

THE LOST BOOK FOUND

II Chronicles 34:1-33.

LESSON 89 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (John 14:23).

A Young King

Josiah was very young, only about eight years old, when he began to be the king of Judah. Yet he was probably the best king since the time of David. Although very young, he had a heart that loved God.

At the age of sixteen he sought the Lord earnestly and loved Him all the days of his life. The work of God had been neglected by his father and grandfather. Manasseh, Josiah's grandfather, was one of the most wicked kings of Judah. The Temple, God's House, had not been repaired and kept up for years. It was a big church and needed to have much work done on it. It took much money to repair it. People from all over the land gave offerings, and the money was brought to the Temple.

Book Found

One day when they were working in the Temple a priest named Hilkiah found a book. He said: "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." They took the book to the king and read it to him. When King Josiah heard the words of the book, he was very sad, for he learned that his people had not done as the words in the book told them they should do. No doubt he was afraid that God would punish him and the people; and God probably would have done so if they had not repented, and had shown Him they were sorry.

Josiah loved the Lord and wanted to do the things that were right, but he did not have the Bible as we have today to tell him just what the Lord wanted him to do. But now he had the book, which taught them how the Lord wanted them to serve Him. We have the Bible today and learn how to serve the Lord by reading His Word.

Sent to Enquire

King Josiah sent men to find out from a good woman, Hulda the Prophetess, about the words in the Law. Shaphan the scribe had read to the king that the Lord would bring evil upon that place and the people there because they had forsaken Him and worshiped other gods. The king thought she would know, and she did know. She sent word to the king that the Lord would bring trouble upon the people because they had forsaken Him, but not in King Josiah's day. Because the king was sorry and had wept and prayed before the Lord, the Lord heard his prayer and would not bring evil upon him. God said he should have peace all the days of his life.

The Law Read

The king called for a great meeting at Jerusalem and read to the people out of the books of Moses – the first five books of the Bible. Then the king stood in his place and promised to follow the Lord with all his heart and to do the words in the book with all his soul. He also had all the people promise to serve the Lord with all their heart. As long as King Josiah lived, the people served and loved the Lord their God.

Book Preserved

It was wonderful that the Lord kept this book hidden away in the Temple all these years and let Hilkiah find it at this time. Wicked kings that did not love the Lord had destroyed many of the holy things that belonged to the House of God, but some way the Lord did not let them find this book of the Law. He kept it hid until there was a king on the throne who loved Him, and then He let the book be found. God knew that King Josiah would read it and would do the things that were written in the book. God knows all about us and knows just what we are doing and what we will always do.

Before children are able to read, they need to have the Word of God read to them so that they may understand and obey it. We read from the Bible in our Sunday School, and our ministers also teach it to us, but we need to read it every day in our homes so that we will know it well and can always remember what the Lord wants us to do, because God speaks to us through His Word.

Working for Jesus

Although Josiah was very young when he became king, God helped him to be a good king. God can and does use children to work for Him, if they love Him with all their heart.

Samuel was another boy whom God called when very young. His mother took him to the Temple and gave him to God. We remember that he worked in the Temple. The Lord called Samuel one night and he answered, "Here am I." "And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again." Samuel did not know that it was the Lord's voice that he heard. "And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me." And then Eli understood that the Lord had called Samuel. So Eli told Samuel to lie down again and if the Lord called him once more Samuel should say, "Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth." So Samuel went and lay down once more, and the Lord came, and stood, and called again, "Samuel, Samuel." Samuel answered, "Speak; for thy servant heareth." Then the Lord told Samuel the things He wanted him to know about what was going to happen to the people there. God must have talked to Samuel many times, for he grew up to be a man who loved God very much and did the work God gave him to do.

Joash, another little boy, was only seven years of age when he became king. When he was anointed king the people clapped their hands and said, "God save the king." He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. It was this king who first set up a chest for receiving the money, or offerings, in the church. (See II Chronicles 24:8-11; II Kings 12:9-11.) Today in our churches we have boxes, or chests, on the walls for receiving tithes and freewill offerings. We never ask people for money in our services. When they give their gift to God it is because they love to do it.

Children Saved

A young man who ushers in our church testifies, "I was brought up in a Christian home where I heard the Bible read and taught from infancy. When just a small boy, God put a desire in my heart to serve Him. I realized I would have to have a change of heart. When only five years of age, I knelt at my mother's bedside one night, and asked God to changed my heart. In a few moments of prayer, I felt the joy and peace of Heaven come down. I began to rejoice and said, "Mamma, I feel so good in here!" – placing my hand over my heart. And best of all, it is still real in these days." His little daughter was saved, sanctified, and received the baptism of the Holy Ghost when only eight years of age. If we give our lives to Jesus when we are young we shall have many years of work for Him and help others to be saved.

When God Speaks

God still talks to the hearts of children. Did you ever feel in your heart when you told an untruth, or took something that did not belong to you, that you had done wrong? That was God talking to your heart and showing you that you were a sinner. Right then you were old enough to be saved. If you do not come to Him when you are young, your heart may become hard. God says, "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15). If you wait till you get older, it may be too late and you may lose your soul. Some children hear God's voice calling them when only five, six, or seven years old. How much happier little children are when they are saved and can live without sin, because Jesus keeps them from being bad! Some may say that you are too young, but God will tell you to give Him your heart. Jesus loves little children. He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16).

QUESTIONS

1. How old was Josiah when he became king? II Chronicles 34:1.
2. What book was found in the Temple? II Chronicles 34:15.
3. Did the young king love the Lord? II Chronicles 34:2-4, 27, 28.
4. What promise did the king have the people make? II Chronicles 34:31, 32.
5. Name two other little boys who worked for God. I Samuel 3:10; II Chronicles 24:1, 2.