

wonderful faith that led Job to exclaim, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

But we know people largely by comparison, and it is hardly fair to compare any one with Job. His wife's faith might have been superior to that of most husbands.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Asa's father reigned but a short time, during which he won a notable victory over Jereboam, first king of the ten revolting tribes of Israel. But he was a weak man and, according to the commentators, permitted idolatry and allowed both himself and his people to commit heathen abominations. And Abijah's mother, descendant of Absalom, is described as an evil woman.

In the second commandment we are told that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of them that hate Him, and shows mercy unto thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments. Some have questioned the justice of God because He visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.

It is not necessary that we shall understand God's laws in order to respect them. The citizen is required to obey the law of the land, even though he opposed its enactment, and that, too, whether it is the proclamation of a king or the decree of a people's government. In human government obedience does not depend upon love for the law or even an understanding of it. If this is true of a man-made law, it is much more true of the laws made by an infinite God for the government of finite people.

It may not be out of place, however, to suggest that the law of heredity acts as a powerful restraint in hours of temptation. A man would more frequently yield to sin if the entire penalty would fall upon himself; he is stronger to withstand temptation when he knows that his act may curse his children and his children's children.

And then there is the other side of the proposition. God shows mercy unto thousands that love Him and keep His commandments. The mercy of God, as well as His punishments are a matter of inheritance. Man is constrained to an obedience which not only saves himself and those of his blood from the wrath of God, but assures him and them the joy of God's presence and the smile of His approval.

BREAKING WITH THE PAST

Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. Noble son! He broke with the past, rose above the evil environment of his youth and put his trust in God.

A lesson for every young man who begins life with the handicap of an unfavorable environment. While the majority of such drift with the current and suffer shipwreck, there are enough splendid illustrations of individual strength to make it certain that none need fail. Society will encourage every boy and every girl who is willing to do as Asa did, and the Church should be the first to offer its hand.

Walter Malone preaches the true gospel of Jesus and His Church when he says, "No shame-faced outcast ever sank so deep but he can rise and be again a man." If there is hope for the violent sinner how much more for the son or daughter of one who has sinned?

But one who would start right must do as Asa did. He took away the foreign altars and the high places and brake down the pillars. As king he was responsible for the form of worship, and he proceeded to do his duty. He rid the land of the altars that had been erected to heathen gods and abolished all the insignia of idol worship.

So with one who sets out upon a new life; he cannot compromise with the things that pertain to the world; his affections cannot cling to the sins of the world. His heart must hate the things that it once loved and love the things that it once hated.

Asa gave evidence of a new birth by the thoroughness with which he destroyed the implements employed in idol worship. He commanded Judah to seek the God of their fathers and to do His law and the commandments.

AN EXAMPLE FOR THOSE IN AUTHORITY

It is a great thing for a private citizen to turn from sin unto righteousness; it was much greater for a ruler to lead a people in the worship of God. And as today, while every soul is of equal value in the sight of God, and every heart can be made a fit temple for the indwelling of God's spirit, it is more important that men in authority shall have singleness of purpose and be sensible of responsibility. The blessing reaches its maximum when the rulers of a free people worship Jehovah.

They have a duty to perform today, for altars

have been raised to mammon in the market place and many have turned from the worship of the Heavenly Father to the worship of gold. The nation needs today the recognition of God at Washington and at the State capitals. All the great problems with which the world has to deal are due to a failure to obey God.

Without a worship of God there can be no respect for God's law of rewards. It is a disregard of God's law of rewards that has brought upon our nation its greatest burdens and threatens it with the greatest calamities. According to God's law, each human being is entitled to draw from the common store in proportion to his industry and intelligence. In other words, a man is not entitled to more than he earns, and he cannot earn more than a fair compensation for the service that he renders. When a few are permitted to draw more than they earn the total sum is so reduced that that which remains is not sufficient to give a just compensation to the remainder.

"FOR WE REST ON THEE"

The God-fearing statesmen of the world have a work to do in the bringing of peace. The time is ripe for the emancipation of the people from war. The fullness of time had not come when Asa improved the ten quiet years of his reign to fortify the cities of Judah against the enemies round about. War was then the only method of settling disputes. The land hunger that has caused so many wars in the centuries since Asa's day was even then the cause of strife.

We now have the simple gospel of One at whose coming the angels sang of peace and good will. His teachers have become the ideal which the best and the noblest strive to embody in their lives. The power of the Christian creed increases with the years.

The devil's burden has become too heavy for the nations; they must turn from his sophistries and false philosophies to the One whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light. When the Arms Conference met at Washington last fall it was opened with prayer. An appeal was made to the God of our fathers and every step taken was in the direction of obedience to God's law and His commandments.

Asa relied upon God. "Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude!" he cried when the great host of the Ethiopians was set in battle array against him.

His example ought to be valuable now to private citizens and to public officials alike. He followed the only path that is open to those who seek to make the most of life for themselves and to make the world a blessed dwelling place for the children of men.

"Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee."

PROVIDENTIAL CARE

By WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

BIBLE TEXT—LESSON FOR APRIL 9

(II Kings 11: 1-4, 11-17)

And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.

But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons which were slain; and they hid him, even him and his nurse, in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

And he was with her hid in the house of the Lord for six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land.

And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the Lord, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord, and shewed them the king's son.

And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple.

And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.

And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and the people, she came to the people into the temple of the Lord.

And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew trumpets; and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason! Treason!

But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges; and him that followeth her kill with the sword, and him that followeth her let her not be slain in the house of the Lord.

And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by which the horses came into the king's house; and there was she slain.

And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord

and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people.

The story of the young prince Joash, as presented in the text of today's Bible Talk, is a fascinating one. It recalls two other Bible stories, and it has innumerable illustrations in lives upon which the light of publicity has not been turned.

The narrative is a simple one.

Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, king of Judah, was the daughter of Aham, king of Israel, and, probably, the daughter of Jezebel. If there is anything in blood, her life furnishes circumstantial evidence of kinship with one of the most wicked women known to history.

When her son Ahaziah, the king, was killed in the revolt of Jehu against Israel's king, Athaliah aspired to Judah's throne, and to make the way clear for the gratification of her ambition she set out to kill off all who were of the royal blood.

It so happened that Jehosheba, sister of the dead Ahaziah, heard of the plot and stole away the babe Joash from among the king's sons and hid him, with his nurse in the bedchamber—an empty room in the palace, where, according to custom, the mattresses and bed coverings were kept. In this way Joash escaped the death that came to the rest of the dead king's sons. Later, in some way not explained, the child was taken into the temple, and there, the account says, was hid for six years "in the house of the Lord" while his wicked grandmother reigned over the land.

THE END OF THE USURPER

In the seventh year, Jehoiada, the high priest, who was an uncle of the young prince, called in the captains and the soldiers and, having placed guards in position to protect him, brought forth the king's son, put a crown upon his head, gave him the testimony and anointed him while the people clapped their hands and shouted, "God save the king."

When the usurper Athaliah heard the noise her suspicions were aroused, and she hurried to the temple, "and, behold, the king stood by the pillar, as the manner was," with the princes and the trumpeters beside him. She heard the people rejoice and the trumpeters blow. Then, we are told, she rent her clothes and cried, "Treason! treason!"

But the high priest, Jehoiada, had the advantage over her. She was in the Lord's house, where he presided, and he had the army on his side. He did not allow her to be slain in the temple, but she was taken outside and put to death.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the wickedness of Athaliah. The history of monarchy is replete with such criminals; hers was the customary way of removing those who might be rivals to the throne. It is shocking today because we have passed beyond the time when such barbarity would be tolerated. There was a time when kings not only admitted such cruelties but boasted of them. On the walls of one of the temples in Egypt there is a carving which represents a king holding in one hand the plaited hair of a number of victims, while with the other hand, uplifted, he waves a lash as if to strike. Times have changed since then.

PROVIDENTIAL CARE

The lesson that stands out from the narrative is that of providential care. An aunt risked her life to save the child Joash. Her blood would have paid the penalty had anyone betrayed to Athaliah the fact that Joash was in hiding, but Jehosheba was willing to die if necessary and so the child escaped.

One recalls the story of a dreamer whose brethren plotted to kill him and then were persuaded to substitute death by starvation in a lonely pit for outright murder. This was at the suggestion of Reuben, who hoped to rescue him later.

Here, again, chance played a vital part in the development of a great career. The Ishmaelitic merchants happened to come that way at an opportune time and the jealous brothers breathed a sigh of relief to find that they could rid themselves of their hated rival and yet not be guilty of taking his life. Circumstance followed circumstance until the chain of events dragged Joseph through a dungeon to a place by the side of Pharaoh.

The mother of Moses is also recalled. Possibly because she provisioned the mission of her son, she hid the child in the bulrushes. Another woman, by accident or by divine suggestion, happened that way and was touched, not by the smile but the cries of the babe.

It is easy to explain the lingering of the sister near to watch the child, but not to easy to explain why the child's mother should have been accepted as a nurse. At any rate, Moses was