. The books of 1 and 2 Kings are in the History division of the Old Testament because they give an account of Israel and Judah's continued sin and the rebellion against a holy God.

Consider pointing out the location of Judah (14) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Kings 18:3-6 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

**SAY** “Hezekiah was a good king who tore down the idols in Judah and encouraged the people to worship the one true God. Can you think of anything in your life that you might care about more than God? **[Allow responses.]** We all have things that we care about like our family, our friends, or even a favorite toy. These things are all good, but God deserves all our worship. Nothing is more important or greater than God. Anything that we care about more than Him is an idol. The good kings of Judah recognized that only God is to be worshiped. Like Hezekiah, we can ask God to help us remove any idols in our lives.”

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “Why did the people of Judah fall back into sin when the good kings died?”

Explain that the people of Judah tried to keep the law, but they could not do it in their own power. Tell the kids that Scripture reminds us how Jesus has done what the law could not; He has freed believers from the power of sin forever (Romans 8:3-4). Share how we cannot perfectly keep the law, but through the Holy Spirit, God gives believers power to obey Him.

**SAY** “When Josiah read God's law, he learned what God commanded His people. How do we know God's commands?”

Tell kids that the Bible is God's Word to us. Discuss how when we read the Bible we learn more about God, His commands, and how He made the way to save sinful people. While the law does not save us, Christians obey God's words to show they love Him and others. Reading the Bible is how we come to understand how God's ways are always right and good.

**SAY** “The good kings of Judah worshiped God. How can we worship God?”

Share how believers worship God with their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Worship of God is seeing God for who He is and loving Him more than anything else. Tell kids that we can show this through our actions, thoughts, and words. When we read our Bibles, we show that we love God and want to spend time with Him. When we care for others, we show we love God because we are doing what He loves.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LIVE the Mission

#### 1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

##### ☐ OPTION 1: STORY POINT CROWNS

Before the session, choose three different colors of paper and cut out five crowns from each color, for a total of 15 crowns. On each color set, write one word of the story point on individual crowns: **JUDAH'S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD**. Hide the crowns around the room. Form the kids into three teams and assign them a color. Explain to the teams that they must race to find their crowns and put the story point together. The first team to assemble their story point wins. Finish by reviewing the story point together.

**SAY** “ These crowns remind us of the good kings that led the people to worship God. The good kings point us to Jesus, who alone was sinless. Jesus is the King of kings, who died on the cross to save us from sin. When we trust in Jesus, we are able to worship God with hearts that love and obey Him. ”

##### ☐ OPTION 2: WALL OF WORSHIP



Tape a large piece of brown craft paper to a wall. Provide each kid with a piece of red construction paper. Lead kids to draw hearts on their paper, and inside the hearts, write or draw pictures of ways they can worship God. Invite kids to share how they can worship God at home, at school, at church or any other location. For example, kids may write: *I can sing praises at home, or I can help others and show God's love*. Then direct kids to cut out their hearts and tape them to the brown craft paper. Invite kids to share what they wrote or drew.

**SAY** “ King Asa, King Joash, King Hezekiah, and King Josiah led the people to worship God. We are called to worship God too. He is worthy of all worship. Because of Jesus, believers can worship God no matter where they are or what they're doing. Through our thoughts, actions, and words, we can show that we love and value God most of all. ”

#### 2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.