Preschool–Grade 6

King Joash

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

Main point: God keeps His promises even when evil seems to win, and the voices we listen to shape whether we keep doing right.
Bible passage: 2 Kings 11:1–12:2. Students read 2 Kings 11:1–12 and 11:17–12:2 out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him." *2 Kings 12:2 (KJV)* and "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." *Proverbs 20:11 (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 11:1–12:2, 2 Kings 8:19 and 2 Chronicles 24:17–18. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Whose Voice? (5–10 minutes)

Write on the board: parents, pastor, Sunday school teacher, best friend, classmates, videos and games, the Bible. Students rank them from 1 to 7: *who has the most say in what I actually do?* (not what *should* have the most say). No one has to share their list. Then ask: *Did your list surprise you? Who would you want at the top?* Say: "Today we will meet a king who was seven years old, and the man whose voice shaped his whole reign."

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

Read out loud: 2 Kings 11:1–12. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **destroyed all the seed royal** (11:1): set out to kill the whole royal family, King David's line
- **stole him** (11:2): took him away secretly; **bedchamber**: a bedroom
- **rulers over hundreds** (11:4): army officers; **took an oath of them**: had them swear to it
- **keepers of the watch** (11:5): guards on duty; **compass the king round about** (11:8): surround and protect him
- **ranges** (11:8): the rows of guards
- **the testimony** (11:12): God's law, God's Word (Psalm 19:7); **anointed**: poured oil on him to show God's choice
- **God save the king** (11:12): "Long live the king!"

Tell the middle part in your own words: Athaliah heard the noise and came into the temple. She saw the king standing by a pillar, with the princes and trumpeters, and all the people rejoicing (11:13–14). She tore her clothes and cried, "Treason, Treason." Jehoiada commanded the captains to take her out, because she should not be killed in the house of the LORD, and she was put to death by the king's house (11:15–16).

Read out loud: 2 Kings 11:17–12:2. Old words in this passage:

- **covenant** (11:17): a binding promise; this one was "between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD'S people"
- **Baal** (11:18): a false god; his house, altars and images were broken down
- **the city was in quiet** (11:20): there was peace
- **instructed** (12:2): taught; **wherein**: during the time that

Background: God had promised David that his family would always have a king, "a light" (2 Kings 8:19). Athaliah tried to end that line. One little boy, hidden six years in God's house, kept the promise alive.

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Athaliah "did reign over the land" for six years (11:3). Have you ever felt like wrong was winning? What does this story say about God's promises in those times?
2. Jehosheba hid Joash from Athaliah (11:2), and six years went by before Jehoiada brought him out in the seventh year (11:3–4). What does it look like to be faithful when you can't see the end yet?
3. Jehoiada gave Joash the crown *and* the testimony, God's Word, on the same day (11:12). Why would a king need God's Word as much as a crown?
4. 2 Kings 12:2 says Joash did right "all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him." Now read 2 Chronicles 24:17–18. What changed when Jehoiada was gone?
5. Look at your list from the opening game. Who are your "Jehoiadas," people who point you to God? How can you keep listening to them?
6. Proverbs 20:11 says even a child is known by his doings. What do your doings this week say about you?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **Jehoash** is another way to say Joash; **in the sight of the LORD** means as God sees it; **wherein** means during the time that; **instructed** means taught. In Proverbs 20:11, **known by his doings** means people can tell who you are by what you do, and **pure** means clean and honest.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 2 Kings 12:2 this week; keep working on Proverbs 20:11 next week too.

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

Say: "Joash was crowned with God's Word in his hands, and God wants His Word to rule our lives too. 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

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

1. Who are the people who point me to God? Write their names.
2. Whose voice pulls me away from doing right? What will I do about it?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help you keep doing right all your days, not just when someone is watching.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: write a thank-you note to one person who teaches you God's Word, and tell them one thing they taught you.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You keep every promise, even when wrong seems to win. Thank You for the people who teach us Your Word. Help us choose voices that point us to You, and help us do right all our days. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks how Joash's life ended: 2 Kings 12 and 2 Chronicles 24 tell the rest. After Jehoiada died, Joash listened to the princes, and the people turned to idols (2 Chronicles 24:17–18). Let the verses speak, and keep the focus on who we listen to.

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