

Thereby, a people was prepared to receive the Messiah.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

We have now reached the end of the kingdom of Judah. Bring out by questioning the great privileges which the people of Judah had enjoyed, and how they had treated these privileges. Quote Longfellow's words in *Evangeline* with reference to the deportation of the Acadians, that they went into an exile "without an end and without an example in story," and question the scholars about how much truth these words contain. Many of the Acadians found their way back, and although their sufferings were great, they were not at all to be compared with those of the Jews who were subjected to the most horrible barbarities. Refer to the deportation of the Belgians and to the horrid cruelties to which they were exposed. Our lesson contains the closing scenes in the history of a wonderful kingdom. Discuss:

1. *Jerusalem Besieged*, vs. 1-3. By whom was the city besieged? How long did the siege last? What means did the besiegers employ of reducing the city? Compare the instruments of ancient warfare with those employed to-day. For the horrors of famine which prevailed during this siege consult Lam. 4:5-10. Read Jeremiah 32:6-15 for an interesting incident which occurred during the siege. The prophet was sure that God would restore his people again to their own land.

2. *Jerusalem Captured*, vs. 4-7. How did the king and his men of war escape from the city? What became of them? Dwell upon the cruelties of ancient warfare which have their counterpart in modern times. General Sherman was right when he said that war is hell.

3. *Jerusalem Destroyed*, vs. 8-10. Point out that some little time seems to have elapsed between the capture of the city and its destruction. Why was this? Compare the destruction of Jerusalem with the destruction wrought during the great War.

4. *Jerusalem Desolated*, vs. 11, 12. Remind the class that no place is completely desolate while it is inhabited. The climax of vengeance was reached in the deportation

of the people. Whom did they carry away and whom did they leave behind? The Babylonians had no more liking for pauper immigrants than we have. Impress upon the class that nations, like individuals, are destroyed by sin. Infidelity and impurity and intemperance are the great destructive agencies at work, sapping the strength of nations and individuals. The only salvation is through Christ, who is the light and life of the world.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

A space of 35 years elapsed between the events recorded in the last lesson and the final destruction of Jerusalem. In order that the boys and girls may have some knowledge of the course of events and their significance, the teacher should have six scholars prepare short essays upon the following topics, and a map should be used: (1) The death of Josiah and its results; (2) Jehoiaquim and the factions in Judah; (3) the First Captivity; (4) the Second Captivity; (5) the destruction of Jerusalem; (6) Jeremiah and the remnant in Judah. Head the lesson up to the thought of Prov. 3:33.

The central events under each topic which should be brought out clearly are:

1. The decline of Nineveh (B.C. 627-607); the assertion of independence by Babylon; the devastation of Mesopotamia, and the siege of Nineveh in B.C. 609; the assertion of independence by Egypt. Josiah, still loyal to Assyria, met the Egyptians at Megiddo, and was slain.

2. Bring out the selfish, covetous, tyrannical nature of Jehoiaquim from the many references in Jeremiah. (See Jer. 22:13-19; 26:22, 23; 36:22-25; 2 Kgs. 23:35.) Emphasize the open revival of the abominations of Manasseh's reign, and the formation of two parties,—one abandoning the worship of Jehovah, and the other carrying it to extremes by costlier and more frequent sacrifices.

3. The Assyrian empire ended with the fall of Nineveh, B.C. 607. The Egyptians were driven homewards from the Euphrates by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 605. Shortly after, Jerusalem was besieged, but Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon to ascend the throne.