

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

Fourth Quarter, 1904.

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER.

Lesson XI.—December 11.—Captivity of the Ten Tribes.—2 Kings 17: 6-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.

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

EXPLANATORY.

THE EPITAPH OVER THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.—Vs 6. This verse is like an epitaph upon the tombstone of the northern kingdom, and then follows what Maclaren calls a post-mortem examination, showing the disease which caused the death. 6. IN THE NINTH YEAR OF HOSHEA. Six years after Hezekiah began to reign, and entered upon his great reforms in Judah. The name of Hoshea the king is identical with Hosea the prophet, and means salvation. THE KING OF ASSYRIA, Shalmaneser IV, carried on the war, destroyed all the surrounding country, and laid siege to Samaria, which lasted three years, but he died before the city capitulated; and it was under the reign, but probably without the presence of his successor, one of his generals, Sargon, that Samaria was taken. CARRIED ISRAEL AWAY INTO ASSYRIA. Is an inscription on a slab found in Sargon's great library rooms in the palace of Khonsabad in the northern part of Nineveh (now, I believe, in the Berlin Museum.) we have Sargon's own account of this story: "I besieged the city of Samaria," says he, "and took it. I carried off twenty-seven thousand and two hundred and eighty of the citizens. I chose fifty chariots for myself from the whole number taken; and all the other property of the people of the town I left for my servants to take. I appointed resident officers over them, and imposed on them the same tribute as had formerly been paid. In the place of those taken into captivity, I sent thither inhabitants of lands conquered by me, and imposed the tribute on them which I require from Assyrians." PLACED THEM IN HALAB. On the Euphrates, in northern Mesopotamia, not far from Nineveh. IN HABOR. The present river Khabour, a branch of the Euphrates from the north, the RIVER OF GOZAN (not "by" the river) in northern Mesopotamia. IN THE CITIES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. East of Assyria, and southwest of the Caspian Sea, including modern Persia.

II. THE MORAL DISEASE FROM WHICH THE NATION PERISHED.—Vs. 7-12. Now follows the reason of this terrible calamity. The sum of it was, that the people had come into that condition in which it was possible to destroy the sin without at the same time destroying the sinner.

7. SINNED AGAINST THE LORD. Jehovah, the self-existing eternal being. THEIR GOD. To whom they owed all things—life, existence, prosperity, religion, every good they possessed. WHICH HAD BROUGHT THEM UP OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT. By a mighty deliverance, full of wonders of love and care. This includes not only the plagues and the passage through the Red Sea, but all his care over them through the wilderness, the giving of the law, the possession of the promised land. FEARED WORSHIPED. They broke through all the barriers of the love and greatness of God; this mightiest of bonds did not hold them back from sin.

8. WALKED IN THE STATUTES. The heathen practices and customs which had come to be laws (compare Judges 2: 11-13.) They substituted heathen forms of worship, and heathen morals, for the worship and the law of God.

9. DID SECRETLY. Literally, they covered. "They cloaked or covered their idolatry with pretenses that it was a worship of Jehovah." FROM THE TOWER OF THE WATCHMEN TO THE FENCED CITY. Found again in 2 Kings 18: 8. "The towers in which watchmen were stationed to keep guard over the flocks and crops were always in the most lonely and deserted spots, while fenced cities implied the presence of many inhabitants. So the sense appears to be 'in this loneliest as well as in the most populous places.'"

10. IMAGES. Stone pillars, rough or carved, and grooves. Rather, "Asherim," or wooden pillars, plain or carved; both being set up beside the altars of idols.

11. THERE THEY BURNED INCENSE AS A MODE OF WORSHIP. AND BROUGHT WICKED THINGS. "The shade of the trees became bowers of iniquity."

The Fascination of Idolatry. It is plain that there must have been some peculiar fascination about idolatry, or it could not have drawn the Israelites so frequently and persistently to its shrines and worship.

1. Idols presented a visible, tangible representation of God, with a splendid and sensual ceremonial; while Jehovah, the true God, was unseen.

2. The worship of Jehovah had its ceremonial of great beauty and power, but always teaching and impressing great moral

and spiritual truths. It was pure, it restrained all sin, it required the confession and forsaking of wrong, it appealed to the higher nature. On the other hand, idolatry presented the temptation of novelty, of fashion and worldliness. It was in favor with learning, wealth and power. But perhaps the chief attraction consisted in the sports, the revelry, the licentious freedom, appealing to every passion, with which idols were worshipped. In the revels of idolaters there was no restraint, no confession of sin, no costly sacrifices, except to passion, but they could serve every evil in the name and under the sanction of their gods.

III. THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS IS HARD.—Vs. 13. The way of transgressors is hard indeed, because of the awful punishment at the end of the way. So the sinful know that the end of their way is death, and the consciousness of this throws a shadow over all the life before. YET THE LORD TESTIFIED AGAINST (unto) ISRAEL. He showed them clearly their sin and their danger. (1) BY ALL THE PROPHETS, who speak forth God's Word. AND BY ALL THE SEERS. Those who see visions which God reveals. Prophets of every kind were sent. The words of Elijah and Elisha still echoed among the people, and later came Jonah and Amos and Hosea, who in every way, by words, by deeds, by object lessons, by visions, warned and entreated the people.

IV. AND YET THEY WENT ON IN THE WAY TO RUIN.—Vs. 14-18. 14. BUT HARDENED THEIR NECKS. A metaphor derived from those who, in spite of all efforts to guide them, hold their necks set and firm in the way they determine to go. It expresses unbending obstinacy and self-will. THAT DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE LORD. They of course knew his existence, but they did not trust in his guidance, in his wisdom and goodness, so as to obey him.

15. STATUTES. COMMANDS. AND HIS COVENANT. So the law was called, because it was an agreement between God and his people, he to preserve and defend them, they to obey. See Deut. 29: 1, 9, 13. HIS TESTIMONIES. His law, which is the testimony he bears for truth and against iniquity. AND FOLLOWED VANITY. Nothingness. Idols who were absolutely powerless to help them. BECAME VAIN. Weak, helpless, with no power to resist attacks.

16. MOLTEN IMAGES, EVEN TWO CALVES. Which Jeroboam had made and placed in Bethel and Dan as centers of false worship, and which had remained all through their history. A GROVE. An Asherah, idol-pillar (vs. 10) HOST OF HEAVEN. Represented by Baal, the sun god.

17. CAUSED THEIR SONS . . . TO PASS THROUGH THE FIRE. Not merely "nude" men pass through the fire for purification, but burnt them with fire, as is said of Ahaz (2 Chron 28: 3; see 2 Kings 17: 31; 23: 10; Jer. 7: 30-32; 19: 1-13). This was done in the worship of Molech. "The Rabbins tell us that this 'dol' was made of brass, and that the head was that of a calf with a crown upon it. It was made hollow, and a furious fire was kindled within it. . . . When the arms were red hot, the victim was thrown into them, and was almost immediately burned to death, while its cries were drowned by drums." DIVINATION AND ENCHANTMENTS. These were different ways of seeking to know future events, and of imposing upon the people. AND SOLD THEMSELVES TO DO EVIL. The metaphor is taken from

WHAT THE MINISTER SAYS.

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"I thought I would write you what Pyramid Pile Cure has done for me. I had a most aggravated case of bleeding piles; indeed I dreaded when I had to go to stool. One fifty-cent box cured me. I feel like a new man. I have recommended it to others as being the most wonderful remedy known. It is indeed a great blessing to suffering humanity. You are at liberty to use this for all it is worth, and I hope it may do good." Rev. W. E. Carr, 355 No. Holbrook St., Danville, Va.

Clergymen (like all professional men who lead sedentary lives) are especially addicted to piles, in various forms and are continually on the look out of a remedy which will give relief with little or no idea of obtaining a cure.

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A little book describing the causes and cure of piles is published by Pyramid Drug Co., Marshall, Mich., and will be sent free for the asking. All sufferers are advised to write for it as it contains valuable information on the subject of piles.

the practice of men selling themselves into slavery, and so giving themselves wholly up to work the will of their master. This was a widespread custom in the ancient world.

WAYS TO INJURE HEALTH.

Giving way to fits of anger.

Leading a life of unfeeling, stupid laziness.

Contriving to keep up continual worry about something or nothing.

Allowing the desire for gain to absorb our minds so as to leave no time to attend to our health.

Tempting the appetite with bitters and piceities when the stomach says no, and forcing food into it when nature does not demand, and even rejects it; gormandizing between meals.

Marrying in haste and getting and uncongenial companion, and living the remainder of life in mental dissatisfaction, cultivating jealousies and domestic broils, and always being in a mental ferment.

Surfeiting on hot and very stimulating dinners, eating in a hurry, without half masticating the food, and eating heartily before going to bed, when the mind and body are exhausted by the toils of the day and the excitement of the evening.—Green's Fruit Grower.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

I stood before Phoebe Cary's chair the day before she died, and we conversed concerning her early life. She said she wished to go back to her old homestead before she died, and see her lover's grave. She added: "Before he went from this world I had no interest in the other world. I never questioned whether there was an eternity or not. The thought never seemed to have any power over me. Men talked about it and preached about it, and I read about it, but it never struck my heart and never touched my life. I had no desire to know of eternal things. But when my loved one went so suddenly, falling dead in the street. I asked over and over, 'Is there another world? Will I meet him? Will I live with him forever? And then I so desired to know.' That desire led her to that beautiful poetry which is in the hymn books of all the world to-day:

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I am nearer home to-day
Than I ever have been before.

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Ovaritis or inflammation of the ovaries or fallopian tubes which adjoin the ovaries may result from sudden stopping of the monthly flow, from inflammation of the womb, and many other causes. The slightest indication of trouble with the ovaries, indicated by dull throbbing pain in the side, accompanied by heat and shooting pains, should claim your instant attention. It will not cure itself, and a hospital operation, with all its terrors, may easily result from neglect.

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