Lesson Date _____________

Captivity of the Jewish People

2Chronicles 36:1-23

INTRODUCTION: Although the Jewish people were the chosen people of God, they disobeyed Him and were punished for their sins. Enemies won battles against them and their crops failed. However, they refused to respond to the correction given to them by the Lord. Finally, God sold them into slavery. One way or another, they must learn that their sins cannot continue and God must be served.

I. ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL

A. Taken into Captivity by Assyria (2Kings 17:22-23); dated at 721BC

B. Never Yet Returning to the Land (2Kings 18:11-12)

C. To Return One Day to the Land (Isaiah 11:10-13; Jeremiah 3:17-18; 30:3-4; 31:31-34; 33:7; Ezekiel 37:15-28; Hosea 1:11; Zechariah 10:6)

II. BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

A. First Stage; occurred about 606BC (2Chronicles 36:5-8; Daniel 1:1-6)

B. Second Stage; occurred about 597BC (2Kings 24:8-16)

C. Third Stage; occurred about 586BC (2Chronicles 36:10-21)

D. Prophets at the Time of the Captivity

1. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:1-3)
2. Habakkuk (Habakkuk 1:6)
3. Zephaniah (Zephaniah 1:1-2)

III. TIME OF EXILE FOR JUDAH

A. Under Babylon

1. King Nebuchadnezzar
   a. Daniel 2:36-38; 4:30
   b. From about 605 to 562BC
2. King Belshazzar  
   b. From about 562 to 539  
   c. History records that he was actually the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar and that Belshazzar actually reigned with his father Nabonidus who was the son of Nebuchadnezzar. However, Nabonidus was gone most of the time on campaigns or for other reasons. Therefore, his son Belshazzar reigned in his absence. Since a grandfather is generally called a father in scripture, this presents no problem at all to the Bible-believer.

B. Under Persia

1. The fall of Babylon occurred around 539BC (Daniel 5:22-30)  
2. Cyrus  
   a. 2Chronicles 36:22-23; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-4)  
   b. Ruled Persia from 559 to 530BC  
3. Darius  
   a. Ezra 4:5; 6:15  
   b. Ruled Persia from 522 to 486BC  
4. Ahasuerus  
   a. Esther 1:1-3  
   b. Historically called Xerxes  
   c. Ruled Persia from 486 to 465BC  
5. Artaxerxes  
   a. Ezra 7:11-13  
   b. Ruled Persia from 465 to 425BC

C. Prophets of the Exile

1. Daniel (Daniel 1:1, 6; 6:1-3)  
2. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:1-3)  
   a. 48 chapters  
   b. Ezekiel means “God strengthens”  
   c. Written after 592BC; Ezekiel was in exile in Babylon  
   d. Born of a priestly heritage (1:3)  
   e. God revealed to Ezekiel on the same day the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem (24:2) and the death of his wife (24:15-18)  
   f. Lived at Tel-abib (3:15) a city for exiles near Babylon near the river Chebar(1:1), the Grand Canal, which flowed from the Euphrates above Babylon and back into the Euphrates near Erech  
   g. Met at his house with the elders of Judah (8:1; 14:1; 20:1)  
   h. Visions of Ezekiel  
      (1) Vision of the Cherubim (ch.1)  
      (2) Vision of the Roll (ch.2-3)  
      (3) Vision of the Plain (ch3)  
      (4) Visions of Jerusalem (ch.8-11)
(5) Vision of the Dry Bones (ch.37)
(6) Visions of the New Temple (ch.40-48)
i. Symbolic Actions of Ezekiel
   (1) Sign of the brick (4:1-3)
   (2) Sign of the prophet’s posture (4:4-8)
   (3) Sign of famine (4:9-17)
   (4) Sign of the knife and razor (5:1-17)
   (5) Sign of the house moving (12:1-7,17-20)
   (6) Sign of the sharpened sword (21:1-17)
   (7) Sign of Nebuchadnezzar’s sword (21:18-23)
   (8) Sign of the smelting furnace (22:17-31)
   (9) Sign of Ezekiel’s wife’s death (24:15-27)
   (10) Sign of the two sticks (37:15-17)

j. Allegories in Ezekiel
   (1) The Vine (15:1-8)
   (2) The Faithless Wife (16:1-63)
   (3) The Two Eagles (17:1-21)
   (4) The Cedar (17:22-24)
   (5) The Two Women (23:1-49)
   (6) The Boiling Caldron (24:1-14)

k. Key words
   (1) Son of man – over 90 times
   (2) The word of the LORD came unto me – 49 times

l. Outline
   (1) Judgment (ch.1-32)
   (2) Restoration (ch.33-48)

CONCLUSION: The Jews did not listen to God when they had a chance. They are still
God’s people and He still loves them, but they have had to go through terrible troubles
because of their disobedience. Perhaps we can learn from their mistakes. We should learn
to obey before we get into such a mess.

MEMORY VERSES:
- Numbers 32:23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the
  LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.
- Jeremiah 33:7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to
  return, and will build them, as at the first.
- Romans 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my
  mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
STAR [Story, Theme, Application, Resources]

- **STORY** – The story follows Israel as a nation. However, the nation can be used as a type of an individual. As in the case with Israel, an individual can receive the word of God, become a child of God, and then rebel against His commandments. An individual can reject the God’s judgment against their sin and make things even worse. Hebrews 12:5-11 can help you make this comparison. Follow the story of the rebellion and punishment of the nation of Israel as if they represented one person.

- **THEME** – God’s patience will only wait so long. Eventually, the punishment becomes much greater. Yet, we never cease to be a child of God if we are saved and we can always come back to Him.

- **APPLICATION**
  - Are your students in rebellion against God?
  - Are they in rebellion against their parents?
  - Do they respond to correction or continue to disobey until the punishment gets greater and greater?
  - Would they repent of their sin of disobedience and get right with God now?

- **RESOURCES**
  - Chorus – “Search Me, O God”
  - Discussion – How does someone rebel against God? What does it mean to refuse instruction (Proverbs 15:32)?
  - Study – What happens at each of the three stages of the Babylonian captivity?
  - Discussion – What was captivity for the Jewish people? Why was it so hard? Note: do not be cruel for the age children you have, but they need to understand that it is not like playing jail.