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FINDING A LOST BIBLE

– JULY 30. – 2 CHRON. 34:14-33. –

"Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee." – Psa. 119:11.

IN CONJUNCTION with Josiah's reformation and cleansing of the temple, a copy of the book of the Law was found. Presumably this book contained the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. The long period of idolatry preceding Josiah's work of reformation had placed the Testimonies of the Lord at a discount, so that evidently the king had never seen, perhaps had never heard of the Divine Law up to this time. If this should seem strange to us for the moment, let us remember that today we have Bibles by the millions, whereas in olden times books were written laboriously with a pen, and were very expensive. A copy was provided for the king as well as one for the temple, but idolatrous kings would have no use for God's Word, and the royal copy was doubtless destroyed long before.

The king caused the manuscript to be read in his hearing. It detailed what blessings would come upon the nation of Israel if obedient to God. It also portrayed the penalties which would be theirs if they neglected the service of the Almighty and His laws and [R4851 : page 206] became idolatrous. Deuteronomy 28 is a very clear statement of what appeared to be the penalty due Josiah's kingdom because of idolatry preceding his day. The king was astonished. Evidently Divine judgments were due. Why they waited he knew not. He reflected that possibly something might yet be done to offset the evil. He sent therefore to make inquiry on the subject.

The inquiry came to Huldah, a prophetess of that time, who gave the Lord's answer, saying that all the woes foretold in the Law would surely come to pass because of the idolatrous course followed by the nation. But the message declared that this trouble, this chastisement,

would be deferred and not come in King Josiah's day because of his earnest repentance and manifestation of sorrow in connection with the matter as soon as he learned about it.

Nevertheless the king did all in his power to remedy the evil and to bring back the nation into accord with the Almighty. He proclaimed a general meeting at the temple and attended in person with the nobles and representatives of all the people. He caused the book of the Law to be read in the hearing of the people and pointed out their shortcomings and what must be expected. The work of purging from idolatry was still more thoroughly carried out and the work of reformation made yet more deep – all that the king knew how to do.

THE BIBLE LOST TODAY

It may amaze some when we say that to the masses of the people today God's Book is lost. What! do you say, Have we lost over a hundred million Bibles in Christendom, and are we not printing more than a million copies every year? How can you say that the Word of the Lord is lost today?

Alas! Bibles we have, but to the majority of the specially cultured they are Bibles no longer – they are the inspired Word of the Almighty no longer! They are studied, believed and obeyed no longer. It is still fashionable to have Bibles; it is still customary to take texts from them – this is done even by ministers, who privately confess that they have no faith in the Bible – that they have no more faith in the Bible than in Shakespeare. And the number of religious teachers who have thus rejected the Word of God as the Divinely inspired Message is much greater than the majority of people surmise. Nearly all ministers graduated during the past twenty years from nearly all of the universities, colleges and seminaries of Christendom, in Great Britain, Germany, the United States and Canada, are really infidels, unbelievers.

How did the Word of the Lord come to be thus lost?

We answer that history shows a long period called the Dark Ages in which the Word of the Lord was set aside in favor of church councils and decrees. Then came the period of the Reformation. The Bible was translated by the Catholics into the English and styled the Douay Version. It was translated by the Protestants into English and styled the King James Version, and once more the Word of God began to exercise a transforming influence upon humanity.

But alas! the errors, the darkness, the superstition of the Dark Ages already in the human mind gave to the Word of God peculiar distortions and made it appear, through the colored glasses of sectarianism, to mean things wholly irrational and inconceivable.

With the progress of education thinking was resumed along the lines of religion as well as science. The thinkers, [R4851 : page 207] however, regarded the Bible only as they had seen it through their colored glasses; and in proportion as they discarded the superstitions of the darker past they discarded the Bible as a part of those superstitions, and supposedly their basis. As a result, school men, college professors, Doctors of Divinity, etc., have charged up against the Word of God various doctrines which it does not teach – amongst others Purgatory and eternal torment for all except the "very elect."

Now, in due time, the Word of God is being found. The dust of the Dark Ages is being brushed aside. The Book is being investigated in the light of its own teachings. It is shining with wonderful brilliancy upon the path of the just. We are seeing fulfilled before us God's promise that the path of the just will "shine more and more unto the perfect day." Its bright shining at the present time betokens that the New Day, the New Era of Messiah's Kingdom is nigh.

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