



## recipe for revival

**Scripture Story:** 2 Chronicles 29–31; 2 Kings 18–20; Isaiah 39.  
**Commentary:** *Prophets and Kings*, chapters 28, 29.

### PREPARING TO TEACH

#### I. SYNOPSIS

Hezekiah was a breath of fresh air among the kings of Judah—a king determined to serve God the way King David had done. He instituted a program of national reform that led to a great spiritual revival. This lesson focuses on two of Hezekiah’s initiatives: restoring the Temple and its services, and renewing the observance of the annual Passover festival.

Before Judah could experience revival, there had to be preparation. Hezekiah called on the priests and Levites to help with the restoration of the Temple and its services. In order to do so, everything that “defiled” the Temple—everything that related to the worship of false gods—had to be disposed of. The people of Judah did the same in preparation for the Passover celebration, throwing down false altars and “high places” to get ready to worship the true God.

When the Passover feast came, it was such a joyous celebration that it ran an extra week—by popular demand. That’s the sign of a real revival—when people just can’t stop worshipping God!

As you discuss this week’s lesson with your class, get a sense of whether they think your church community and/or your youth group is in need of revival. What might revival look like in your context? Remember to keep the focus on the fact that revival within a community begins with individuals making a radical commitment to Jesus. Revival isn’t about going around telling others what they’re doing wrong; it’s about being so committed to Jesus that others will want to share the excitement.

#### II. TARGET

The students will:

- Understand what steps are necessary to prepare for revival. (*Know*)
- Sense the need for revival in their lives and communities. (*Feel*)
- Commit to doing what they can to make revival a reality. (*Respond*)

#### III. EXPLORE

- Worship
- Repentance
- Commitment

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at [www.leadoutministries.com](http://www.leadoutministries.com).

### TEACHING

#### I. GETTING STARTED

##### **Activity**

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Ask: Have you ever been in a church or youth group that you felt was really “on fire” for God? How could you tell? Do you see those same qualities in our church community here? If not, what’s missing?

If you have a large class, break into small groups of four or five for this discussion, and have groups report back to the class as a whole. Generate a list of “Signs of a Church on Fire” and write them on a chalk-

board, whiteboard, or flip chart at the front of the room. Use it as a checklist to evaluate your church and/or youth group.

### **Illustration**

*Share this illustration in your own words:*

One of the most famous “revival” preachers in American history, Billy Sunday, started out as a professional baseball player. Sunday was no star, but he was a good solid player. He began with a team that was then called the Chicago White Stockings, back in 1883.

One day in 1887, Billy Sunday and a few other ballplayers were out on the streets of Chicago after having a few beers when they heard a street preaching team. Attracted by the gospel songs his mother used to sing, Billy began attending a nearby mission and gave his heart to the Lord. He went on playing baseball for a few years, but in 1891 he turned down a contract for \$400 a month with the Philadelphia Phillies—that was good money in 1891!—and took a ministerial position for about \$80 a month instead. He committed the rest of his life to ministry, and became one of America’s best-known evangelistic preachers.

Not everyone is called to give up a professional sports career to become a preacher, but commitment to God always requires sacrifice. And it always offers a reward—both in this life and the next!

## **II. TEACHING THE STORY**

### **Bridge to the Story**

*Share the following in your own words:*

For many years the kings of Israel and Judah hadn’t led their people to follow God’s law closely. The laws God outlined for Israel in the first five books of the Bible had mostly fallen into disuse. Many people worshipped pagan gods; those who still followed the true God often did so without a clear understanding of who He was and how to worship Him.

Hezekiah came to the throne as a man with a mission. Just 25 years old, he knew that he wanted to follow God all the way—and take the nation with him. God has always used youth and young adults who were willing to make a total commitment to Him, just as Billy Sunday had. Hezekiah used his position of power to lead his people back to God.

### **Out of the Story for Teachers**

*After you read the Into the Story section with your*

*students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

- *Underline* the specific things Hezekiah did (or instructed the people to do) as part of his plan for reform and revival.
- How do you think people felt about Hezekiah’s reforms? What evidence do you see in the text to tell you how the people responded?
- What might be some modern-day equivalents to the things Hezekiah did? What would have to change in our churches and communities to prepare for a Hezekiah-style revival?

Write three headings on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or flip chart: 1. Seeking God’s Will; 2. Sacrifice; 3. Celebration. The student lesson suggests these as three steps in Hezekiah’s revival that we could apply to revival in our church today. Divide the class into three groups and assign one heading to each group. Ask each group to answer the question: Under this category, what are some things we can do to prepare our church, youth group, or community at large to get closer to God?

If the groups need more guidance, suggest that Group 1 discuss how we can better understand God’s will, as revealed in His Word. Group 2 can generate a list of things we might need to be willing to give up or change in order for revival to come. Group 3 can think of ways we can celebrate God’s presence—joyful ways of worship that will keep people coming back for more, as the people of Judah did during Hezekiah’s revival Passover.

Give groups a few minutes to discuss, then have them report back and write a summary of their ideas under the headings at the front of the room.

*Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today’s story: Acts 2 (compare the Pentecost revival with that of Hezekiah).*

### **Sharing Context and Background**

*Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.*

The history of Israel and Judah was a roller coaster of falling away from God, then coming back to Him. The “revivals” during which the Jews returned to God were usually led by a powerful, charismatic leader who was completely committed to following God and challenging others to do so, too. One such revival, led by John the Baptist, paved the way for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus.

## Tips for Top-notch Teaching

### Brainstorming

When you divide students into small groups (or discuss as a whole group) as in the *Getting Started* and *Out of the Story* sections of this lesson, be sure to review the rules of brainstorming with them. Remind them that the goal is to generate lots of ideas, and not to “shoot down” their own or other people’s ideas. Comments such as “that’s a stupid idea” or “that’s wrong” should be banned; people should feel safe saying whatever pops into their heads. In discussion time afterwards, you as the teacher may gently and tactfully suggest which answers are more helpful and which are closer to the meaning of the Bible text. But students should always feel that during a brainstorming discussion they are safe to say what they think without fear of being criticized or told to be quiet.

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The history of the Christian church has seen the same kind of pattern. As Christians grew lukewarm and unconcerned about religion, God always raised up leaders who were willing to dig deeper into the Scriptures, challenge people to change, and lead a revival. Revival can happen in any church or any com-

munity. But it always starts with someone who is willing to place themselves completely in God’s hands.

Anthropologist Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

## III. CLOSING

### Activity

*Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.*

Hand out an index card or small slip of paper to each student. Say: “We’ve talked today about revival—about what it would be like if our church, our youth group, and our community were totally committed to God as Judah was in Hezekiah’s time. That’s a very big idea, but now I’d like you to make it small and practical. On this slip of paper, write ONE change you’d like to see in your church, this youth group, or this community, that would bring it closer to God. Then write one thing *you* could do to help make that happen.”

### Summary

*Share the following thoughts in your own words:*

God calls each of us to a renewed and closer relationship with Him. He wants us to be, like King Hezekiah, willing to follow Him all the way, whatever it takes. That kind of commitment will lead to change—

## Teaching From . . .

*Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.*

- **Other Eyes**

*Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.*

- **Flashlight**

*Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Prophets and Kings. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.*

- **Punch Lines**

*Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.*

*Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.*

not just in us, but in the world around us. Whether or not you think of yourself as a leader, you do have influence on those around you. Your example of total commitment can help bring about change in your family,

your school, your church, your community. If you determine to follow God completely, like Hezekiah did, you can be a positive force for change.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Prophets and Kings*, chapters 28, 29.

\*A special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at [www.cornerstoneconnections.net](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net).