





# IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL Lesson

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Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.  
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## Lesson for June 22

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### THE TRAGIC END OF A NATION

LESSON TEXT—II Kings 25:1-12.  
MEMORY SELECTION—Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.—Proverbs 14:34.

The end of the road! Down, down, down went Judah in its sinful refusal to keep God's Word, and ultimately came the final day of reckoning. It always does! The catastrophe which had long been approaching had arrived at last.

The fall of a capital city, which carries with it the empire, is a world-shaking event. The fall of Rome shattered the world for a thousand years. The fall of Berlin and Tokyo are within the memory of all of us, and the results are seen in a disordered world.

The destruction of Jerusalem, which our lesson presents, was even more serious; for it was not only a national tragedy, but also one with deep religious significance.

The wicked king Jehoiakim was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, a mere boy who reigned only three months. He gave way to Nebuchadnezzar, who appointed as his successor his uncle Zedekiah.

It is in the verses just preceding our lesson that we learn that Zedekiah turned against Babylon in an act of

#### I. Rebellion (v. 1).

Zedekiah ignored his oath of allegiance (II Chron. 36:13), for which he was condemned by Ezekiel as a traitor (Ezek. 17:13-18). Zedekiah has well been called the vanishing point in a diminishing line of kings. It was an evil thing he did (II Kings 24:19), and one which showed his conceit, vanity and rashness.

True it was that he only followed what he had learned from his predecessors, but that is never a good excuse for a man foolishly to turn against God's will.

Observe that God was not just a disinterested spectator, and yet he had come to the place where he let Judah go down to its own awful doom. The worst thing that can happen to a man or a nation is to be let alone by God!

Zedekiah's act of folly quickly brought

#### II. Retribution (vv. 2-10).

Jeremiah urged Zedekiah to surrender (see Jer. 37, 38) in order to save Jerusalem and himself, but he refused, and the city was besieged.

The king's refusal to hear God's prophet and his turning to Egypt for help speak to us of the manner in which unrepentant sinners reject God's mercy and then seek help at the hopeless cisterns of this world (Jer. 2:13).

The king tried to flee, but was taken captive. Then came the siege of Jerusalem. For one and one-half years the enemy gradually closed in, while famine and distress grew apace in the city. Jeremiah went through this entire period sharing his people's trouble. The book of Lamentations is the record of this eyewitness.

Sin does its terrible work. Even as it can take a great city and turn it into a plague spot marked by cruelty, suffering and death, even so it can bring forth its inevitable and unspeakable results in the life of the individual who persists in resisting the voice of God.

Note also that the sin of Zedekiah brought quick judgment, not only on himself, but upon his innocent children (v. 7), and on many in the besieged city who were equally guiltless of wrongdoing. It is again a picture of what sin does today in the homes and communities of our nation.

#### III. Removal (vv. 11, 12).

The fall of Jerusalem prepared the way for the closing scene of the immediate history of the nation as the people went into captivity. It also ended for the time being the history of the city that had once so proudly held a position of privilege and power, but was now brought down by its sin and rebellion against God.

We say rightly that history repeats itself. We see that any nation that lifts itself up in pride and forgets God will inevitably perish. We ask ourselves where our beloved country stands. As we consider its debauchery and drunkenness, its disregard of moral standards, its indifference to the things of God, we feel that instead of pointing a finger of scorn at Judah, we ought to be on our faces before God in penitence and shame.

Let us not assume that we hold a place of favor with God, which exempts us from the certainty of judgment. Israel was his chosen, and they still are, for his promises of ultimate blessing to them have never been withdrawn. But their sin brought certain punishment, and the same is true today not only of the nation but of the individual.

The Sunday school lessons will take up the history of Israel again at this point in April, 1948, when we consider the captivity and the partial return of the people to their land.

A friend of ours said his son was looking for a wife that is too proud to make him work.

## John H. Savory, M.D.

East Jordan, Mich.

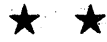
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## SOUTH ARM...

(Edited by Mrs. Arnold Smith)

Miss Henkey of Michigan City, Ind. and Miss Hicks of Jackson, Michigan are spending the week in the neighborhood of the Ranney school teaching Daily Vacation Bible school. The first day there were twenty-seven children present. They hope for more before the end of the week. The program of their accomplishments will be held at 8:00 o'clock Friday night at the school. The girls are rooming at

the Arnold Smith home.

Mrs. Walter Goebel Sr. and Miss Ruth Gobel of Chicago are spending a two weeks vacation with the former's son Harold and Wally Goebel and family.

The Charlevoix Co. Achievement for the Ladies Extension Clubs will be held at the tourist park Friday June 20th at 6:00 o'clock with a pot luck supper.

The farmers Union meeting was held at Kenneth Isaman's Monday evening and in four weeks they will

meet at the Versal Crawford home. May Moore is leaving for New Hampshire taking her nephew Bobbie Lively to join his mother.

Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Smith and family are going to Morrize this week and plan to find work near there for the summer.

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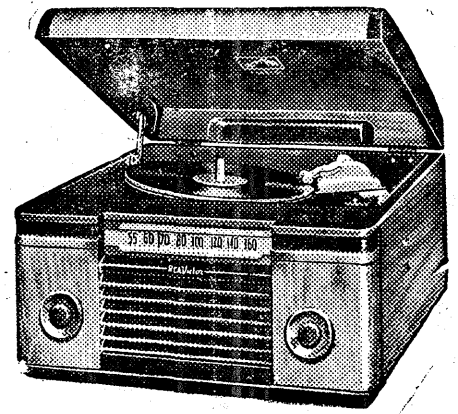


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