Preschool–Grade 6

Hezekiah's Prayer

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Bring God your hardest news first. He hears every prayer and sees every tear.
Bible passage: 2 Kings 20:1–11. Students read it out loud themselves. Background: 2 Kings 18:1–7. The same story is told in Isaiah 38.
Memory verse: "Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD." *2 Kings 20:5 (KJV)* and "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *James 5:16 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read 2 Kings 18:1–7, 2 Kings 20:1–11 and Isaiah 38:1–8. Write both memory verses on the board.

1. Opening game: First Move (5–10 minutes)

Read each situation. Students call out what most people their age would do first. 1) You get a text with really bad news. 2) The doctor says someone in your family is very sick. 3) You fail a test you studied for. 4) A friend says something hurtful about you. Ask: *How often is "pray" the first move? Why not?* Say: "Today a king got the worst news possible, and his first move was to pray."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Background (tell it): Hezekiah the son of Ahaz became king of Judah (2 Kings 18:1). "He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him" (18:5).
Read out loud: 2 Kings 20:1–11. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **sick unto death** (20:1): so sick he would die; **set thine house in order** (20:1): get your family and affairs ready
- **I beseech thee** (20:3): I beg You; **perfect heart** (20:3): a whole, undivided heart; **wept sore** (20:3): cried very hard
- **afore... the middle court** (20:4): before he got to the inner yard of the king's house; **captain** (20:5): leader; **behold** (20:5): look
- **for mine own sake** (20:6): because of who God is; **lump of figs** (20:7): a cake of pressed figs; **boil** (20:7): a painful swelling on the skin
- **sign** (20:8): proof of God's word; **degrees** (20:9): steps on the dial; **a light thing** (20:10): an easy thing
- **dial of Ahaz** (20:11): Isaiah 38:8 calls it "the sun dial of Ahaz"; Ahaz was Hezekiah's father (2 Kings 16:20)

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Hezekiah's first move was to turn his face to the wall and pray (20:2). Why do you think he turned to the wall? What helps you shut out everything else and talk to God?
2. Hezekiah "wept sore" (20:3), and God said, "I have seen thy tears" (20:5). Is it okay to cry when you pray? What does this verse say about how God sees you?
3. God answered before Isaiah was out of the middle court (20:4). Many prayers take longer. How do you keep trusting God while you wait?
4. God gave more than Hezekiah asked: fifteen years, and safety for the whole city (20:6). Where have you seen God do more than you asked?
5. God said He would defend the city "for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake" (20:6). Does God answer because we are good enough? What does this verse show?
6. Hezekiah asked for the hard sign, not the easy one (20:10). God did it (20:11). What does that tell you about what God is able to do?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in 2 Kings 20:5 and James 5:16: **turn again** means go back; **captain** means leader; **thus saith** means this is what He says; **thy** means your; **behold** means look; **confess your faults** means admit the wrong things you have done; **effectual fervent prayer** means earnest prayer from the heart that works; **availeth much** means does a lot of good.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 2 Kings 20:5 this week; keep working on James 5:16 next week too.

5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "God heard Hezekiah, and He hears you. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

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6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. What is the hardest thing I am facing right now? Have I made prayer my first move about it?
2. What would it look like to "turn my face to the wall," to get alone and pour out my heart to God, this week?
3. Write a short prayer about it. Then write one person you can pray for, because James 5:16 says "pray one for another."
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: make prayer your first move, before you text, worry or complain.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You hear every prayer and see every tear. Make prayer our first move when the news is hard, and help us pray for one another. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks why God doesn't always heal right away: answer honestly and gently. God always hears (2 Kings 20:5), and the gifts of healing are for today (1 Corinthians 12:9; James 5:14–16). Sometimes the answer is different: Paul prayed three times, and God said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:8–9). God is always good, and we keep praying.

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