

Lesson VII.

JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW

August 13, 1905

2 Chronicles 34: 14-28. Commit to memory v. 21. Read chs. 34, 35, and 2 Kings, ch. 22.

GOLDEN TEXT—I will not forget thy word.—Psalm 119: 16.

14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the Lord, Hilki'ah the priest found ¹ a book of the law of the Lord given by Mo'ses.

15 And Hilki'ah answered and said to Sha'phan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilki'ah delivered the book to Sha'phan.

16 And Sha'phan carried the book to the king, and ² brought the king word ³ back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do ⁴.

17 And they have ⁵ gathered together the money that was found in the house of the Lord, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and ⁶ to the hand of the workmen.

18 ⁷ Then Sha'phan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilki'ah the priest hath ⁸ given me a book. And Sha'phan read ⁹ it before the king.

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.

20 And the king commanded Hilki'ah, and Ahik'am the son of Sha'phan, and Ab'don the son of Mirc'ah, and Sha'phan the scribe, and Asai'ah ⁹ a servant of the king's, saying,

21 Go, ¹⁰ enquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Is'rael and in Ju'dah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great ¹¹ is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do ¹² after all that is written in this book.

Revised Version.—¹ the; ² moreover; ³ Omitt therein; ⁴ the king's servant; ⁵ ye, inquire; ⁶ Tokhath; ⁷ second quarter; ⁸ said unto; ⁹ is my wrath poured out; ¹⁰ it; ¹¹ But unto; ¹² thus; ¹³ As touching; ¹⁴ hast humbled; ¹⁵ hast rent; ¹⁶ wept; ¹⁷ I also have heard thee, saith; ¹⁸ thereof.

22 ¹³ And Hilki'ah, and they ¹⁴ that the king had ¹⁵ appointed, went to Hul'dah the prophetess, the wife of Shal'tum the son of ¹⁶ Tik'vath, the son of Has'rah, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jeru'salem in the ¹⁷ college;) and they spake to her to that ¹⁸ effect.

23 And she ¹⁹ answered them, Thus saith the Lord ²⁰ God of Is'rael, Tell ye the man that sent you to me,

24 Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Ju'dah:

25 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore ²⁶ my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and ²⁷ shall not be quenched.

26 ²⁸ And as for the king of Ju'dah, who sent you to enquire of the Lord, ²⁹ so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the Lord ³⁰ God of Is'rael ³¹ concerning the words which thou hast heard:

27 Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou hearest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and ³² humbledst thyself before me, and ³³ didst rend thy clothes, and ³⁴ weep before me; ³⁵ I ³⁶ have even heard thee also, saith the Lord.

28 Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt ³⁷ be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants ³⁸ of the same. So they brought the king word again.

back; ⁴ emptied out; ⁵ into; ⁶ And; ⁷ delivered; ¹¹ according unto; ¹² So; ¹³ whom; ¹⁴ commanded; ¹⁵ according unto; ¹⁶ So; ¹⁷ whom; ¹⁸ commanded; ¹⁹ it; ²⁰ But unto; ²¹ thus; ²² As touching; ²³ hast humbled; ²⁴ hast rent; ²⁵ wept; ²⁶ I also have heard thee, saith; ²⁷ thereof.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—622 B. C.; the temple and king's palace at Jerusalem.

Connection—While the temple was being repaired Hilki'ah, the high priest, found a copy of Moses' writings and brought it to King Josiah.

I. A GREAT DISCOVERY.—14, 15. And when they; those employed by Josiah to oversee the repairing of the temple (see Lesson VI.). Brought out the money;

to pay the workmen, v. 10. Hilki'ah the high priest had perhaps stored the money in some secret place for safe keeping. Found the book; in the form of a roll. Of the law of the Lord; the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses, in whole or in part. By Moses; written by him, Deut. 31: 24. Hilki'ah answered; answered the unspoken thoughts and surmises. Shaphan the scribe; the king's secretary. He would tell his master. I have found, etc.; a far greater "find" than gold or silver.

16-18. Shaphan brings the book to the king, and at the same time tells him about the use of the money gathered for repairing the temple. They have emptied out the money (Rev. Ver.); from the chest in which it had been kept. Delivered it; to those in charge of the work. Then the book was shewn to the king, and Shaphan read it; portions here and there.

II. A DEEP IMPRESSION.—19-22. When the king had heard the words of the law. From 2 Kgs. 22: 19, it seems that Shaphan must have read some such passage as Deut., ch. 28 with its curses against those who disobeyed God. He rent his clothes; a sign of grief, common in the East, on account of the wickedness of His people. Go, enquire of the Lord. The king sends the persons named in v. 20, to find out, through some prophet of the Lord, what the Lord would have him and his people do. For great is the wrath of the Lord. Josiah felt that the wickedness described in Deuteronomy existed in his kingdom, and that therefore the Lord must be angry. Because our fathers (ancestors) have not kept the word. Sin, practised for generations, had become a habit of the people. Went to Hul'dah the prophetess. The prophet's office was sometimes, though rarely, held by a woman. (Compare Miriam, Ex. 15: 20; Num. 12: 2; and Deborah, Judg. 4: 4.) Wife of Shallum. . . keeper of the wardrobe; either that of the king or that of the priests in the temple. Dwelt. . . in the second quarter (Rev. Ver.); probably that part of Jerusalem west of the temple mount.



A High Priest]