

The following outline facts may be helpful in giving a fairly clear grasp of Israel's history and of the lessons of this and the following Quarter.

SOME FACTS IN THE HISTORY OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

1. God brought Israel out of Egypt and gave them Canaan for their possession.

2. He commanded that he alone should be their king, and that judges of his choosing should be their rulers, and so he gave them judges for about four centuries.

3. Then they wanted a king like the nations round about them; and, displeased that they were not satisfied with him as their king, God gave them Saul, then David, then Solomon. Three kings, each of whom reigned forty years, ruled over the whole kingdom of Israel.

4. At the death of Solomon the ten northern tribes, who had been dissatisfied because of the heavy taxes which they had to pay, and which were spent chiefly in Jerusalem, in the tribe of Judah, asked for lighter taxation, and not getting it they rebelled against Rehoboam and chose a king for themselves, Jeroboam, one of their own young men, who had pushed his way from poverty to prominence.

5. This division of the kingdom, we are distinctly told, was of the Lord. The whole kingdom was drifting into idolatry, and by separating the ten Northern tribes from Judah, the latter, from which the Messiah was to come, was kept purer and better.

6. The Northern kingdom, the ten tribes, usually called the kingdom of Israel, went astray from God fast and far. One of the very first acts of their king Jeroboam was to set up idols, golden calves, one in Bethel in the South of his kingdom, one in Dan in the North, for the people to worship, to keep them from going to Jerusalem to the temple. Thus cut off from the house of God they sank farther and farther into idolatry.

7. For about 215 years, 937 B.C. to 722 B.C. God spared them as a separate people, and then, 722 B.C., as they persisted in forsaking him, he forsook them, and gave them into the hand of the Assyrians, who carried them away captive, and settled strangers, Assyrians, in their land, so that the country would not

be in danger of rebelling again. Thus ended, after 215 years, the kingdom of Israel. God cast them off forever.

8. The story of the kingdom of Judah, from the division of the kingdom at Solomon's death, to their final carrying away into Babylon, 586 B.C., or more than a century after the captivity of Israel, is the subject of the Sabbath School Lessons for the next Quarter.

The latter, the tribe of Judah, were sent back, some of them, by Cyrus, king of Persia, 530 B.C., after a captivity of seventy years, and dwelt in their own land until Christ came, the King of David's line who was long foretold by the prophets.

10. Then the Jewish people, after a greater act of wickedness than ever the nation had previously done, crucifying Jesus their king, and thus filling up the measure of their iniquity, were taken captive by the Romans, never again to be an independent people, but down-trodden by many peoples, while strangely preserving their identity as a race.

SOME FACTS AND THOUGHTS ON THE LESSONS FOR THE QUARTER, THE HISTORY OF THE TEN TRIBES.

1. From the beginning to the end of this Northern kingdom was, according to the revised Chronology, from 937 B.C. to 722 B.C., or 215 years.

2. During that time they had twenty-one kings, the average length of reign being ten and a half years.

These twenty-one kings were of nine different dynasties. Instead of the son quietly succeeding to the throne as the father passed away, a common way was that some ambitious officer or leader gathered a party to himself, slew the king and reigned in his stead, to be perhaps dealt with in his turn in the same manner.

3. This shows two things about the Northern Kingdom: (1) The turbulent and lawless spirit of the people, their disregard for law and order. (2) It shows something of the character of the kings, in that they made themselves odious in the sight of many of the people. (3) It shows that the fear of God, which tends to loyalty, was singularly wanting.