

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR APRIL 16.

GOLDEN TEXT—I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of Jehovah, Psalm 122:1.

The Love of Joseph for God's House. Scripture Lesson, 2 Kings 12:1-15.

7 Then king Jehoshaphat called for Jehoiada the priest, and for the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? how therefore take ye no more money from your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house, 8 And the priests consented that they should take no more money from the people, neither repair the breaches of the house.

9 But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of Jehovah, and the priests that kept the threshold put therein all the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah, 10 And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags and counted the money that was found in the house of Jehovah, 11 And they gave the money that was counted into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of Jehovah, and they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders, that wrought upon the house of Jehovah, 12 and to the masons and the hewers of stone, and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the breaches of the house of Jehovah, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it, 13 But there were not made for the house of Jehovah cups of silver, snuffers, basins, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah, 14 for they gave that to them that did the work, and repaired there with the house of Jehovah, 15 Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to give to them that did the work, for they dealt faithfully.

Introduction.

The connection with the last lesson is close, though the interval of time is long. There is a gap in the records of uncertain length. The silence implies that the course of events moved smoothly. A great English writer has said, "Happy are the people who have no history." The young king, no doubt, under the guidance of Jehoiada, was carefully trained during these uneventful years. We recall here the eighteen years of silence concerning our Lord's life between his twelfth year and his baptism; and there are also years in Paul's life of which no record remains.

Lesson Notes.

For forty years Josiah reigned in Jerusalem. The name of his mother is given as Zibiah, but nothing more is said of her. As Josiah was saved by his nurse and aunt, we would naturally infer that his mother was dead at the time. That Josiah was a truthful and docile child appears from the statement that his conduct was right in the sight of God all the while that he was under the teaching of Jehoiada. That the conduct of the priest was patriotic and worthy is to be taken for granted. But an exception is clearly noted in verse 3. It is to the effect that the high places which were connected too often with idolatrous worship were not removed. Jehoiada does not seem to have been strong enough to suppress this evil practice. Another exception is also to be noted in his neglect of the temple. We may infer that Jehoiada was growing old and was not so resolute as in the day when he made Josiah king. We often have to excuse errors and mistakes of great and good men when, after long and faithful service, they become less active and efficient.

The first recorded action of the young king on taking the reins in his own hands was to direct that money should be set aside for repairing the temple. This is described as "the money of the hallowed things," which no doubt means that which was contributed for the support of the temple worship, including the income of the priests. Three sources of supply are mentioned: (1) That which is called "current money." This is not a good translation. It more properly means the half shekel required of every member for the support of the temple. See Exodus 30:13 where this law is laid down. We remember that Jesus upon one occasion paid this temple tax for himself and Peter Matt. 27:24-27. (2) Another source is the "money of the persons for whom each man is rated." This refers to money that was paid in the discharge of vows, as is explained in Leviticus 27:1-8. (3) The third source of income was free-will offerings, consisting of presents that worshippers would bring for the priest or other purposes in connection with the work. It seems that the young king's zeal exceeded what was practical. We do not know just when he issued this order, but verse 6 tells us that in the twenty-third year of his reign the house had not been repaired. From what follows it seems that the priests were not so blameless as would at first sight appear. The law allowed the first two sources of income for the support of the temple and its ministers. And it was neither wise nor right for the king by his own authority to divert this money from its original purpose. The king called Jehoiada and his associates into conference and inquired why the work had not been done. The king decided that the third source of income should be cut off from the priests and used for the repairs, leaving the first two sources to be used as was the custom. The priests consented to this arrangement, but for some reason

declined to be responsible for the repairing of the breaches. The reason for this was that the amount was not sufficient, and they were unwilling to undertake the work unless the means were fully provided.

JOASH ACCOMPLISHES THE RESTORATION OF THE TEMPLE.

12 Kings 12:9-16. In order to increase the free-will offerings of the people and to direct them to the one end of repairing the temple Jehoiada adopted a very simple and successful plan. He prepared a chest with a hole in the lid, which he placed beside the altar on the right hand side of the entrance of the temple. Priests were waiting at the threshold to urge and keep these contributions. Thus proper arrangements were made for safeguarding the gifts.

When the box was filled the king's own secretary, together with high priests, bound up the money in bags and counted it. The count was made by weight and not by coins, as with us. When enough had accumulated to begin the work the money was carefully weighed out into the hands of overseers and they in turn divided it among the workmen of every craft. There were masons, carpenters and sculptors whose skill was required to do the work. Verse 12 plainly says that the precious metals were not used for making vessels for the service of the temple, but as money to pay the workmen. In the account in 2 Chronicles 24:14 we have the supplementary statement that when repairs were all finished there was some money left over, and out of this remainder vessels for the house of the Lord were made.

SPECIAL LESSONS.

1. No church should permit its house of worship to fall into decay. It is our business, not only to build, but to keep the house of God. It is a reflection on any church and on any community to permit houses of worship to become unattractive or decayed.
2. Good intentions and good conduct are often accompanied by faults and failings. Even the good priest Jehoiada failed in some respects. But in spite of the neglect or mistakes of even good leaders, the work of God goes on.
3. Men must not be forced, but they should be led to make sacrifices for the work of God. Tithes were required and thank-offerings were welcomed under the old dispensation. The priests and the temple must be provided for, though other things may be maintained by voluntary gifts. The best investment that a community can make is that which promotes the spiritual and moral welfare of its members. Every contribution made to maintain in a community the true and reverent worship of God is money well spent. As a mere matter of economy a church is worth more to a community than a jail.

FLOYDADA ENDORSES PLAN OF P. P. C. OF C.

Special to The News.
FLOYDADA, April 12.—The Chamber of Commerce of Floydada unanimously adopted resolutions at its regular meeting Friday night favoring the establishing in the Panhandle Plains country a regional agreement not to make guarantees to chautauques, lyceum bureaus, lecturers, etc., as outlined in a recent letter sent out by the Panhandle-Plains Chamber of Commerce at Amarillo. The plan to establish in Amarillo as a bureau of the Panhandle-Plains Chamber of Commerce a place where information can be obtained relative to the merits of highway proposals by various parties who promote highways was also endorsed by the chamber.

HUGHES OPPOSED TO DRASTIC CUT IN NAVY

By Associated Press.
WASHINGTON, April 13.—Leaders of the movement seeking to defeat in the House the naval bill proposal cutting the enlisted personnel to 65,000 presented today a letter from Secretary Hughes, setting forth the view that it would reduce the American navy below the 5-5-3 ratio as fixed by the arms conference, and prove "most injurious" to the nation's interests.

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E. J. DOOSE ELECTED NEW TEXICO MAYOR

Special to The News.
CLOVIS, April 12.—At the city election held at Texico this week, E. J. Doose was elected mayor, receiving 82 votes, while his opponent, M. L. Rodgers, received 65. B. D. Williams was elected city clerk, with 78 votes; his opponent, D. F. Wolfman, receiving 68.

GROUND BROKEN FOR NEW MASONIC TEMPLE

Special to The News.
PANHANDLE, April 12.—Ground was broken Tuesday for the new Masonic temple to be erected here. It is expected that actual construction will start within a few days.

The building will be of two stories, with basement. The first floor will be used for offices and store rooms, the upper floor for lodge meetings.

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Earl Cobb in City On Business Trip

Earl Cobb, who, with his family, has been spending several months in Dallas, is in Amarillo for a business visit of several days. Mr. Cobb is president of the Southwestern Coal Company, which has offices here.

He reports that full production of coal is being mined in New Mexico and Colorado. These two states have not been affected by the coal strike, as the mines are operated on a non-union basis, according to Mr. Cobb.

Friends of Mr. Cobb will be interested to know that members of the family are getting along splendidly at Dallas.

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