

CHILDREN'S GREAT BIBLE TEXTS

VOLUME XV



THE BOOK OF
JEREMIAH

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JAMES HASTINGS

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www.jazzybee-verlag.de

admin@jazzybee-verlag.de

THE SPEECH OF A CHILD.

I cannot speak : for I am a child. — Jer. i. 6.

These words were spoken by the prophet Jeremiah. God had called him to carry His message to the people of Judah, and Jeremiah felt he was not fit for the task. It was a very sad message he had to take. He had to tell his fellow-countrymen that unless they turned away from their wicked ways they would bring their country to ruin. It was a very terrible message, a very solemn one, and a very unpopular one, and Jeremiah felt quite unable to carry it. He loved his country dearly, and it hurt him dreadfully to have to foretell its doom. Besides, he was very young — little more than a lad. So when God asked him to go he replied, " I cannot speak : for I am a child."

Now I wonder if you have ever felt like Jeremiah ? Not that you have a sad message to carry, but you want to do some good in the world, you want to help somebody, and you feel that you can do so little because you are just a child. So you say sadly, "I cannot speak : for I am a child." Do you know that you are making a great mistake ? A child can do a great deal more than he imagines — if only he is willing.

1. If you cannot speak you can smile, and a smile sometimes works miracles in driving away gloom, in dispersing the clouds of worry or even of angry and bitter thoughts that sometimes darken the minds of other people.

There was a man once who sat thinking black thoughts. He was planning to do a very wicked deed. His little child ran