



LESSON III.—OCTOBER 16.

The Temple Repaired.

II. Chron. xxiv., 4-13. Memory verses 9-11.

Golden Text.

'And the men did the work faithfully.'—II. Chron. xxxiv., 12.

Home Readings.

- M. II. Kings xi., 1-21. — Jehoshaphat anointed king.
- T. II. Chron. xxiv., 1-14.—The temple repaired.
- W. II. Kings xii., 1-21.—Jehoshaphat's reign and death.
- T. II. Chron. xxxiv., 1-13.—The temple repaired by Josiah.
- F. Psa. lxxxiv., 1-12.—'How amiable are thy tabernacles.'
- S. I. Cor. iii., 1-23.—'The temple of God is holy.'
- S. Psa. lxxviii., 1-35.—'Because of thy temple at Jerusalem.'

Lesson Story.

Jehoshaphat, whose good reign we studied last week, had made a great mistake in making an alliance with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. He had taken Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, to be the wife of his son Jehoram.

This wicked woman so influenced her husband and sons as to bring great disgrace and misery to Judah; she was a heathen and encouraged all sorts of idolatry and sin. When her son Ahaziah was killed after one year's reign, she usurped the throne herself, and made an effort to destroy all the remaining members of the royal family. But the sister of Ahaziah rescued his infant son Joash and hid him and his nurse from the infuriated Athaliah. Now this aunt of Joash was the wife of the high-priest Jehoiada. When Joash was seven years old Jehoiada called together the people, and anointing the little king before them, made a covenant between them and their king and their God. Then the people slew Athaliah and the priest of the awful Baal-worship. And the people rejoiced and the land had peace.

The glorious temple which Solomon had built to the Lord had fallen out of repair in the years of carelessness and idolatry. Joash made up his mind to repair the temple and reorganize the service, so he commanded the priests and Levites to go through the country collecting money for the house of God. But they did not make any effort to do so. Perhaps the people did not care to give unless they could see just where their money went, so the king had a chest made with a slit in the cover, and this collection box was placed at the gate of the house of the Lord. A proclamation was made through Judah and Jerusalem that everyone should bring in their money for repairing the temple, as God had commanded Moses in the wilderness.

Then the people gladly brought their offerings and put them in the chest of the Lord's treasury. Each time the chest was filled the officers of the king and high-priest emptied it and counted the money carefully and paid it out honestly to the workmen. When the work was all done, the gold and silver that was left was made into vessels and dishes for the temple service. And the temple service was well kept up as long as the high-priest Jehoiada was alive.

But after the death of Jehoiada the idolatrous princes of the land came to make friends with the king by flattery and led him into all sorts of wickedness. And when Zechariah the high-priest, and son of Jehoiada, rebuked the infamous idolatry, the king commanded the people to stone him at the altar of God. This base act was never forgotten by the people. (Matt. xxiii., 35.)

Lesson Hints.

'Joash'—the tenth in descent from David, also the great-grandson of Jehoshaphat. He began life well, and as long as his uncle the high-priest, lived and counselled him, he was foremost in all good works. But his was a weak character, doing always those things that seemed easiest. It was easiest to be good while under the influence of the strict

high-priest, but when this influence was removed the weak-minded king was perfectly open to evil influences and went further in serving the devil than he had tried to go to please the Lord. Evil companions and a weak will were his ruin.

'House of the Lord'—the temple built by Solomon. (II. Chron. vi., 2.)

'Levites hastened it not'—the temple had been so long out of repair that they had probably quite lost heart about it, and found it difficult to collect anything from the people. The people may also have lost faith in their priests and may not have trusted them to use the money rightly.

'Collection according to the commandment'—'They shall give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, . . . an half-shekel shall be the offering of the Lord. . . The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less. . . Thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.' (Ex. xxx., 12-16.) This was the law of God, but it had been discarded for so long that the people were greatly in debt to the house of God. This poll-tax of half a shekel was equal to thirty-three cents a year.

'Athaliah'—a fierce heathen princess, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

'Broken up the house of God'—to build the house of Baal, robbing God to pay the devil's bills. 'If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' (I. Cor. iii., 17.)

'A chest'—locked, but with a hole bored in the lid for the silver to be dropped in.

'The people rejoiced'—they 'offered willingly,' as at the time of the building of the temple. (I. Chron. xxix., 9.) Great blessings followed this glad giving. (Mal. iii., 8-10.)

Questions.

1. Whose son was Joash?
2. Who was his great-grandfather?
3. What age was Joash when he was crowned?
4. Who was his guardian and chief counsellor?
5. What great work did he do for God?
6. Have you any duty to God's temple? (I. Cor., iii., 16, 17.)

Suggested Hymns.

'All for Jesus,' 'I gave My life for thee,' 'Loyalty to Christ,' 'There's a wideness in God's mercy,' 'Throw out the life-line,' 'O worship the King.'

Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

He that loves God will love his temple also. Verse 1.

Money is well invested when used to beautify the house of God, and make it attractive. Verses 4, 5.

Wherever Satan enters he would tear down everything that reminds him of his conqueror. Verses 6, 7.

The cheerful giver experiences a joy to which every miser is a stranger. Verses 8-10; also II. Cor. ix., 7.

In the reign of Joash the people gave freely of their means to repair the temple. They did not need to be allured by tea-meetings, concerts or popular lectures. Verses 11-13.

Lesson Illustrated.

This gives us a picture of coins dropping into the Lord's treasury, and dimly seen



through clouds the temple of the Lord that is built up by these gifts, Just as the gifts in Hezekiah's day built up a temple that

men could see so our gifts now build up a temple of the Lord, visible to him in all its glory but not yet to be fully seen by us.

Our missionary contributions pass into the Lord's treasury through our various societies and we see little more of them. But away in Africa or Asia, or the Islands of the Sea, the fruits they bring forth are added as living stones to the great temple of the Church of God. What is your Sunday-school doing to build up this temple to the glory of God? You buy your own papers and that takes all you get. Well, you ought to be ashamed. Superintendent, teacher, to paraphrase Hezekiah, Why hast thou not required of the Sunday-school to bring in the collection for the tabernacle? It is more blessed to give than to receive. Wake up, arise from your selfishness and try it.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

Oct. 16.—Our society work, and how to better it.—Judges vii., 1-8: xix., 22.

Use Illustrations.

A teacher should be able to find and use illustrations. In attempting to teach a class something they do not grasp, the instant you show them that what you are trying to get them to understand is just like something they are perfectly familiar with, they will comprehend your meaning. Christ, our Model Teacher, made the people understand divine truth in this way.

An excellent authority on this subject says: 'Keep your eyes open for every grand and beautiful sight. Keep your ears acute for all sweet harmonies. Have your heart in sympathy with every heavenly thought. Read, study, observe, be wide-awake, be thoroughly in love with all truth and all souls; then when you come to teach a thousand likes will rush to your lips, and you and your class will not only be in full sympathy, but you will see truth alike.'

Illustrations can be gathered from nature and from literature. The teacher must, however put himself to the task of 'gathering' them. For those from nature there must be keenness of vision and alertness of hearing. The soul must be in constant communion with nature as a means of that higher communion with the God of nature. Literature offers us the choicest gems with which to beautify and illustrate the things of God. These gems are sure to be found by the studious teacher. They can be gathered from the productions of the past or from current literature. Only the very best from these sources should be used for this purpose. We have heard illustrations in the pulpit and in the Sunday-school class that were very much out of harmony with the occasion as well as the subject they were to illustrate. Use your illustrations as windows through which the truth may have an opportunity to shine. Truth is to be made clearer and plainer through this medium. Never yield to the temptation of using an illustration for any other purpose than that of aiding your scholars in understanding and obeying the word of God. — 'Evangelical Sunday-school Teacher.'

To make Sunday-school rooms as pleasant as possible will aid in holding young people in the school. Often this is not done. We are created with a love for the beautiful. Other things being equal we naturally choose those things that are most pleasing to the eye. The enemies of Christ spare neither time nor money to make their places of amusement attractive. Unless young people are held by a more potent influence they will resort to more inviting places. Paper, paint, and varnish will make a cheerful room at small cost, and flowers will brighten the most gloomy abode without any outlay of money. The Jews beautified first their temple, afterwards their homes. We need to reverse the present order of things, and be as careful for the appearance of our churches as we are for our homes. — Mrs. D. M. Hopkins.

The Sunday-school teacher who neglects to pray over the lesson he expects to teach, neglects one of the most important requisites for understanding the lesson and for teaching it to the class.