

reigned for a few years in Israel as a puppet king inferior to and subject to the king of Assyria and supposed to pay tribute to the king of Assyria, heavy tribute, disagreeable conditions, impossible to keep up very satisfactorily. So before so many years he revolted and then the king of Assyria came and conquered Samaria. We read in chapter 17, verse 6. So this section 1, the downfall of Israel here, I am dividing into three sections--small "a" Pekah and small "b" Hoshea. Pekah is the king under whom the land was conquered by the Assyrians and many of them taken captive but Hoshea continued as a nominally independent king for nine years. Then Hoshea is conquered in 721 B. C., a date which from Assyrian records we are able to set quite definitely. You may find in some places that it is 722 instead of 721. Whether it happened in November of 722 or in the ~~fall~~ following February of 721 is impossible to prove. It was in the year that overlapped these two, whether that was 722 or 721 is a satisfactory statement of the ~~time~~ downfall of Israel. One of the most important fixed dates of the Biblical history. The book of Kings proceeds to tell us of the sins that the people have--how they have turned away from God and followed the practices of the evil and served idols and consequently God delivered them into captivity. It is a terrible picture of a nation which had every opportunity of successfully following the Lord, every prospect of God's blessing but under these circumstances failed as a nation and turned away from Him, another evidence of the fact that man is incurably wicked, that it is in this age that Satan is ruling and that while individuals who are born again into the kingdom of God are eternally His we cannot hope if we make a nation fully righteous to have it continue that way. It would only continue that way if all the new generations were converted with their whole heart and brought to the Lord. There is no promise that that will happen in any nation in this age. In this age the church is here for a witness and will gather out individuals ~~and~~ to be members of the body of Christ and we can make great accomplishments at times in bringing a nation into a great step of seeming conformity to God's will and making His will dominant to a great extent in the council of the nation that we