

RETRIBUTION

CORE PASSAGE: 2 KINGS 17:6-15,18-20

CONTEXT

The books of 1 and 2 Kings record the history of the kings of Israel over approximately four hundred years. Beginning with the death of King David and the start of Solomon's reign, through the split of the kingdom into Israel and Judah, and ending with the destruction of Jerusalem, the author documented each king in both the north and the south in light of their faithfulness to the Lord. While Judah enjoyed a few faithful kings, Israel's kings consistently followed a path away from the Lord, in spite of the warnings from the Lord's prophets. This led to their destruction and exile at the hands of the Assyrians.

KEY CONCEPT

Though God is merciful, sin has dreadful consequences.

As you examine 2 Kings 17:6-15,18-20:

- Recognize that Israel sinned against God, and God allowed them to be conquered by Assyria.
- Recall how God used prophets to warn the people, but they still disobeyed.



TIMELINE

Elijah and Elisha Perform Miracles and Prophecy to Israel (1 Kings 17–2 Kings 13)

Hosea Prophecies to Israel and Judah (Hosea 1–14)

SESSION STUDY: Assyria Besieges and Conquers Israel, Deporting the People (2 Kings 17)

Jonah Prophecies to Israel and Nineveh (2 Kings 14; Jonah 1–4)

Israel's Kings Persist in Doing Evil in the Lord's Sight (2 Kings 14–17)

Assyria Threatens Judah, but Hezekiah Relies on the Lord (2 Kings 18–20)

Daily Readings

☐ **Day 1:** 2 Kings 15–17

☐ **Day 4:** Isaiah 13–24

☐ **Day 2:** 2 Chronicles 26–28

☐ **Day 5:** Isaiah 25–35

☐ **Day 3:** Isaiah 1–12

☐ **Day 6:** Psalm 12



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

2 KINGS 17:6-12

WHEN WE WORSHIP OTHER GODS, DISASTER HAPPENS.

Underline what the Israelites did to deserve judgment.

6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria. He deported the Israelites to Assyria and settled them in Halah, along the Habor (Gozan's river), and in the cities of the Medes. **7** This disaster happened because the people of Israel sinned against the LORD their God who had brought them out of the land of Egypt from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt and because they worshiped other gods. **8** They lived according to the customs of the nations that the LORD had dispossessed before the Israelites and according to what the kings of Israel did. **9** The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. They built high places in all their towns from watchtower to fortified city. **10** They set up for themselves sacred pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. **11** They burned incense there on all the high places just like the nations that the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did evil things, angering the LORD. **12** They served idols, although the LORD had told them, "You must not do this."

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

SIN AS REBELLION: Because the Bible portrays people as responsible beings, called to respond in faith and obedience to God's revelation, the Bible often portrays sin in terms of defiance and rebellion toward God the King. Isaiah 1:2 is one of many passages that describes sin in terms of rebellion against God: "I have raised children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me." Seen in this light, sin is personal and willful disobedience, the raising of a clenched fist toward the One who made us.

Key Concept: Though God is merciful, sin has dreadful consequences.

Hoshea was the last king over the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Though not as bad as the kings before him, Hoshea still did what was evil in God's sight (v. 2). God disciplined the Northern Kingdom by allowing Assyria to attack and force them to pay tribute. But after Hoshea rebelled against that arrangement, God's judgment finally came due as Assyria invaded, besieged, conquered, and deported the Israelites, spreading them anywhere from 400 to 1,000 miles from home.

Reading only verses 3-6 would make it seem Hoshea's poor political maneuverings cost Israel their freedom and land. But the Lord made it clear the reason the Israelites suffered—they sinned against God (v. 7). The Israelites were exiled because they were rebellious and disobedient. Though God had brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt, they were unfaithful to Him. Though God had conquered and given them the promised land, they worshiped other gods. Though God sees and knows all, His people thought their secret wickedness and idolatry went unnoticed. But they were wrong.

Why do we sometimes think and act as though the Lord cannot see us?

The Lord had promised to provide for every need of His people, but Israel habitually sinned against Him. They were continually wicked, rebellious, and disobedient despite God's gifts and His warnings (2 Kings 17:12). Because of this, God allowed them to be captured and exiled by Assyria. The Lord had repeatedly shown that He is merciful, but sin has consequences. Israel's unfaithfulness to God resulted in the disaster they now experienced.

Similarly, people today are responsible for their actions, and sin is rebellion against God. In Galatians 6:7-8, Paul warned Christians to walk in obedience to God: "Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap, because the one who sows to his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh." When we worship other gods, even ourselves, disaster happens.

How would you explain sin to someone who has no Bible background?



PERSONAL PREPARATION

2 KINGS 17:13-15,18-20

GOD WARNS OF THE DANGER OF DISOBEDIENCE, ALLOWING US TO CHOOSE.

Underline the phrases that express how God responded to His people's sin.

13 Still, the LORD warned Israel and Judah through every prophet and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep my commands and statutes according to the whole law I commanded your ancestors and sent to you through my servants the prophets.”

14 But they would not listen. Instead they became obstinate like their ancestors who did not believe the LORD their God. **15** They rejected his statutes and his covenant he had made with their ancestors and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves, following the surrounding nations the LORD had commanded them not to imitate. . . . **18** Therefore, the LORD was very angry with Israel, and he removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah remained. **19** Even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God but lived according to the customs Israel had practiced. **20** So the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, punished them, and handed them over to plunderers until he had banished them from his presence.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Sin leads to disaster and death. Trusting and following God is necessary for life. Trusting and following Him leads to a fulfilled life here and in eternity.

Key Concept: Though God is merciful, sin has dreadful consequences.

God had chosen the Israelites as His people, had rescued them from slavery in Egypt, had given them His law, and had given them the promised land. But from Exodus to Judges to 1–2 Kings, a pattern developed that described hundreds of years of the history of God’s people: The people sinned and rebelled, turning from God to wickedness. Next, God warned them through His prophets. Then the people were faced with a decision: turn from their wickedness and back to God or continue in their sin and rebellion.

Though the Lord had sent them Elijah, Elisha, and Hosea, among other prophets, unfortunately the Israelites had a problem with stubbornness and pride like their ancestors (v. 14). Their false worship of false gods had so marked them that they became worthless like the idols they worshiped. God’s intended purpose for Israel had been rejected, and now they were good for nothing more than to be cast out and trampled (Matthew 5:13). So this time, the discipline for their rebellion would be the most severe.

What are some ways the Lord warns His children today to turn from evil and to keep His commands?

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“The sinner mocks and scorns, When offered the love of God. This will be his undoing, For God will not be deceived.”¹

–George Blaurock (c. 1492–1529)

As the Lord had foretold in His law, He would keep His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and lead the Israelites into the promised land, but if they rebelled, He would send them away from it and from His presence (Deuteronomy 28:58–68). Israel did rebel, they did reject God’s covenant, they did resist God’s prophets, so “the LORD was very angry with Israel” (2 Kings 17:18), and He “banished them from his presence” (v. 20). Israel had already cut themselves off from the temple of God through their counterfeit idolatry, but now they were cut off from their land and from the patient grace of the Lord. They chose their idols, so they also chose disaster, exile, and death.

What idols might you be choosing today instead of listening to the Lord?

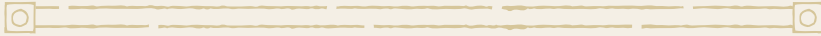
MERCY AND HOLINESS

Read the following passages from 2 Kings 17. Summarize the problem the Israelites faced, the warning, and the consequence of their actions.

THE PROBLEM (17:7-12)	THE WARNING (17:13-15)	THE RESULT (17:18-20)

What does this passage have to say to those who do not believe in Jesus Christ?
To those who do believe in Jesus?

Key Concept: Though God is merciful, sin has dreadful consequences.



HEAD

What “sin cycles” have you seen emerge in your own life?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read Psalm 12 aloud as a prayer to God, adding between verses circumstances and confessions from your own life. When you're done, offer God thanksgiving for His mercy in light of your sinfulness and for His holiness in light of His certain justice.



HEART

How do you need to reevaluate your perspective and feelings toward God's holiness and discipline?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HANDS

How will you reflect God's holiness and mercy in your interactions with others this week?

