

LESSON 16 - CAPTIVITY DEVIATION

Kings and Chronicles

THEME: *To show that happiness comes only as we trust and obey.*

What is the difference between obedience and disobedience? When we are obedient we do what we are instructed to do. When we disobey, we trespass or violate or fail to obey an order or command.

What is the difference between happiness and unhappiness? Happiness is that excitement we feel when we enjoy good things. Unhappiness is just the opposite. Can we be happy when we are disobedient? No, because we have a guilty conscience; then too, disobedience always brings some kind of punishment, not only to the one who commits the wrong, but to others also.

When God gave the Law and Commandments to Israel, He told them that the blessings of rain and sunshine, peace and safety, victory over enemies, would be theirs if they would keep His commandments. But if they made themselves idols and did not keep His Sabbaths, the curses of epidemics--death--wild beasts--desolation--defeat by their enemies would be theirs. Leviticus 26.

King Solomon knew all of these commandments but early in his career he began to disobey. He multiplied to himself horses, wives, silver and gold, all of which God had forbidden. Deuteronomy 17:16-17. His many heathen wives led him away from God to idolatry. God was displeased with Solomon in his old age. God said: "Because you have not kept My covenant...I will surely tear the kingdom from you." Then Solomon died, and his son Rehoboam became king. When the people complained he said: "My father made your burden heavy, and I will add to your burden." 1 Kings 12:14. Israel rebelled and the Kingdom was divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah.

Jeroboam became the first king of the northern kingdom, Israel. He sinned greatly and those who came after him in Israel followed in his steps. At last, as Prophet Hosea foretold, God sent the promised judgment: the Assyrian army came, besieged Samaria for three years, and finally carried them away as captives to the land of Assyria. "For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against God." 2 Kings 17:1-7. You can see why KINGDOM HIGHWAY on our chart is now twisted and crooked because of sin.

Most of the kings which followed King Rehoboam in the Kingdom of Judah were also wicked. Only a few tried to obey God's laws. When they did, it brought great blessings and protection. But most ignored God's words and treated His messengers, the Prophets, with hatred. The last king of Judah was Zedekiah. He was foolish and disobedient. Jeremiah the Prophet warned: "This whole land will be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." Jeremiah 25:11.

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, came with all his army against Jerusalem. King Zedekiah tried to escape but was captured. They killed his sons before his eyes and then put his eyes out. They bound him with chains of brass and carried him away captive to Babylon. We call this CAPTIVITY DEVIATION on our chart. The leading families of the Jews were carried away and scattered among the Gentile nations. Nebuchadnezzar burned the Lord's Temple, the king's house, and every other great house with fire. His soldiers broke down the city walls and the beautiful pillars of brass, and carried them away with the silver and gold of the Temple.

Do you understand what terrible consequences disobedience to God brings? Not only were Solomon and the other kings unhappy, but they also brought trouble to their whole nation. In Romans 6:16 God tells us that we are the servants of the one whom we obey. If we disobey God's Word, are we serving ourselves or God? God wants us to obey the Gospel. 2 Thessalonians 1:8. He wants children to obey their parents. Ephesians 6:1-3. God wants all of us to obey Him unto righteousness. Romans 6:16-17.

The chorus is true: "Trust and obey, for there's no other way,
To be happy in Jesus, than to trust and obey."

After 70 years God, according to His promise to them, allowed the faithful to return to the land, but the kingdom was gone.

Who is your Master today? Sin or righteousness? Yield to Christ today as He alone can give true happiness.

MEMORY VERSE: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Ephesians 6:1.

LESSON 16 - WORK SHEET

Read Leviticus 26:1-13 and write down 6 of the blessings which God promised Israel if they obeyed Him and did not worship idols.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Read Leviticus 26:16,17,20,22,25,29,31,33,38 and write down 6 of the terrible chastisements or punishments which would come upon Israel if they disobeyed God and turned to idols.

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

7. But God loved His people and said He would remember the _____
_____ with their ancestors. Leviticus 26:45.

8. In the space below, draw a picture representing the way KINGDOM HIGHWAY looked under the wicked kings and during CAPTIVITY DEVIATION.

9. On the lines below, write the words to the chorus of "TRUST AND OBEY" _____

10. Write from memory Ephesians 6:1. _____
