

Lesson, 2 Kings 17: 9-18. Read 2 Kings 17: 1-23; Amos 6; Hosea 5; Consult vs. 12, 14.

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 prophets, and 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, and 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.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever."—1 Chron. 28: 2.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Secret sin, v. 9-12.
2. God's warning, v. 13.
3. Open Rebellion, v. 14-6.
4. God's judgments, v. 18.

DAILY READINGS,

- M. Fruit of disobedience, 2 Kings 17: 1-8.
 T. Captivity of the ten tribes, 2 Kings 17: 9-18.
 W. Rejected of God, 2 Kings 17: 19-29.
 Th. Prophecy of captivity, Hosea 10: 1-8.
 F. Consequences of sin, Isa. 1: 1-9.
 S. Punishment of pride, Isa. 9: 8-17.
 S. Sin of rejection, Matt. 21: 33-43.

CATECHISM.

Q. 36. What are the benefits which, in this life, do accompany or flow from justification, adoption and sanctification?

A. The benefits which in this life, do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 69 (Ps. Sel.), 528, 217, 242.

Our lesson might well be entitled "The secret of the decline and fall of the kingdom of Israel."

The Story of the Fall.—

Jeroboam II, of whom we read in our last lesson, had brought the ten tribes to the pitch of their glory. He was practically master of Palestine. We saw from the lesson in the book of Amos that this glory covered a deep-seated corruption in religion and morals—gross selfishness and cruelty as between man and man. Immediately after Jeroboam's death in 740 B.C., this corruption and cruelty invaded the seat of government.

Zachariah his son was murdered at a drunken feast after six months of a reign.

Shallum, the chief hand in the murder, enjoyed a short month of guilty honor when he too was assassinated.

Menahem, his murderer, reigned for ten years, for he put to the sword all those who might overthrow him.

While the kingdom of the Ten Tribes entered this new and calamitous phase of its existence, the kingdom of Assyria entered a new and glorious epoch.

Pul ascended the throne under the name of Tiglath-Pilezer. A great general, and a greater organizer, he abandoned the system of making hap-hazard raids upon neighboring countries, by which the Assyrians gained booty and tribute but often had to conquer the same country over and over again. Tiglath-Pilezer organized an army that became the terror of the world (see Isaiah's wonderful description, v. 26-29.) and set himself to break up the nations with it and reduce them to the position of Provinces of Assyria. Part of the plan was the carrying away of the leaders of a people into exile. It was this new system which ultimately wiped Israel out from among the nations.

Menahem only saved his people from immediate destruction by submitting early, and paying tribute. This with his sinful following in the ways of the former kings made the ten years of his reign years of degradation.

Pekahiah his son reigned two years ingloriously, when he was slain by Pekah, his general, who put himself at the head of an Anti-Assyrian party.

Pekah, gathered together a strong opposi-