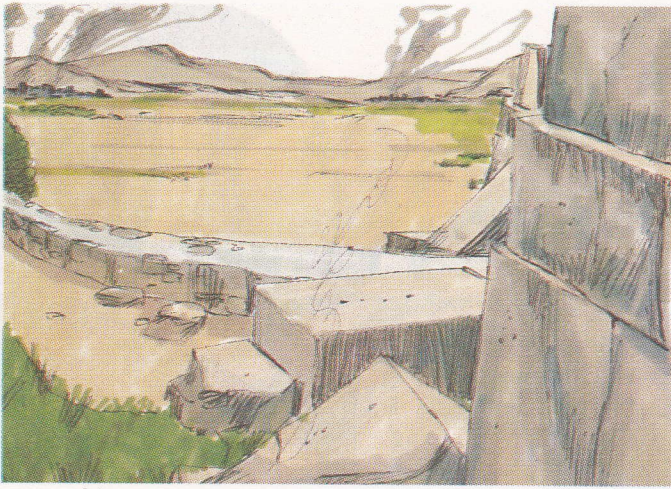
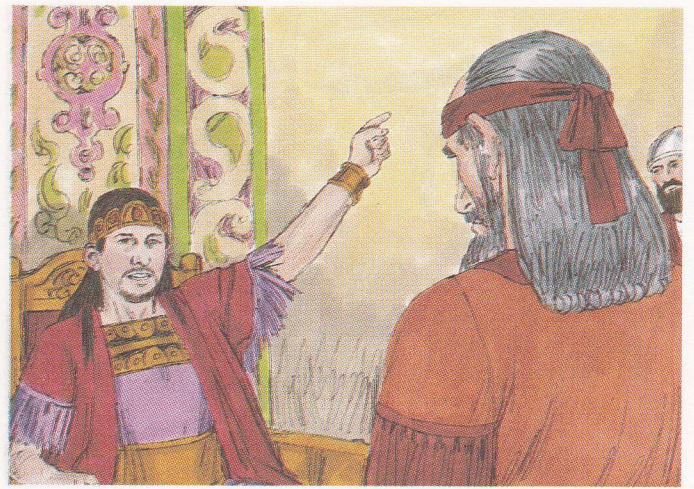


# Josiah Renews the Covenant



**1** Many years had passed since the Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom, Israel. When King Amon of Judah was killed, the people made his son Josiah king. Josiah was just eight years old.



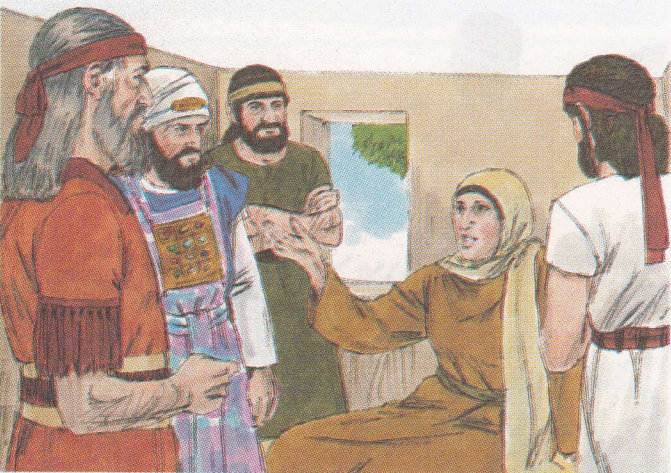
**2** After he had been king for many years, Josiah decided to repair the Temple. He sent his secretary Shaphan to tell the high priest to give the money collected by the priests to the Temple workers.



**3** After Shaphan had given Hilkiah the high priest those orders, the high priest showed him a book which he had found in the Temple. It was the book of the laws of God's covenant with the Israelites.



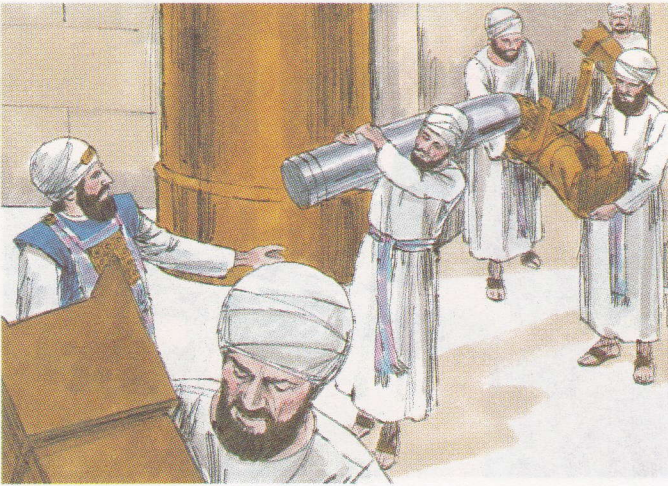
**4** So Shaphan reported to Josiah about the money for the repairs. Then he said, "This is a book that Hilkiah gave me." As he read it, Josiah tore his clothes in grief.



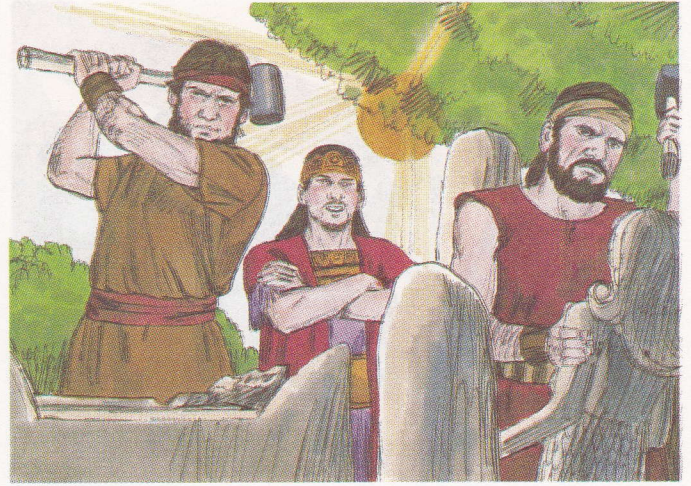
**5** Josiah sent word to Huldah the prophetess about what had happened. She replied, "The Lord fully intends to destroy Jerusalem. But he will not do so while Josiah is alive."



**6** Josiah ordered all the people of Judah to meet at the Temple. He read aloud to them the book that Hilkiah had found. Then he and all the people made a promise that they would obey the Lord.



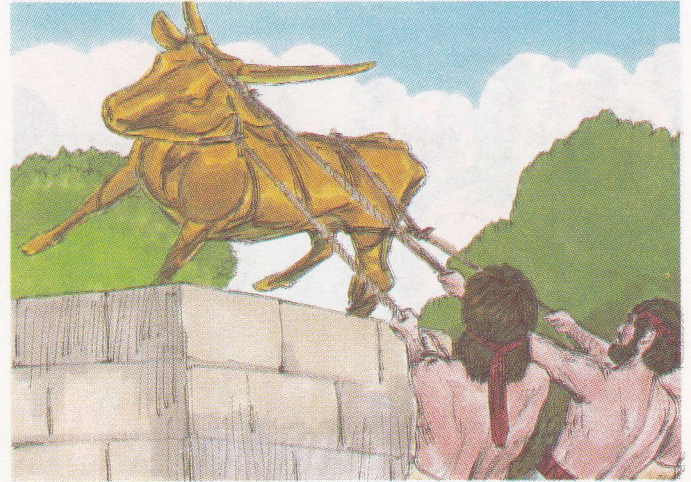
**7** Josiah had the priests clean out the Temple. They removed all the things that had been used to worship Baal and Asherah and the stars. Josiah burned all these things outside the city walls.



**8** Josiah ruined the altar that King Solomon had built near Jerusalem for the gods of his wives. He broke the stone pillars and cut down the symbol of the goddess Asherah.



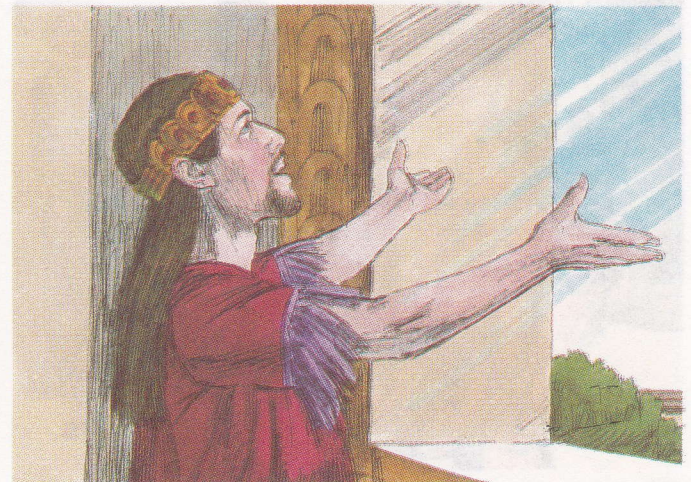
**9** Throughout the land of Judah, Josiah removed the priests who had made sacrifices to other gods. He destroyed the place where they had burned their children as offerings to the god Milcom.



**10** Josiah destroyed the place of worship at Bethel which Jeroboam had built when the kingdom was first divided. Then he went through the towns of Israel and tore down all the altars.



**11** Finally Josiah ordered the people to celebrate the Passover. No Passover had been celebrated like that by any of the kings of Judah or Israel since the time of the judges.



**12** No other king turned to the Lord as Josiah did. He obeyed the law of God with all his soul and all his strength.