

Lesson 85: The Assyrians defeat Israel

Scripture: 2 Kings 17

Memory Verse: 2 Kings 17:7 “All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt.”

The kings of Israel and Judah continued to lead the people of Israel astray. And despite God’s REPEATED warnings, the people did not repent and put their faith in HIM.

So when Hoshea son of Elah was king of Israel, king Shalmaneser of Assyria attacked King Hoshea, and God allowed king Shalmaneser to be victorious. And Hoshea was forced to pay heavy tribute to Assyria.

But Hoshea stopped paying the annual tribute and conspired against the king of Assyria by asking King So of Egypt to help him shake free of Assyria’s power. When the king of Assyria discovered this treachery, he seized Hoshea and put him in prison.

Then the king of Assyria invaded the entire land, and for three years he besieged the city of Samaria. Finally, in the ninth year of King Hoshea’s reign, Samaria fell, and the people of Israel were exiled to Assyria. They were settled in colonies in Halah, along the banks of the Habor River in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

This disaster came upon the people of Israel because they worshiped other gods. They sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them safely out of Egypt and had rescued them from the power of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their ancestors, and they despised all his warnings. They worshiped worthless idols, so they became worthless themselves. They followed the example of the nations around them, disobeying the LORD’s command not to imitate them.

Because the LORD was very angry with Israel, he swept them away from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah remained in the land. And even then, God protected Judah for only a season, because they too refused to obey and follow God. As a result, they were defeated by Babylon only a few years later.

So God dispersed all the people of Israel. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT ABANDON HIS PROMISE THAT HE MADE TO ABRAHAM! Though the people of Israel became scattered, God’s promise to make them into a great nation that would bless the whole world was still in effect.

From the story of the rise and fall of the nation of Israel, we learn that Israel was powerless to follow God’s rules in their own strength. God knew this. In fact He knows that is true for every person on earth; we all were born with a sin nature, and were born into captivity of sin, just like the scattered Israelites. But God He had a plan to send one, born of the Jews, who would have the power to change people’s hearts so they could follow God and be reconciled to Him. And

His name is *Jesus*.