KIDS WILL UNDERSTAND:
- The story of King Hezekiah and how God spared his life.
- That God heard King Hezekiah’s prayers and gave him a second chance at life.
- That God hears our prayers and gives us a second chance.
ACTIVITY

If you have a large gym or open space outside, this would be a good place to play this game. Cut 2 long pieces of rope (at least 6 feet long). Tie the ropes really well on both sides (opposite each other) of a hula hoop (or tire). One person will stand on each side of the hula hoop, holding the rope taut so that the hula hoop is suspended between the two ropes. You can make several of these so that more kids can be throwing at once. This only works when the 2 people are holding the ropes really taut. If you have a way to suspend the rope from the ceiling so the hula hoop can hang, that would work great too.

Form teams and give each team a Nerf football (or some type of ball). Designate a starting line where the kids have to stand to throw the ball (about 20 feet from the hoop). Show the kids the prizes that you have.

In order to win this prize for everyone on your team, you ALL have to throw the ball and make it through the hoop. Each team member only gets one shot. As soon as someone on your team misses, your whole team is out, and has to go sit on the sidelines. Now, play one round of the game.

Guess what everyone? Now that most of you are out, and sitting on the sidelines, I have some good news for you! I’m going to give you all a second chance. This round, you can stand only 10 feet from the hoop ... and, ANYONE who gets the ball through the hoop wins a prize! Keep giving chances and moving the throw line closer until all the kids have gotten a prize.

I know you were excited to get a second chance today, and in today’s Bible story, a man named King Hezekiah got a second chance from God. When he did, he was overjoyed—kind of like some of you were when I told you that you could have a second chance at this game. But Hezekiah’s second chance was much more valuable than we had in our game today. His was a second chance at life!

BIBLE ACCOUNT

As you tell the story, the kids will interrupt you with questions that will be projected on PowerPoint slides. Each one of these questions that they say in unison will help put the story in order for them. Do not change the slides until you’re ready for the kids to ask the question.

Hezekiah was the king of Judah, and he was a good king. But, he came from a long line of rulers who didn’t follow God.

(show slide #2) They didn’t follow God?

No, they didn’t follow God. They didn’t worship God or love Him. But Hezekiah wanted the people of his kingdom to know God. He tried to
point the people in his kingdom to God.

Hezekiah called some people to prepare God’s house of worship—the temple—for a big celebration called the Feast of the Passover. They came and got everything ready in the temple for the celebration. They cleaned and fixed things. Everything was perfect so they could worship God in the temple.

(show slide #3) Everything was perfect for the Passover?

Yes, everything was perfect for the Passover. Hezekiah was so excited about the Feast of Passover! He jumped up and down in excitement! He invited everyone in the land. All the people who came rejoiced and worshipped God.

(show slide #4) They all rejoiced and worshipped God?

Yes, they all rejoiced and worshipped God. Hezekiah wanted everyone to worship only God and not idols. So he destroyed all the idols, or fake gods, and told everyone to worship only God. He taught the people and shared God’s Word with them. He was a very good king. God was pleased.

THEN, the enemy, the King of Assyria came over. He wanted King Hezekiah and all his people to pay him taxes, lots of taxes! He was rude to King Hezekiah, and King Hezekiah did not want to pay taxes to such a bad king. He refused to pay, even though he knew that the King of Assyria would want to attack!

(show slide #5) Hezekiah refused to pay taxes?

Yes, Hezekiah refused to pay taxes to the King of Assyria. The King of Assyria was very angry. He stomped away and planned an attack. He gathered some people and told his army to start attacking all the towns around Judah, and so they did. King Hezekiah was scared!

(show slide #6) King Hezekiah was scared?

Yes, King Hezekiah was scared. He looked at his people, and told them how to fight. He taught them some good fighting moves.

(show slide #7) He taught them to fight?

Yes, he taught them to fight, but he knew they couldn’t beat the Assyrians, because Hezekiah’s army was too small. So King Hezekiah tried to get enough money to pay the King of Assyria, who was waiting and very upset with King Hezekiah and his people. King Hezekiah couldn’t get enough money.
No, he couldn’t get enough money. So the king of Assyria sent a messenger to give a message to King Hezekiah. The message was, “I will destroy your city, and your God won’t be able to save you!” Hezekiah was so frightened! But what did he do? He prayed!

Yes, he prayed! He immediately got down on his knees and prayed to God. He asked God to save his people, and give him wisdom as their leader. God heard Hezekiah’s prayers, and made the Assyrian King and his army get sick so they couldn’t attack.

Yes, they got sick and had to turn around and go home. King Hezekiah and his people were safe! They were so happy, and they thanked God! They continued rejoicing and praising God for several more years, until one day King Hezekiah got very sick. He started coughing and fell to the ground. He knew he was going to die soon.

Yes, he was going to die. He wasn’t afraid to die, though, but he knew his people still needed him. The people were sad. They loved King Hezekiah. King Hezekiah did what he always did. He prayed.

Yes, King Hezekiah prayed. He prayed to God and wept. God heard King Hezekiah’s prayers and decided to extend King Hezekiah’s life so he could live 15 more years!

Yes, he lived for 15 more years. King Hezekiah was overjoyed! His people rejoiced! He had been given a second chance, and he praised God!

ACTIVITY

Cut a 5-day weather forecast out of the newspaper or print one off the computer. Show the kids the weather forecast. Ask one of the kids to come up and read it quickly.

Do you know how we get our 5-day weather forecast? Some highly trained people, called meteorologists, use lots of tools and experiments to predict what the weather is going to be like.

SUPPLIES

• 5-day weather forecast
We can usually have a pretty good idea what the weather is going to be like in the next few days. But have you ever seen a 20-day forecast? What about a 75-day forecast? Or a 365-day forecast? That would be an entire year! Can we know what the weather will be like a year from now? No! We have no clue. We can't be sure.

Predicting the future is something only God can do, because only God knows! We might think we know what's going to happen in our lives. We might think we know what is going to happen next week, but we don't know. God is the only One who knows our futures.

Where do you think you'll be 10 years from today? Try to figure out how old you'll be, and then turn to the person next to you and share where you think you'll be and what you'll be doing in exactly 10 years.

Turn to the person next to you and tell them what you’ll be doing in 30 years! That will take a bit more math. If you’re 8 years old today, you’ll be 38 years old in 30 years. What will you be doing when you’re 38 years old?

Only God knows! The only person recorded in Scripture to know when he would die was King Hezekiah, and he only knew because God told him he would live for 15 more years. We can’t expect God to tell us those kinds of things, but we should live to fully trust Him and make every day count.

GAME

This will be a fun energetic game! You’ll need some toy swords from the dollar store. If you don’t have those, then use paint stir sticks (that are free from most home improvement stores or discount stores). You could even decorate the paint stir sticks to look like a sword. Then, collect a bunch of margarine lids. Cut the middles out of these lids so they become tossing rings. Put down 2 parallel lines with masking tape, about 10 feet apart.

Remember, King Hezekiah taught the people some fighting moves. In this game, the kids will practice their sword techniques. Divide the kids into teams. Two players from each team will play for the question. The pairs will face each other, standing behind the masking tape lines. One player from each pair will have a sword (or paint stir stick). Their partner will have a supply of the margarine lid tossing rings. At the signal, the players with the rings will toss them one at a time while the player with the sword tries to catch them on his sword. The first team to get two rings on their sword yells, “King Hezekiah!” Then, the winning pair will answer one of the questions below. Choose two new players from each team and toss for the next question.
Questions and Answers

- Did the kings before Hezekiah lead the people to God? (no)
- Who was King Hezekiah's enemy? (the King of Assyria)
- What feast did King Hezekiah celebrate with his people? (Feast of Passover)
- What did the king of Assyria want King Hezekiah and his people to pay? (taxes)
- What did King Hezekiah do after the King of Assyria sent the message that they would attack? (He prayed.)
- What happened to the Assyrians when they went to attack Judah? (They got sick and scared, then turned around and went home.)
- Why was Hezekiah upset when he got sick? (He thought he was going to die and he wasn’t ready to leave his people.)
- How many more years did God add to King Hezekiah's life? (15 years)
- How did King Hezekiah and his people react when they found out his life was extended? (They rejoiced and praised God.)

This is the story of a Major League Baseball player who got a second chance. His name is Josh Hamilton. He plays baseball for the Texas Rangers. Josh was drafted to play professional baseball for the Tampa Bay Rays in the year 2000. He was given the highest signing bonus ever! He was the number one pick. Josh did great playing for the Tampa Bay Rays ... at first. Then his parents were killed in a car accident and he got hurt. He lost sight of what was important in life and made some bad decisions that led to huge consequences. He blew all his money on partying, got lots of bad tattoos, and got addicted to alcohol and drugs. All of this affected his baseball career, and he lost everything. He was kicked off the baseball team.

Josh's family and friends had been praying for him, and they decided to get involved in his life to help him get back on track. Josh realized that he was making bad choices and decided to live for God. He turned his life around with God's help.

Josh was given a second chance to live God's way. He was also given a second chance to play professional baseball. He now plays for the Los Angeles Angels, a Major League Baseball team. He was MVP in 2010 and played in the World Series. He’s a great testimony of God’s grace!

Download this YouTube video called “I Am Second: Josh Hamilton” and view it with your kids. This will be especially meaningful for your boys.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-U-oaXKqzw
Why did Josh Hamilton need a second chance? Why do you think his life got messed up so badly? What has he done with his second chance?

MESSAGE

(show slide #2) **What can we learn from King Hezekiah?**

The story of King Hezekiah is a wonderful story that teaches us that God hears our prayers and gives us a second chance. What can we learn from King Hezekiah?

(show slide #3) **He was loyal to God.**

How many of you have a dog? Many dogs quickly become very attached to their owners. Labradors, especially, are very close with their masters and are protective of them—a guard dog. Most of the time, owners don’t have to teach their dogs to be loyal and protective.

If an owner and a dog have a good relationship, and the dog loves the owner, the dog will naturally be loyal to the owner. The dog feels the sense of love and loyalty because he loves his owner.

That’s how King Hezekiah was with God. He didn’t have to be taught to be loyal to God. He was loyal to God because he knew God and loved God. He trusted and obeyed God.

If you know God and have a real relationship with Him, you want to be loyal to Him. You want to live His way and obey Him, and you trust Him. What does it mean to be loyal to God? Turn to a neighbor and share what you think. So, are you loyal to God? Do you put Him first in your life?

Another important thing we can learn from Hezekiah is ...

(show slide #4) **His first instinct was to pray.**

What was the first thing King Hezekiah did when he found out the enemies were going to attack his people?

He prayed.

What was the first thing King Hezekiah did when he found out he was going to die?

He prayed.
What was the first thing King Hezekiah did when he found out he was going to live for 15 more years?

He prayed.

Do you see a pattern? The first thing he did was pray. In good times and in bad times he immediately went to God in prayer. That strengthened his loyalty, dependence, and relationship with the Lord.

Make it your first instinct to pray. Prayer should be a natural part of your daily life, not something you only do on Sundays at church or before a meal. Your prayer life can be a friendship with God, a constant conversation and awareness of Him all through the day. Look up and read together 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. This verse tells us to pray without stopping or to pray at all times. That does not mean we have to keep our heads bowed and eyes closed at all times. It means we always know God is with us, and we do everything with His presence and His Spirit guiding us. We are always listening; we always come to God first.

Is prayer your first instinct? How would your life be different if it was?

(show slide #5) God hears your prayers.

God doesn’t promise to answer our prayers the way we want Him to, but He will always hear them. He wants us to come to Him in prayer. We have to have faith that God hears our prayers. Our prayers change things—sometimes it’s the circumstances that change and sometimes it’s the way we look at things that changes.

King Hezekiah prayed in faith, and he believed that God would hear Him. Do you believe God hears your prayers? Next time you pray, pray with faith, knowing that the God of the Universe is listening to you and wants to hear your heart poured out to Him. Look up and read together Psalm 17:6.

In the good times and in the bad times, make a commitment to come to God in prayer and with faith. He will hear your prayer. And prayer can change things! King Hezekiah’s prayers changed the course of his life on earth.

(show slide #6) God gives second chances.

God gave King Hezekiah a second chance at life ... a second chance to lead His people ... a second chance to make a difference in the world. God gives us second chances, too. He wants us to know that He will never give up on us. He wants us to make the most of our lives that are a gift from Him.
He gives us the gift of forgiveness and new life in Him. If you ask Jesus into your life, you become a new creation. What will you do with your new life, your second chance? Will you use it to make a difference for God? Will you live for Him and give Him praise?

**OBJECT LESSON**

Show the kids the dead leaves from the trees. If you can bring in a full branch that would really make a statement to the kids.

*Have you ever noticed that every time autumn comes, all the leaves on the trees turn pretty colors, then fall off the trees and die? Why do you think all the leaves die in the fall? Do they stay dead?*

*What happens in the spring? The trees come back alive again! They burst into life with bright green new leaves, and flowers blossom and bloom. But new life can’t come until the old leaves have died.*

*In the fall, when we see the leaves start to die and fall off, we can remember that they will get a second chance. The tree is not dead forever. New life will come. That’s what happened to King Hezekiah when he thought he was going to die, and then God gave him new life.*

**SCIENCE EXPERIMENT**

You may want to take this experiment outside, or at least cover the area with a drop cloth. Sometimes, the balloon likes to pop (not exactly what you want to happen, but the kids would love it!) If it does pop, be ready to do it again. After all, this is a lesson about second chances!

Place about ¾ c. of water in an empty water bottle (ok, now it’s not empty). Stretch the balloons before going any further. Use the funnel to put 1-2 tablespoons of baking soda in the balloon. It’s a little tricky, but make sure the baking soda is down inside the balloon. Now, carefully fasten the balloon to the top of the water bottle WITHOUT LETTING ANY OF THE BAKING SODA FALL INSIDE THE BOTTLE. The balloon should be hanging off to the side like a little stocking hat. Lift the balloon and let the baking soda drop into the bottle. Nothing will happen.

*Okay, kids, that didn’t work. I think I’ll give it another try. I’ll give it a second chance.* Do the same thing, only this time put ¾ c. of vinegar in a bottle and no water. When you lift the balloon and dump the baking soda in the bottle, the reaction should cause the balloon to inflate.

* Aren’t you glad I gave it a second chance? I think Hezekiah and the people were glad when God gave Hezekiah a second chance and let
him live another 15 years. When have you gotten a second chance? Did a teacher give you a chance to do better on a test or a project? Have you ever been given more time when you couldn’t get something done in the amount of time you thought it would take?

God gives us the greatest second chance. When we mess up our lives by disobeying Him, He gives us a second chance when we accept what Jesus did by loving us and taking our punishment on the cross. When we realize that we’ve disobeyed God and we ask Him to forgive us, God says, “Here’s your second chance to be the person I created you to be!”

**OBJECT LESSON**

*King Hezekiah’s first impulse when bad things came into his life was to pray. Do you know what it’s like to have an impulse? You don’t think about them, because that’s what an impulse is—it’s something you do without thinking first. It’s automatically the first thing that comes to mind to do in a certain situation.*

Call up 2 students to help. To the first one, flash your hand in front of their face. The person will blink.

To the other student, gently toss (underhanded, so it’s not that fast) a soft ball toward the student’s head. The student’s impulse will be to duck or put a hand up to block the ball.

*When someone swats at your face, you blink … without thinking. When someone tosses a ball at your head, you try to keep it from hitting you. You do that without thinking. It’s an impulse. It’s the first thing you do. When trouble comes into your life, what is the first thing you do? Is it pray? Or is the first thing you do something like: get afraid, sulk, get mad, or get frustrated? King Hezekiah’s first instinct was to go to God in prayer. That’s how we should be. God wants us to go to Him in prayer at all times—that means in good times and bad times.*

**PRAYER**

*TIP: If you don’t have a chalkboard, you can make one very easily. Get an old painting with a frame and purchase some chalkboard paint (available at home improvement stores). Paint over the painting inside the frame. You might have to do a couple coats for it to show up well. Then, let it dry completely. You now have your own chalkboard!*

Use chalk to write “SIN” on the chalkboard. *Have you ever sinned? Raise your hand if you have ever done anything that God wouldn’t want you to do, or if you have ever NOT done something that God did*
want you to do! That should be all of us, because the Bible tells us that we are all sinners, and we have all disobeyed God. That’s sin. Do you know what happens when there is sin? Something has to die to take the punishment for our sin.

BUT the good news is—God sent Jesus to take our punishment, so we are free! We have a second chance, because of God’s forgiveness. We have a second chance to have a relationship with God. A second chance to live for Him ... and be like Him ... and live like He wants us to live.

Erase the word SIN on the chalkboard and write over it, FORGIVING and FOR GIVING.

We are all forgiven, and that is a gift from God. Let’s all bow our heads and thank God for FORGIVING us and FOR GIVING us a second chance.

Dear God,
Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your Son Jesus to take the punishment for our sin. Thank You for giving us a second chance to have a relationship with You, and for forgiving our sins. We know that means You don’t hold them against us anymore. Help us become more like You. Thank You for giving us Your grace and Your love. We love You.
In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

ACTIVITY

You’ll need everyone to be absolutely silent once you get started. The leader will demonstrate in the first round. One person (leader) will stand at the far end of the room with their back to the group who are standing at the other end of the room. If you have a large group of kids, then choose 6 or 8 to do this at a time.

The leader will whisper a short sentence, like “My dog went to the groomer Saturday” or “I made a home run at my baseball game” or “We’re going to Hamburger Heaven for lunch today.” Once they say the sentence, they will count to 3 and wait for someone to be able to tell what they said. Then, they’ll take a giant step backwards—toward the group. At the same whisper, they’ll say the sentence again and wait to the count of 3 to see if anyone hears. Continue whispering the sentence, waiting, and taking a step backwards until someone hears the sentence and can tell you what you said.

Now, try it with a couple of students. Be careful, though, because they’ll want to get quieter and quieter as they get closer to the kids. Encourage them to whisper at the same level each time they move.

We don’t know if Hezekiah yelled his prayer or whispered his prayer or mumbled his prayer under his breath. But, it really doesn’t matter. This is just one amazing characteristic of God—He can hear us no matter where we are or how loud or soft we’re praying. He heard us when we
were just praying together. And, there are groups of kids in churches all over the world today praying together, and He hears everyone of them, too. None of us have to wait in line. Yeah! He can hear all of us at the same time. It just keeps getting more and more amazing! You can talk with the CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE anytime you want ... AND ... He will hear you and answer you. Now, doesn’t that just mess with your head a little! Whoa!

**TAKE HOME REMINDER**

Give each child a piece of chalk (sidewalk chalk would be cool, but regular white chalkboard chalk is fine, too).

*Take this piece of chalk home and use it to write “FORGIVEN” somewhere on the pavement or a chalkboard—maybe on a sidewalk or the driveway. Ask your parents first though! This will remind you that God always gives you a second chance, and the biggest second chance He gives you is forgiveness. You can rejoice, because you are forgiven!*

**BLESSING**

*May you always thank God for the second chance He gives.*
SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

2 Timothy 4:7-8
“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.”

Beforehand, cover a table with disposable cups that you can’t see through. Turn them upside down. Underneath about half of the cups place a toy army man. These represent the Assyrian army that God helped the people defeat.

God gave Hezekiah a second chance to “fight his good fight.” Hezekiah prayed and God helped the people defeat the Assyrian army. God caused the army to get sick and have to go home. Hezekiah and the people fought the good fight by trusting God.

Divide the kids into teams. Choose one person from each team to pick up a cup. The teams that chose a cup that has an army man under them will say the verse together. If they have trouble, give them a second chance. Then, each team will send a new representative. Those players will pick up a cup and do the same thing. Continue on in like manner.

KNOW YOUR BIBLE

In the Bible story, King Hezekiah helped His people learn about God and celebrate the Feast of Passover. The Passover Feast was a great celebration that helped God’s people remember His mercy and when He saved them from Egypt. They had been slaves in Egypt for over 400 years and God led their escape. This story is in Exodus where the night before they left Egypt, the Israelites prepared their homes. The angel “passed over” all the Israelites’ homes and spared their lives. The Israelites were freed from Egypt!

Passover is a very special celebration for God’s people. In the times of Hezekiah, celebrating Passover was a sign that they were living for God. During Passover they gave God thanks for His love and mercy.

Jewish people today still celebrate Passover. It is a 7-day celebration in which Jewish people celebrate with special food and traditions.
One of their traditions during the Passover celebration includes not eating any bread with leavening in it (ingredients to make it rise, such as baking powder, yeast, or baking soda). They eat this special type of bread called Matzo bread, which is a flatbread made out of flour and water. On the first night of Passover, the families gather for a special meal called a Sedar meal.

Pass out some Matzo crackers and encourage the kids to try them. Imagine how Hezekiah and his people felt as they celebrated the Passover for the first time in many generations.