

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 ¹a 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 ²brought the king word ³back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do ⁴it.

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

18 ⁷Then Sha'phan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilki'ah the priest hath ⁸given me a book. And Sha'phan read ⁹it 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 Ahikam the son of Sha'phan, and Ab'don the son of Mica'ah, and Sha'phan the scribe, and Asai'ah ¹⁰a servant of the king's, saying,

21 Go, ¹¹enquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great ¹²is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do ¹³after all that is written in this book.

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

22 ¹⁶And Hilki'ah, and they ¹⁷that the king had appointed, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of ¹⁸Tik'vath, the son of Has'rah, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the ¹⁹college;) and they spake to her to that effect.

23 And she ²⁰answered them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 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 Judah:

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 ²¹my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and ²²shall not be quenched.

26 ²³And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the Lord, ²⁴so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel ²⁵concerning the words which thou hast heard:

27 Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and ²⁶humbledst thyself before me, and ²⁷didst rend thy clothes, and ²⁸weep before me; I ²⁹have even heard thee also, saith the Lord.

28 Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt ³⁰be 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 ³¹of the same. So they brought the king word again.

back; ⁴emptied out; ⁵into; ⁶And; ⁷delivered; ¹¹according unto; ¹²So; ¹³whom; ¹⁴commanded; ¹⁵it; ²⁰But unto; ²¹thus; ²⁶I also have heard thee, saith; ²⁷thereof.

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 Huldah 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]