

We are indebted for the following Review Questions to the *Schools' Handbooks*, published by the American Sunday School Union.

## I. INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS.

The time covered by this history? The number of rulers of Judah during this period? How many kings? The name of the one queen? The great event with which this period begins? Cause of the division?

The country ruled over by Judah—how large? Its capital? Its situation? The chief towns in Judah?

"Israel" had how many rulers during this period? How far did the territory of "Israel" extend? Why called "Israel"? What city was its capital? When destroyed? By whom? How was the land afterward repopled? 2 Kings xvii. Other nations noticed in the lessons—name them. Which were the most powerful of these? Which the oldest?

## II. LESSON QUESTIONS.

How did God teach Judah?

(1) BY MERCIES.—What king attacked Rehoboam? Why? What prophet gave Rehoboam the cause of the attack? Why did God spare Rehoboam? Asa's character? His efforts to remove idolatry? By whom was he attacked? How delivered?

The covenant, why renewed? At what place? By what offerings? To whom? What mercy was granted to Judah?

Jehoshaphat's prosperity, why given? By whom? His efforts to remove idolatry? To acquire a knowledge of God?

Jehoshaphat reprieved, for what? By whom? His efforts at reform? Who were appointed to aid in reforming the people? The instructions given them?

Jehoshaphat helped, by whom? Against whom? When? The speech of Jehoshaphat to his army? Who went before the army? The manner and result of the battle?

Joah repairing, whose house? How was the money to be raised therefor? The amount of money gathered? The feeling of the people in giving?

(2) BY JUDGMENTS.—Uziah's pride punished, where? For what? How? By whom was he visited? His temper under the reproof? How long a leper?

Ahaz persistent wickedness, against whom? How punished? By what kings? How ruined? His greater sins?

Hezekiah's good reign, by what judgments prompted? How does he describe those judgments? His orders to avert them? To restore true worship?

Hezekiah and the Assyrians, the cause of their strife? The aim of the Assyrians? How known to Hezekiah? The added threat? The character of the letters sent? To whom did he carry them all? The judgment on the Assyrians?

Manasseh brought to repentance, by what judgment? The effect of the judgment on him? The answer of the Lord? The efforts Manasseh made to restore God's worship? How God teaches us by this history?

3 The Captivity of Judah, Jer. li, 1-16.  
4 The Captives in Babylon, Dan. i, 1-17.  
5 Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, Dan. ii, 1-12.

6 The Holy Furnace, Dan. iii, 1-17.  
7 The Handwriting on the Wall, Dan. v, 1-31.

8 Daniel in the Lion's Den, Dan. vi, 1-23.  
9 Nebuchadnezzar's Kingdom, Dan. iv, 9-14.

10 The Decree of Cyrus, 2 Chron. xxvii, 1-22.  
11 Manasseh's Repentance, 2 Chron. xxxiii, 1-9.

12 Josiah's Early Piety.—2 Chron.

Lam. i, 8.  
2 Dan. vi, 10.  
3 Psalms xvi, 6.  
4 Psalms xvi, 7.

5 Dan. ix, 25.  
6 Dan. iii, 17.  
7 Dan. v, 27.

8 Dan. vi, 23.  
9 Psalms xvi, 6.  
10 Psalms xvi, 7.

11 Isaiah xl, 6.  
12 Isaiah xlvi, 13.

April 7.—Josiah's Early Piety.—2 Chron.

xxxiv. 1-8.—About B. C. 639-621.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

"Remember unto the Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Eccles. xii, 1.

## INTRODUCTORY.

Manasseh, the subject of our last study, left a son AMON, to succeed him upon the throne, who followed the same evil courses that Manasseh had adopted before he was "brought to repentance." He was a wicked king, and succeeded in undoing the good that had been done by his father subsequently to his conversion. Amon only reigned two years however, and then fell a victim to a conspiracy, and was slain in his own palace. The conspirators were themselves put to death by the people, and Amon's young son Josiah was placed upon the throne of Judah by the popular voice. (2 Kings xxi, 19, 26; 2 Chron. xxxiii 21-25.)

With reference to the good influences that surrounded king Josiah in his early life, Stanley remarks:—"There was a circle of remarkable persons in or around the palace and temple, who possibly driven together by recent persecutions, had formed a compact band, which remained unbroken till the fall of the monarchy itself. Amongst these the most conspicuous at this time were Shaphan, the secretary; Hilkiah, the high priest; and Huldah, the prophetess, who, with her husband Shallum, himself of the priestly race and keeper of the royal wardrobe, lived close by the temple precincts."

In the study of our lesson we may adopt the following divisions:—(1) Josiah's Early decision for God; (2) His Earnest work for God.

HIS EARLY DECISION FOR GOD, v. 1-3.

**F. 1.** Where he began to reign. He reigned from B. C. 639 to 609. He was nominal king at the age of eight years, but probably did not exercise his kingly authority until he was 20 years old, the country being no doubt governed by a council meanwhile, see 2 Kings xvii, 4; and verse eight of our lesson.—Compare this early accession to the throne with that of Josiah, 2 Chron. xvi, 1.

**F. 2.** Did that which was right. "It is remarkable that in an age so general and great corruption, and in such a family,—his father and grandfather having both been very bad men,—and in such a position,—exposed to the temptations of royalty at so early an age,—Josiah should have been so good a man and so excellent a king. Possibly it was due to his mother's influence; but we are left to conjecture."—Todd, For his mother's name see 2 Kings xxii, 1. Declined neither to the right hand nor to the left. "Timidity did not prevent him from going far enough, and zeal did not lead him beyond the bounds. He walked in the golden mean, and his moderation was known unto all men. He went neither to the right nor to the left; he looked inward for guidance, and looked upward. Remember, let the conduct of this pious youth be thy exemplar through life."—Adam Clarke.

**F. 3.** In the eighth year of his reign.—that is, when he was about 16 years old. While

he was yet young. "Blessed are those who begin young to serve their God,—fewer sins to break off, a longer time in which to do good, a life less tainted with early sins and habits. Compare Manasseh's and Josiah's reigns. The great majority of all who become Christians at an early age so when young."—Fleming. Began to seek after the God etc. See Prov. viii, 17; Jer. xxix, 13; Isaiah xiv, 19, etc., etc. Blessed youth to experience saving grace at such an age, and in such times of general apostasy! v. 1-3

HIS EARNEST WORK FOR GOD. v. 3-8

**F. 3.** (continued) In the twelfth year—that is, the twelfth year of his reign, or the twentieth of his age. Notice that this is the first intimation of his exercising his kingly authority.—"We have no exact age set down at which a Jewish king attained his majority and began to direct affairs. Perhaps there was no legal limit, and the character of the monarch, determined, to some extent, the time of his advent to power. But the three cases of Asa, Josiah, and Jehoiachin give some grounds for concluding that, practically, regencies lasted till the monarch reached the age of twenty."—Spa. Com. Began to purge Judah. "The call of Jeremiah so nearly coincides with the commencement of Josiah's reformation." (Jer. i, 2) that we can scarcely regard the two facts as unconnected. . . . at any rate Jeremiah's first prophecies (Jer. ii, and liii) appear to have been coincident with Josiah's earlier efforts to uproot idolatry, and must have greatly strengthened his hands."—Spa. Com.

**F. 4.** In his presence.—that is, in the presence of king Josiah, who no doubt superintended. The images. In the margin it reads "idol-images," which word was commonly applied to images of Baal and Ashtar, the god of the sun and the goddess of the moon. Stripped it upon the graves. See 2 Kings xxii, 6.

**F. 5.** Burnt the bones of the priests. "The priests whose bones were burnt had been probably just seized and put to death."—Spa. Com. **F. 6.** Cities of Benjamin, etc. Israel had been carried away captive in the time of Hezekiah, but a remnant of the people was left still, and in the absence of any other authority Josiah no doubt felt called upon to assert his claim to authority over the whole "land of Israel."—"We must regard Josiah as aiming, not merely at a religious reformation, but at a restoration of the kingdom to its ancient limits."—Spa. Com. At this time the power of Assyria had become greatly weakened. With their mottos. Another translation is "in their desolate places," as in Psalm cii, 10. The cities of Israel were indeed "desolate places," in ruins and only very partially inhabited.

**F. 7.** Had broken down, etc. "Those which were of stone he broke down, those which were of metal he beat to powder; and those that were of wood he hewed down."—Barth.

**F. 8.** Had purged the land and the house. "The purging of the temple had probably been the first work that Josiah took in hand, (see 2 Kings xxi, 4; and compare 2 Chron. xxxiv, 3). From purging he had probably proceeded to repairs; and these had probably been carried on for some considerable time before the particular occasion here brought before us, when Shaphan, Masesiah, and Joah, were sent by the king to see the progress of the repairs, and to obtain money from the high priest to pay the workmen."—Spa. Com. To repair the house of the Lord his God.—that is, to carry on the work, not to commence it.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The most steadfast and useful servants of God are those who begin to serve Him in early life.  
2. As Josiah assailed and destroyed those idols, so we should do with all the idols of our hearts.

MERCIES AND JUDGMENTS  
IMPROVED, BRING SALVATION  
ABUSED, BRING DESTRUCTION.

## SECOND QUARTER.

SUBJECT

GOLDEN TEXT.

- 1 Josiah's Early Piety, 2 Chron. xxxiv, 1-8. Eccl. xii, 1-3.  
2 The Scriptures Found and Searched, 2 Chron. xxxiv, 14-29. Jer. xxxv, 3-9.  
3 Jeremiah in Prison, Jer. xxxvii, 1-10. Jer. xxxv, 1-11.  
4 The Rehearsers, Jer. xxxv, 12-19. Jer. xxxv, 12-19.