

JANUARY 3RD.

Josiah and the Book of the Law.

2 Kings 22: 1-13

LAST year we learned how the kingdom of Israel was divided, and ten of the tribes formed a kingdom of their own which lasted for two hundred and fifty years, when it was destroyed by the Assyrians. The kingdom of Judah, which was made up of the two other tribes, lasted for one hundred and thirty years longer. Most of the time wicked men reigned over it, but one of the kings was a good man named Josiah. He began to reign when he was a little boy only eight years old. When he was sixteen years old he began to seek after God. He broke down all the idols and opened the temple and showed his people the way to serve the God of their fathers. Men were set at-work to repair the temple of God. While the men were at work they found the book of God's law, which no one had seen for many years, and it had been entirely forgotten. They brought it to the young king and read from it. As he heard the law, he began to weep, saying, 'O how wicked have we and our fathers been in not keeping this law which God gave to us! How angry God must be with us for disobeying his words!' He sent the priest to a good woman in Jerusalem, to learn what they must do to serve God. So Josiah and all his people turned to God with all their hearts.

Now, dear children, just think of a boy only eight years old being king! But what grander history could be written by any one than is told of this boy-king in the Golden Text, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." But you see little Josiah had learned about good King David, and, while he was still young, he began to seek after David's God. It was God who made the young king brave enough to destroy all the idols, and who put it into his heart to repair and cleanse the temple. It was a great thing for a child to do; but what he did every child may, by the grace of God, do also, though it may be in humble and unnoticed ways, which no one will find out to speak of or praise, only God will see and know them.

Remember, childhood is the time for obedience, and if you are obedient to God you will grow up as did King Josiah, into a brave, fearless, servant of God.

JANUARY 10TH.

Jeremiah Predicting the Captivity.

Jer. 8: 20-22; 9: 1-16

THE prophets were men by whom God spoke to his people, before he sent his own Son to tell us the glad news of salvation. While King Josiah was trying to make the people love and obey God, the prophet Je-re-mi-ah brought them many messages from God himself. And when the good king died, and the people went back to their idols, it was Jeremiah who grieved over their folly (see v. 1) and reproved their sins (vs. 4-8), and warned them that, because of their disobedience and neglect of God's Word (v. 13), their beautiful cities would surely be destroyed (v. 11), and they be scattered among the heathen (v. 16). The

book of Jeremiah, and another called Lamentations, which he wrote, are full of picture-lessons, to show the people their great wickedness in God's sight, and the dreadful woes God would surely send upon them unless they repented. Jeremiah was a mild, timid man, but whatever God told him to say, he said, no matter how angry the people were, nor how often wicked kings threatened to kill him.

Jeremiah, was called "the weeping prophet," because he sorrowed so greatly over the sins of his people.

Jeremiah's tears did not keep him from telling his people the truth. He spoke out boldly against the sins of the king, of the rulers, and of all the people. Sometimes he spoke in the court of the temple, sometimes in the streets; and when they put him in prison he wrote his words and sent a friend to read them. He mourned over the people but he also told them of the "balm in Gilead," by which he meant God's mercy, which could save them from their sins.

But the people would not listen, and went on in wickedness, until as we shall see in a future lesson God sent them into captivity as a punishment for their sins.

'OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.'

Edited by ALF. SANDHAM. Published on the first and third Saturday of each month, by the Toronto Willard Tract Depository,—S. R. BRIGGS, Manager—corner Yonge and Temperance Streets, Toronto, Ont.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—PER YEAR—Single copies, 25c.; 10 copies, \$1.25; 50 copies, \$3.00; 100 copies, \$5.00.



READING THE BOOK OF THE LAW.