

Lesson XI.

CAPTIVITY OF THE TEN TRIBES

December 11, 1904

2 Kings 17: 6-18. Commit to memory vs. 16-18. Read 2 Kings 16: 1 to 18: 12.

GOLDEN TEXT—The face of the Lord is against them that do evil.—1 Peter 3: 12.

6 In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods,

8 And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

9 And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city,

10 And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree;

11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger:

12 For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the

seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

17 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.

Revised Version.—1 unto; 2 on; 3 And it was so, because; 4 Omil had; 5 nations; 6 pillars; 7 Asherim upon; 8 and; 9 unto; 10 by the hand of every prophet, and of every seer; 11 by the hand of my servants; 12 neck; 13 who believed not; 14 forsook; 15 an Asherah; 16 that which was evil.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—Late in 722 B.C., or early in 721 B.C.; Samaria, the capital of Israel.

Connection—God had long before threatened judgment upon his people if they should persist in sin: (for example, Lev.

26: 33; Deut. 28: 36). The time had now come. The judgment came through Assyria and its armies; verses 1-4 tell of the first stages of it, v. 5 of the three years' siege of Samaria, the capital.

I. CARRIED CAP-

TIVE.—1. In the ninth year of Hoshea (king of Israel); six years after Hezekiah had become king of Judah. Hoshea means "salvation," yet in his reign the kingdom was destroyed. The king of Assyria; probably Sargon, the successor of Shalmaneser who began the siege, v. 3. Took Samaria. "Samaria," says Sargon in an inscription found in the great library rooms of his palace at Khorsabad, "I besieged and captured; 27,290 of its inhabitants I carried away; fifty chariots I collected from them; the rest I allowed to keep their property." Carried Israel . . into Assyria; from 1300-600 B.C. the leading power in the East. Halah; probably not far from Habor. Habor by (on) the river of Gozan; a northern tributary of the Euphrates, a little south of the latitude of Antioch in Syria. Cities of the Medes; a region southwest of the Caspian Sea and including the modern Persia.

II. BECAUSE OF DISOBEDIENCE—7; 8. For

Israel had sinned. Their sin had ripened into a terrible harvest. Against the Lord their God (read the whole verse). What black ingratitude it describes! Feared (reverenced and worshipped)



The Assault on the City

other gods; in spite of the First Commandment. Walked in the statutes; followed the (religious) customs and observances. Of the nations (Rev. Ver.). Part of Israel's sins and idolatries were derived from the nations who dwelt in Canaan when they came to it from Egypt. Whom the Lord cast out (from their land); because of the very sins Israel had imitated, Lev. 18: 24, 25. And of the kings of Israel. Another part of Israel's sins could be traced to their kings, like Jeroboam (1 Kgs. 12: 28, 29), and Ahab, 1 Kgs. 16: 31. (See also v. 16.)

8-12. Did secretly. Evil-doers hate the light, John 3: 20. Israel pretended to be worshipping God, while they really worshipped idols. Now follows a list of their sins. Built high places; mounds for sacrifice. God had appointed one temple and one altar, Deut. 12: 14. From the tower of the watchman (a solitary place for keeping guard over flocks and herds) to the fenced cities; as we might say, in country and town. Set up pillars (Rev. Ver.); used in the worship of Baal. Asherim (Rev. Ver.); images of the vile goddess, Ashtoreth. Burned incense; an emblem of prayer. They served idols; like Jeroboam's calves. The Lord had said (in