

Lesson VIII. **Jehoiakim Burns the Word of God** August 20, 1905

Jeremiah 36: 21-32. Study the chapter. Commit to memory vs. 22-24. Read ch. 26.

GOLDEN TEXT—Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God.—Jeremiah 26: 13.

21 So the king sent Jehu'di to fetch the roll, and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehu'di read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

22 Now the king sat in the winter-house in the ninth month, and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him.

23 And it came to pass, that when Jehu'di had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.

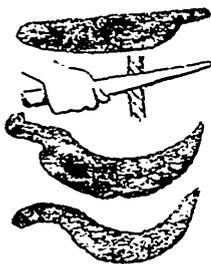
24 Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

25 Nevertheless Elnathan and Delai'ah and Gemari'ah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.

26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Sherehmiah the son of Abdeel to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremi'ah the prophet: but the Lord hid them.

27 Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremi'ah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words

Revised Version.—In the chamber of Elishama the scribe; in the brasier; Omithat: that the king; An: they; Moreover; And; king's son; concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah thou shalt say; concerning.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Ancient Assyrian Knives

Time and Place—605 B.C. The temple and the King Jehoiakim's palace, Jerusalem.

Connection—When King Josiah was slain in 609 B.C., Jehoahaz, his son, was made king. Within three months, however, he was de-throned, and taken captive by the king of Egypt. His brother, Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim, was made

king in his place. (See 2 Chron. 36: 1-4.) Jehoiakim was a wicked king, and Jeremi'ah, who had been prophesying since the reign of Josiah (Jer. 1: 1-3), warned him of the punishment that would come upon him and his people.

I. PROPHECIES DESTROYED.—21, 22. So the king; Jehoiakim. Sent Jehu'di; one of the king's officers. To fetch the roll. Jeremi'ah had prophesied against Judah's king and people, warning them that God would punish them for their sins, v. 2. At the Lord's bidding, he caused Baruch to write down his prophecies, v. 4. These were read, first to the people (v. 9), and then to the princes, v. 15. Jeremi'ah hoped his hearers would heed his words and so escape punishment. The king heard of this, and sent for the "roll" to have it read to him. The roll was of skin cut into sheets. There were sewn together, with a piece of wood at one end, or both ends, on which to roll them up. It was thus that books were made among the Jews. Elishama the scribe; the king's secretary. The roll had been put in his

care. In the winter house; the portion of the palace used in winter, a different part being used in summer. In the ninth month; our December. The Hebrew year began two weeks before the Pass-over, our Easter. A fire in the hearth; a sort of fire pan placed in the centre of the room for burning charcoal. Eastern houses had no chimneys.

23-26. Jehu'di... read three or four leaves. The Hebrew word for "leaves" means "folding-doors," which the writing arranged on the roll in columns closely resembled. Cut it with the penknife; like those with which scribes sharpened the reeds used as pens. Cast it into the fire. The king was very angry at what he had heard. Yet they were not afraid. How different from Josiah, 2 Chron. 34: 19-21. Destroying the roll could no more ward off the punishment it threatened, than shutting the eyes can save from death by lightning.

Vs. 25, 26 tell how some of the princes tried to persuade the king not to injure the roll further, and how the king sent officers to take Baruch and Jeremi'ah prisoners, perhaps to kill them. But the Lord hid them. God ever keeps watch over his servants.

II. PROPHECIES RE-WRITTEN.—27-29. The word of the Lord... to Jeremi'ah. With God's word at our back, we need fear no foe. Take thee again another roll, etc. Wicked men have often attempted to destroy the Bible, but they have always failed. The king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) shall certainly come and destroy this land. He had already come and forced Judah to become tributary to him. (2 Kgs. 24: 1), but he shall come again and make the land utterly desolate. This prediction was soon after fulfilled in the reign of Zedekiah, 2 Kgs. 25: 1-10.

III. PROPHECIES FULFILLED.—30-32. He