



LESSON XII.—SEPT. 18.

**Captivity of the Ten Tribes.**

II. Kings xvii, 9-18. Memory verses 13, 14. Read II. Kings, xvii., 1-23: Amos vi.: Hosea, v.

**Golden Text.**

'If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.'—I. Chron. xxviii, 9.

**Home Readings.**

M. II. Kings xvii., 1-23.—Captivity of the Ten Tribes.  
T. Amos vii., 1-17.—The captivity predicted.  
W. I. Chron. xxviii., 1-9. — David's warning against forsaking God.  
T. Isa ix iv., 9-20.—The vanity of idols.  
F. Psa. cxv., 1-18.—'They that make them are like unto them.'  
S. Col. iii., 1-17.—'Coveteousness, which is idolatry.'  
S. Rom. vi., 1-23. — 'The wages of sin is death.'

**Lesson Story.**

The people of Israel, in careless indifference to the warnings God sent by the prophets, persisted in disobeying God and so working out their own ruin.

Outwardly they paid reverence to Jehovah, but secretly they practised idolatry in the most revolting forms. God was angry with them, yet he sent his prophets to say that if they would repent and return to him, he would still receive them as his own children and bless them. But they hardened their hearts in unbelief. They knew that God was merciful, and they did not believe in his promise of punishment. They rejected his covenant with them, and broke all his laws, and turned to the worship of idols.

They followed the fashions of their neighbors, and made golden calves to worship. They worshipped the sun, moon and stars, and made their children pass through the fire, burning them as a sacrifice to their horrible idols. They also used divination and consulted with familiar spirits, a way of finding out things which is strictly forbidden, (Deut. xviii., 10-12.)

Because of all these sins and the awful hypocrisy and lack of repentance, God sent the promised punishment on his people. He sent the King of Assyria to take Israel into captivity, and thus ended the kingdom set up by Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

**Lesson Hints.**

'Secretly'—thinking to hide their wickedness from God by a cloak of hypocrisy. The soul that seeks to hide anything from God is bound to fail. Secret sins eat out spirituality.

'High places'—altars, generally built for idol worship.  
'Ye shall not'—Exodus xx., 2-5: Deut. iv., 15-19.

'Testified against'—sent warning messages to them. Their most secret sins could not be hid from God. He begged them to turn from their evil ways, but allowed them to choose whether they would repent and obey or work out their own ruin by their sin.

'Hardened their necks'—as oxen who will not yield to guidance but obstinately persist in their own way.

'Did not believe in the Lord'—they believed that there was a God who ruled over all, but even the devils believe that (Jas. ii., 19.), that kind of faith will not save. They did not believe in God's word or heed his warnings, they had no real faith in him. Unless we have an honest faith and trust in God we are working out our own captivity and ruin as surely as did those Israelites.

'His covenant'—and all the time they were rejecting God's covenant with them, God was preparing a new covenant to be sealed with the blood of his own Son, (Matt. xxvi., 26-29. Surely his mercies are everlasting.

'Vanity'—nothingness.  
'Became vain'—wasted their lives and their energies, missing the whole aim of life.

'Through the fire'—sacrificing the innocent children in their wicked worship. Heathen to-day offer their children in sacrifice to their cruel idols. Parents of this land some-

times offer their children to the goddess of fashion or ambition.

'Divination and enchantments'—fortune-telling and table-rapping. Seeking to know past or future events by the aid of unseen spirits, or apparitions. All spiritualism, theosophy, etc., is very strictly forbidden in God's word. It is far safer to play with gun-powder and matches than to have anything to do with the things God has so expressly forbidden. (Lev. xix., 31: Isa. viii., 19: Deut. xviii., 10, 11.)

**Questions.**

1. Name three of the prophets whom God sent to warn Israel?
2. Why did Israel not listen and repent?
3. Could they hide their sins from God?
4. What did they worship?
5. How did God punish them?
6. Is God sure to punish all who reject him and will not repent?
7. How can we be saved from punishment?

**Lesson Hymn.**

Out on life's stream, with no thought of its end,  
Seeking each moment in pleasure to spend;  
Nearer and nearer, the rapids swift glide,  
Driven along by sin's rushing tide.  
'There's danger ahead,' cries a voice from the shore;  
A voice of some loved one, who passed on before;  
Make haste, and for refuge in Jesus abide;  
Turn from thy drifting away with the tide.

Onward, still onward, the swift waters flow,  
Bearing them nearer the brink just below;  
Spurning the dear warning voices aside,  
Lost ones are drifting away with the tide.  
But Jesus is calling, He's called off before;  
He waits to receive you on heaven's fair shore.

Oh, turn ye from sin, in God's mercy confide;  
Cease from thy drifting away with the tide.

—W. MACOMBER.

**Suggested Hymns.**

'Oh, turn ye!' 'Eternity,' 'Christ receive: sinful men,' 'Why not come to him now?' 'While we pray and while we plead,' 'I have a Father in the promised land,' 'For you I am praying.'

**Practical Points.**

Sept. 18.

CAPTIVITY OF THE TEN TRIBES.—II. Kings xvii., 9-18.

Nothing is secret in the sight of God, which fact the sinner often forgets. Verse 9.

The destruction of the Amalekites and other heathen nations had been forgotten by the children of Israel. Verses 10, 11.

Sin is opposing God's will. Happy is he whose will blends with that of God. Verse 12.

The Lord is very long-suffering. His mercy is proverbial. Therefore they who reject his oft-repeated invitation shall receive the greater punishment. Verses 13-16.

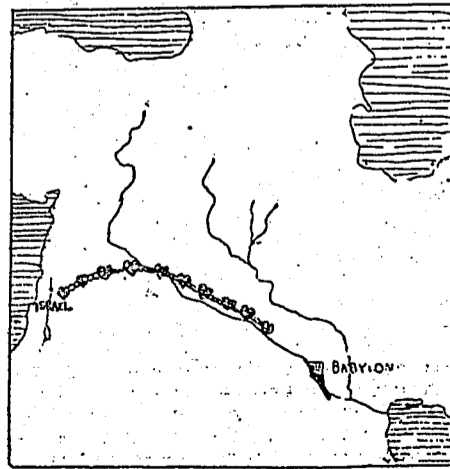
The road to ruin is so steep and slippery that unless the sinner retrace his steps he will speedily land in the bottomless pit. Verses 17, 18.

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**Lesson Illustrated.**

The last sad lesson about the ten tribes of the Kingdom of Israel. The darkened hearts



chained together, reaching along the probable route taken by the captives shows the inevitable result of their sin.

Have the hearts cut from paper, and ask

for the names of the ten. As each name is given add it to the ones already placed along the road and connect by drawing the links of the chain with chalk. The lines of the map will be simple, and far more interesting if drawn upon the board and the route marked, than if it is simply followed-upon a printed map.

**Christian Endeavor Topics.**

Sept. 18.—The triumphs of Christianity.—Luke iv., 16-22.

**A Word of Encouragement.**

The following may be a word of encouragement to young teachers. I write it out of a heart overflowing with praise for the rewards our heavenly Father has given me as a teacher.

I have just come home from the annual winter treat of S— R— Sunday-school. While there I have been surrounded by a class of bright lads of about fourteen years of age. It was three years since I was permitted to call any of them 'my boys,' but previous to that I had a class in the boys' room for ten years. As I looked at their bright faces thoughts of other days and other years came back, and the question arose: What will be the future of each of these souls entrusted to me? And there and then faith seemed to claim God's promises, and silent prayer went up, that these dear lads, only just in this new year committed to my teaching, might all have their names 'written in the Lamb's Book of Life.'

I turned up the gas in my sitting-room, the evening post had come in during my absence, and several letters were lying there for me. I opened one — it had the black border which tells its own story. I found it was from an old scholar who only yesterday buried his father. I cannot repeat the letter here; but the boy, now grown to manhood, is on the Lord's side, and though I have not seen him for several years, asks still a share in my prayers, and 'should like to hear from you sometimes if it is not troubling you too much.' Signed, 'your old and affectionate scholar.' P.S.—I still treasure the letters I received from you when in your class.

I folded it up with a very full heart, and opened a second letter. Was it a strange coincidence, or was it part of God's great plan and loving kindness? This letter was from another old scholar. Not in my class with the previous one, but through a simple earnest question one Sunday, blessed of God, and 'saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.' They are both young men out in the world. I have not seen the latter for eighteen months; he has removed to another place, and connected himself with a chapel and bible-class there; but signs himself, 'one of the old scholars.' He, too, asks for a letter.

And with two thoughts I must close. One is how God entwines the lives of teachers and scholars; what a close bond of union, lasting throughout eternity, is begun on the common wooden benches of a Sunday-school, and how our old scholars turn to us in their after life for help in their spiritual life and daily difficulties! Then, the value of a letter, written perhaps at a little inconvenience, or at the expense of a little self-denial, but valued and 'treasured' for years.

Was it not a fitting close to a Sunday-school treat? Did the treat end at the school? Was not the best wine kept till the last? And was it not almost an answer to the silent prayer, or at least a pledge of continued blessing, 'that which has been is that which shall be.' Am I one alone, 'highly favored among women'? Is not my experience that of many a teacher? Why should the King recompense me with such a reward? And week by week, to see the morning school conducted by three old scholars, and the International Bible Reading branch conducted by another, impresses more and more the words, 'Ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord.' Oh, may those words ring in the ears of our teachers this year, 'not in vain'—'not in vain.' — A Sunday-school Teacher, in 'Sunday-school Chronicle.'

'Once to every man and nation  
Comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of truth with falsehood,  
For the good or evil side.  
Some great cause, God's new Messiah  
Offering each its bloom or blossom,  
Parts the goats upon the left hand,  
And the sheep upon the right;  
And that choice goes on forever  
'Twixt that darkness and that light.'