

Israel and Assyria

Second Kings 17

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • March 12, In the year of our Lord, 2017

Prelude:

I. Second Kings 17 is like Judges 2.

- A. Judges 2 summarizes the story that the writer shall tell, how Israel would not listen to the Lord and what He did to punish Israel.
- B. Second Kings 17 summarizes the story that the writer has told, how Israel would not listen to the Lord and how he used Assyria to punish Israel, and how Assyria attempted to repopulate the land with unbelievers.

Persuasion:

I. Second Kings 17.1–2 | **Not as Evil as the Others, but Still Evil**

1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned nine years. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him.

- A. An evil king who was not as evil as previous kings.
- B. Do not think of that as complimentary.
 - 1. Is telling a carpenter that he is bad, but not as bad as the previous ones a compliment?
 - 2. It is simply saying that he did not go as far in evil as the previous kings.

II. Second Kings 17.3–4 | **Hoshea Had to Pay Tribute Money**

3 Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute money. 4 And the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

- A. Hoshea, the king of Israel, did not want to pay tribute to Shalmaneser, but what did Hoshea gain by hooking up with the king of Egypt?
- B. Assyria was not the problem, and Egypt was not the solution.

1. What was the problem?
2. What was the solution?

III. Second Kings 17.5–6 | Assyrian Captivity Begins in Earnest

5 Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. 6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

- A. The Assyrians had the will and the power to go wherever they wanted to go and to do whatever they wanted to do.
- B. Once they attacked a city or nation, they took it.
- C. How long did the siege against Samaria last?
 1. What does that tell you about Samaria's resources to withstand a siege?
 2. What does that tell you about Samaria's fortifications?
 3. What does that tell you about Samaria's military strength?
- D. Finally, Assyria defeated Samaria.
 1. Where did the Assyrians take the Samaritans?
 2. Verse 6 makes a sad statement about the people whom the Lord had delivered out of Egypt and had humbled Egypt for Israel's sake.

IV. Second Kings 17.7–12 | The Sins of Israel

7 For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, 8 and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. 9 Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city. 10 They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. 11 There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger, 12 for they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not

do this thing.”

A. What are the sins of Israel that the writer listed?

1. They fear other gods, although it was Yahweh God who freed them.
2. They walked in the statutes of the Canaanite nations.
3. They did things in secret that were not right, building high places to sin.
4. They set up images on every high hill and under every green tree.
5. They burned incense on the high places like the Canaanite nations.

B. They slapped God in the face, because

1. He had delivered them,
2. He had removed the Canaanites.

V. Second Kings 17.13–14 | The Lord Sent Prophets

13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, “Turn 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 Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God.

A. What did the Lord do to turn away His people from evil?

B. What was the message of the prophets?

1. Turn from your evil ways.
2. Keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord.
3. The Lord sent the Law by His servants the prophets.

C. How did the writer characterize the responses of Israel and Judah?

1. They would not hear.
2. They stiffened their necks.
 - a) They stiffened their necks like their fathers.

b) Their fathers did not believe.

VI. Second Kings 17.15–17 | Israel Forsook the Commandments of the Lord

15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them that they should not do like them. 16 So they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. 17 And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

A. What did they reject?

1. The Lord's statutes
2. The Lord's covenant
3. The Lord's testimonies
 - a) This would include such passages as:
 - b) Lev 26
 - c) Deu 27–28

B. What did they accept or do instead?

1. Idols
2. Went after the nations
3. Made a molded image
4. Made two calves
5. Made a wooden image
6. Worshiped the host of heaven
7. Served Baal
8. Made their children pass through the fire
9. Practiced witchcraft and soothsaying

10. Sold themselves to do evil in the Lord's sight

11. Provoked the Lord to anger

C. Why do you think they did all these things?

VII. Second Kings 17.18 | The Lord Removed Israel

18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.

A. Do you understand the Lord's anger in this narrative?

B. Do you understand why He removed Israel from His sight?

C. The Lord left Judah in the Land, but did they learn from what happened?

VIII. Second Kings 17.19 | Judah Followed Israel

19 Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

A. How could this be?

B. How could Judah repeat Israel's sins?

C. Why don't we learn from the sins of others?

IX. Second Kings 17.20–23 | Israel's Faithfulness Explained

20 And the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His sight. 21 For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin. 22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, 23 until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

A. Verse 20 indicates a gradual process.

B. They did evil in God's sight, so He cast them from His sight.

1. See Hab 1.13

C. Why had the Lord torn the ten tribes from the house of David?

D. What did Jeroboam do once he had the Northern Kingdom of Israel?

1. Would Israel depart from the sins of Jeroboam?

2. What had the Lord said through His servants the prophets?

E. The Assyrian captivity had begun and continued to the time of the writing of the Book of Kings.

X. Second Kings 17.24–28 | Assyria Resettled Israel, But with Problems

24 Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. 25 And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they did not fear the LORD; therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them. 26 So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, “The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land.” 27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, “Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land.” 28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the LORD.

A. Why did the king of Assyria repopulate the land?

B. Since the new people did not fear the Lord, what did He do?

1. He sent lions that killed some of the people.

2. What did the new people conclude?

C. What did the king propose to solve the problem?

XI. Second Kings 17.29–31 | The Gods of the Nations

29 However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put them in the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities where they dwelt. 30 The men of Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, 31 and the

Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.

- A. Did the new people get the message?
- B. As the next passage will show, they did start to fear the Lord, but they did not give up fearing their gods.

XII. Second Kings 17.32–41 | Fearing Jehovah and the Gods of the Nations

32 So they feared the LORD, and from every class they appointed for themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. 33 They feared the LORD, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away. 34 To this day they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the LORD, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances, or the law and commandment which the LORD had commanded the children of Jacob, whom He named Israel, 35 with whom the LORD had made a covenant and charged them, saying: “You shall not fear other gods, nor bow down to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them; 36 but the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice. 37 And the statutes, the ordinances, the law, and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall be careful to observe forever; you shall not fear other gods. 38 And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods. 39 But the LORD your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.” 40 However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals. 41 So these nations feared the LORD, yet served their carved images; also their children and their children’s children have continued doing as their fathers did, even to this day.

- A. They did not want to leave out any gods.
 - 1. Sounds like Athens in Acts 17.
 - 2. Sounds like Hindus.
- B. According to verse 34, what eventually happened?
 - 1. It is as Jesus said in Matthew 6, we cannot serve God and mammon or anything else as equal to God.
 - 2. He demands exclusive loyalty.