

Bible Societies will be helpful. The second truth is the doom of those who disregard the law of God. One does not escape the rocks by destroying the lighthouse; rather he deprives himself of valuable help in avoiding danger. To shut the Bible out of life is to close the soul to the noonday glory of light and to leave it to starve in barren fields. The practical lesson is, to be warned by Jehoiakim's conduct, and embrace the Word of God as our personal guide.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Here are five Scenes (and five is the number of scenes in a Tragedy.) Let the teacher master the details by reading and re-reading the Lesson passage, and by going carefully through the Exposition and Light from the East.

Scene 1. THE SENDING FOR THE ROLL. The winter palace; time, December; the king (what can the scholars tell about him?); his courtiers (v. 21: called "servants" v. 24); the princes who had just finished their story:—what was it? vs. 1-16—about the book the prophet Jeremiah (who was he?) had written, and all the terrible things (what were they?) which it contained; the king all on edge to see the book, angry already in his heart against the man who wrote it, perhaps against the Lord who had caused it to be written;—"The king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll."

Scene 2. THE PEN-KNIFE AND THE FIRE. Jehudi unrolls the book and reads three or four leaves. It is not the fire on the hearth (describe) alone that causes that crimson flush on the king's cheek: it is his anger (ask why angry); there is a flash of the scribe's knife (explain) which the king hastily snatches, and, bit by bit, the roll is thrown on the living

coals till it is all shrivelled up (it was a parchment, sheepskin) and consumed. Two brave, God-fearing men (v. 25) had tried to stay the king's hand, but in vain; king and courtiers are unabashed and unashamed.

Scene 3. THE SEARCH. For the scribe and the prophet, the man who had written, and the man who had dictated, the book. Jerahmeel, Serajah, and Shelemiah, (likely three strong, keen, knowing men; there is room for imagination in the details of the scene). But there is a great Hand between (whose hand? see last clause of v. 26). No fear that they will find them until the Lord so permits.

Scene 4. THE FRESH MESSAGE. Where it was given, none can tell: none but Jeremiah himself heard God speak. But what a word it was!—"Re-write the roll, and add new woes for the king's new sin" (vs. 29, 30), and that of his people," v. 31. By way of contrast, show the scholars such messages from God as these: Isa. 1: 18; 55: 6, 7; Matt. 11: 28.

Scene 5. THE RE-WRITING OF THE ROLL. In the fourth Scene there were two persons, Jehovah and Jeremiah. In this, again, two, Jehovah and the scribe Baruch. Jehovah has commanded. Jeremiah obeys. The first writing cost Jeremiah persecution and pursuit; the second may cost his life. One would not judge so to look; for he is calm and collected. Is he not doing God's business? And he trusts in God's care. Look into the book. It is the same message as before, for God does not change. He is always angry at sin. "Many like words" are added; for, as mentioned above, the new sin of king and princes brought down new judgment. The way of safety for the king, his people, for us all, is in the Golden Text.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Lesson Points

The higher our position, the greater our need of wisdom from above. v. 21.

Human opposition is the impotent waves, heaven's purpose the steadfast rock. v. 23.

Foolhardiness is not courage, nor is a wise fear cowardice. v. 24.

Obstinacy is the counterfeit of firmness. v. 25.

God's "buts" are bulwarks to those whose trust is in Him. v. 26.

Evil may succeed in a single battle, but it can never win in the war. vs. 27, 28.

Every blow aimed at goodness recoils on the striker. v. 29.

At the word of the Lord the wicked wither. v. 30.