Sunday School Lesson

May 5. Lesson V—What Hilkiah Found in the Temple—2 Chronicles 34: 14-16, 29-33. Golden Text—Why word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.—Psalm 119: 105.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE GOOD REIGN OF JOSIAH, vs. 1-7.
II. THE REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE, vs. 8-13.
III. THE BOOK OF THE LAW, vs. 14-28.
IV. THE COVENANT, vs. 29-33.

INTRODUCTION—The reign of Hezekiah, which came to an end somewhere between B.C. 698 and 692, was marked by many efforts toward reform of religious conditions in Judah and throughout all Israel (2 Kings 18: 4-7, 22; 2 Chron. 31: 1, 20, 21). But there were evidently many people strongly attached to the old ways, to the local sanctuaries, or high places which he destroyed, and to their forms of worship. Under their influence the young Manasseh who succeeded him and reigned more than fifty years in Jerusalem (2 Kings 21: 1-9) set himself to undo the good which his father had done. He restored the "abominations of the heathen," "built up again the high places," even built strange altars in the temple itself, revived the horrible custom of child sacrifice, and "wrought much wickedness." The second book of Chronicles tells of calamity which befell him in later years and of a belated repentance, and a prayer is preserved in the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, bearing his name (see 2 Chron. 33: 11-19). His son, Amon, followed his father's bad example, but was murdered after a brief reign, by his own servants.

Meanwhile the influence of the great prophetic reformers of the eighth century, Isaiah and Micah, Amos and Hosea, continued strong in the minds of their disciples and, in spite of persecution (2 Kings 21: 16), their teaching spread among the people. After the murder of Amon there was an uprising of "the people of the land" against the corrupt court, 2 Chron. 33: 24-25. The child Josiah who succeeded to the throne came under the good influence of the reforming party and when he reached mature age began a series of reforms more complete and far-reaching than anything which had previously been attempted. The parallel story of his reign in 2 Kings 22: 1 to 23: 28 should be read. See also Jeremiah's testimony to his character and his good reign in Jer. 22: 15, 16.

I. THE GOOD REIGN OF JOSIAH, vs. 1-7.

Josiah was king in succession to his father Amon from B.C. 639 to 608. The historian bears him witness that "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord (v. 2), and that "like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul (2 Kings 23: 25)." The high places, or local sanctuaries, which had been places of worship all over the land from the days of Joshua and the conquest, had become corrupted by imitation of the heathen rites practiced at the altars of Baal. The Levite priests who ministered at these places are said to have gone away far from Jehovah after their idols, Ezek. 44: 10.

The groves, or, more correctly, the "Asherim" (Rev. Ver.), were originally sacred trees standing near the altar. In many cases they were replaced by wooden poles which may have been carved or painted with representations of the deity. The word Baalim is plural of Baal, and is used because the god Baal was multiplied by the people into many localized divinities such as baal-gad, Baal-zephon, Baal-hermon. Above the altars of Baal were images of some kind (sun-images, Rev. Ver.), perhaps representing the sun as an object of worship. For v. 5 compare 2 Kings 23: 15-16.

II. THE REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE, vs. 8-13.

The eighteenth year of his reign was the year B.C.621. The temple had, no doubt, been neglected and had fallen into disrepair during the long, bad reign of Manasseh. The king's officers (v. 8) were ordered to go to the high priest Hilkiah and ask him to sum up the money collected from the people by the doorkeepers, that it might be used to pay for material and to pay the wages of the workmen, 2 Kings 22: 3-7. The last clause of v. 9 should be, as in Rev. Ver., "of the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The faithfulness of the workmen in the performance of their task is especially commended (v. 12). Apparently music was brought in to aid them in the work. The overseers were men who could skill of (play skilfully on) instruments of music.

III. THE BOOK OF THE LAW, vs. 14-28.

This book can hardly have been the entire Pentateuch, which the Jews in later times called the Law. The prophets of the previous century seem to have been well acquainted with parts of the Pentateuch, and it is not likely that the knowledge would have been entirely lost. The evidence here is rather strongly in favor of the belief that it was the book of Deuteronomy, or the part of it which contains law, warnings and promises. The measures of reform which Josiah and his ministers undertook under the guidance of this book are all such as are prescribed in Deuteronomy, while some, at least, of the laws of Leviticus and Numbers seem yet to have been unknown. Any reader may for himself make comparison of the reforms begun by Josiah and the law codes of these books. The marginal references in a good Reference Bible will be a guide.

The king's alarm and grief upon hearing the words of the book must have been due to the fact that its laws were not being, and had not been observed, and that terrible punishment was threatened in it for such neglect. See Deut., chaps. 27 and 28, and compare v. 24.

The prediction of Huldah the prophetess concerning Josiah (v. 28) was unfortunately not fulfilled, for he met a tragic death in battle with an Egyptian army at Megiddo, thirteen years later, 2 Kings 23: 29-30.

IV. THE COVENANT, vs. 29-33.

The name "book of the covenant" was first given to the law given to Israel by Moses at Sinai, and contained in Exodus, chaps. 20 to 23 (see 24: 7). On the basis of this law a solemn covenant was made between Israel and Jehovah, Jehovah promising guidance and prosperity to Israel, and Israel obedience to Jehovah's laws, Exod. 24: 7, 8. The law in Deuteronomy is an enlargement of that in Exodus, and is called, with its accompanying warnings and promises, "the words of the covenant," Deut. 29: 1. The ancient covenant bond is now renewed, and the people

"Army" Boy Settlers

Here is a group ready to step off the Anchor-Donaldson liner Athenia at Halifax this spring and begin the new life of prosperity in Canada.

"Marathon dancing for six consecutive days almost makes one weak."

An amusing story is told concerning the veteran John D. Rockefeler, reputedly the richest man in the world. It appears that the multi-millionaire creator of the Standard Oil Trust had his portrait painted for presentation to a cetrain public institution. It was a water-color. "Of course," remarked one of his business rivals, when viewing the picture, "it had to be water-color. They couldn't 'do' Rackefeller in oil!"

Farm Notes

A BERRY BEARING CLIMBER

Among climbing vines that are useful in concealing screens, bare verandahs, summerhouses, old stumps and fences is the American Bittersweet, Celastrus scandens. This is one of the best climbers, being a rampant grower with glossy green leaves. This plant, if given a chance, will establish itself very quickly, as it twines about everything it can get hold of and is not subject to injury from insects and disease. It is described by W. T. Macoun, the Dominion Horticulturist, in his bulletin, "Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Woody Climbers." Bittersweet has an advantage over some other very useful vines in bearing bright colored berries, which remain hanging after the leaves have disappeared. It is pointed out by the author in this bulletin, which is numbered 89 and published by the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, that one in procuring a plant should have knowledge that it has borne fruit or has been propagated from a fruit-bearing vine, as some of the plants bear only male blossoms that do not set fruit. The American Bittersweet is but one of many hardy climbing plants described in the bulletin that have been tested at the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa.

PERENNIAL CLIMBING PLANTS

A greater use of climbing plants would add beauty to many of the homes in the country. Houses that lack beauty of architecture may be made very attractive by the planting of some of the hardy climbers. Verandahs, summerhouses, milkhouses, fences, rocks, and old stumps of trees covered with climbing plants will so change the appearance of the place that it will hardly be recognized by one who has known it before. Fortunately there are many hardy native climbers available in most districts and most nurseries carry suitable kinds at low prices. For many years a large number of kinds of these plants have been under test by the Central Experimental Farms system. The results of these trials are concontained in Bulletin No. 89, "Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Woody Climbers." Among the most favored of these for hardiness, rapidity of growth and permanence the Virginia Creeper holds a prominent place. This vine, Ampelopsis quinquefolia, a native of the colder parts of Canada, is one of the hardiest and quite suitable for Prairie Provinces planting. While it has tendrils by which it clings to wire supports and trellises, it does not attach itself well to walls. Another variety of the Virginia Creeper known as the self-fastening or Hairy Virginia Creeper, attaches itself firmly to brick and other walls, requiring no special support. This variety, found growing wild at Ottawa, is hardy for Ontario and the Eastern Provinces, as well as in British Columbia. Many other attractive climbers or ornamental trees and shrubs are described and recommended in this publication, issued by the Publications Branch of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa.

ORNAMENTAL HEDGES

For dividing lines between properties or separating parts of the home grounds, living hedges are often more suitable than walls or fences. There are many plants suitable for hedging purposes, and most of these have been well tested at the Cetnral Experimental Farm at Ottawa, where there are no less than eighty-four hedges of sufficient length to make reliable comparisons. In testing hedge plants at the Central Farm about one hundred and twenty species of trees and shrubs have been tried out. Many of these have proved unsuitable. The hedges at the Experimental Farm are of different heights and breadths, and include both deciduius and evergreen varieties. These, as well as the method of their cultivation and care are described in Bulletin, 89 published by the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa and entitled "Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Woody Climbers." For positions where tall hedges are desired the Siberian Pen Tree has proved satisfactory, as have also the Honey Locust, the Common Buckthorn and some of the Birches. For tall evergreen hedges the Douglas Fir and the Norway Spruce are recommended, while for low evergreen hedges the American Arbovitae is very desirable. For deciduous hedges of medium height the Alder Buckthorn, the Wayfaring Tree and the Woody Caragana make good effects, while the Japanese Barberry, the Dwarf Cargana are well suited where low growing hedges are desired. The author of the bulletin, Mr. W. T. Macoun, the Dominion Horticulturist, observes that the shape of hedge that has been found most pleasing to the eye, and at the same time ensures the branches remaining alive almost or quite to the ground, is one with the broadest part of the hedge at the ground, gradually narrowing towards the top and the top being rounded instead of being pruned to a sharp point.

She: Dad says you are a very promising young man.

He. Gosh, yes! Two girls are suing me for breach of promise right now.

Grandpa (to Grandma). "And another thing—I will not have you going out pillion-riding!"

If you want your pets to love you speak kently to them, and handle them gently. Do not lift your rabbit by its ears, or pull a cat's tail, or drag the dog by its fur, or wake them roughly out of sleep. Learn to make them happy, and they will learn to love you.—Humane Pleader.

LIMERICK CORNER

While the contest is closed the interest has by no means flagged as the many letters received testify, but we want to hear from still more readers of Limerick Corner. So send along your opinion with any suggestions you may have for the future conduct of this feature to Limerick Editor, Rooms 421-425, 73 Adelaide Street West, Toronto 2, Ont.

Mrs. Hicks of Niagara Falls South, sends in this very interesting letter:—

Dear Editor:—It broke my heart when I saw that the Limerick Contest was closed, even temporarily, but my failing respirations revived considerably when I saw with joy in this week's "Thorold Post" that you had not run out of limericks yet. "O King, live forever!"

I, for one, vote that the contest be continued. It is just at its height. Some people, Hubby for instance, are just beginning to take a real interest in it.

We have "sold" him "Salada Tea" (I have a lovely one for Salada Green Tea) so he can hardly wait for a cup when he gets in the house for supper.

It is not only the nice new dollar bills (It is the cleanest money I ever saw.) but I do enjoy the good limericks so. Mrs. MacNeil, Norwood, for "Keen's Mustard"; Miss Kathleen Walsh, Blenheim, on "Christie's Sultanas"; and Mrs. Harry McDonnel, Clarendon Sta., on "Beecham's Pills"; Miss Bernice Hall, R.R. No. 2, Sundridge, on "Red Rose Tea", and Mrs. M. E Calder, Fenelon Falls, on "Shredded Wheat", are the best ones in this week's "Post". (O, yes and Mrs. Claude Bongard, Norwood, on "Brock's Bird Seed"), in my opinion.

Why not make everybody illustrate his or her limericks, with simple geometrical illustrations (in Indian ink of course)..

Please forgive me. I vowed I would not pester that poor over-limericked editor with any more nonsease until he sent out another invitation for lines. But it seems I can't help it. Well, you did ask for suggestions.

I think the "Limerick Contest" is quite the nicest, most "sociable" contest I ever entered. Room for everybody. I have been in lots of contsts: I have won a few, and lost out in more, and in either case, did not enjoy the feeling, either that I was left out in the cold, or that anybody else was. The funny part of it is, the limericks you have bought are just the ones that have run off the end of my pen without any effort, almost without any thought, and the ones I have labored over to polish and finish, have gone overboard.

Yours very sincerely, FANNIE T. HICKS, R.R. No. 2, Niagara Falls South, Ont.

R.R. No. 2, Niagara Falls South, Ontario.

P.S.—The limericks are getting better. We had many good chuckles over the last batch.—F.T.H.

A few more prize winners:—

Dromedary Dates

A housemaid who called herself Cherry
(Her cheeks were as red as a berry),
Was fond of spice cake
Which weekly she'd bake
And of dates she preferred "Dromedary".

Miss M. P. Kirkwood,
R.R. 1, Terra Cotta, Ont.

Bayer's Aspirin

A poor man who'd ne'er heard of Bayer's,
Had a cold, and could scarce climb the stairs,
When in popped his wife
With a smile large as life
And said "Now you'll be cured, I've bought Bayer's".

Miss Grace Hubley,
Arundel, Que.

Shredded Wheat

The doctor said "Absolute quiet
And if you will buy it and try it
A Shredded Wheat Biscuit
(I know you can risk it)
Is fine, when you're put on a diet."

Mrs. E. Miles,
Box 397, Elora, Ont.

MacGregor

Farmers wishing some farm help to hire,
Should write to MacGregor, Esquire,
Victoria Street,
Is where you will meet,
These people 'bout whom you enquire.

Mrs. T. Genoe,
Ceylon, Ont.

Bayer's Aspirin

'My head's aching awful", said Andy,
Said his friend, "I've relief here quite handy,
Here's an Aspirin to take
Its the good Bayer's make
So we'll soon have your head feeling dandy."

Lottie Livingstone,
R.R. 1, Powassan, Ont.

Old Dutch Cleanser

'There was a housekeeper called Maizie,
Who was most exceedingl lazy,
But she bought some Old Dutch
Didn't use very much
Till her house was as fresh as a daisy."

Mrs. Alex. McWillian,
R.R. 2, 3rd Con., Dutton, Ont.

Phillips Milk of Magnesia

The wise and the winsome Patricia,
Told this to her best friend Alicia,
"If your stomach feels sick,
You can cure it up quick
With a spoonful of Phillips Magnesia."

D. Watters,
40 Hendrick Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Veno's

There was a young lady of Reno,
Who delighted in playing Casino,
She caught a bad cold
But she threw off it's hold
By using a bottle of Veno.

Mrs. J. P. Matheson,
Kentville, Man.

Simond'c Saws

There was a young sawyer named Spender,
Whose income was known to be slender,
Till he let go old saws
Choosing Simond's because,
The best of results they will render.

Mr. W. J. Cottrell,
Box 34, Marmora, Ont.

Baby's Own Soap

A cranky young kiddie named Bubble,
Made bathing a terrible trouble,
His mother in hope
Bought Baby's Own Soap
Now she has no trouble with Bubble.

Hugh Mathleson,
R.R. 3, London, Ont.

Red Rose Tea

A man there was, boorish and spiteful,
His manners were perfectly frightful,
He began to drink tea
"It is Red Rose", said he
And makes me feel simply delightful.

Chris. M. Forbes,
Perth, Ont.

Shredded Wheat

Two friends one day planned a meeting,
And stopped for a chat after greeting,
Said one, "I have read
It's all in the shred
That makes Shredded Wheat such good eating."

Mrs. J. A. Cook,
63 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, Ont.

Whoever named that sea-coast rum-runner I'm Alone, certainly had a sense of humor.—Troy Times.

When a great financier announces that the country is going to be very prosperous he means that he is.

MUTT AND JEFF— —By Bud Fisher.

They Discuss a Serious Traffic Problem.