

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 40

Israel Goes into Captivity

Israel Goes into Captivity

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective The goal of this lesson is to illustrate the way the Lord disciplines His children through the story of Israel's captivity.

Key Verses

2 Kings 17—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Proverbs 3:12 (June Memory Verse)

"For whom the LORD loves He corrects,
Just as a father the son *in whom* he delights."

Hook

Ask the students if any of them have ever been put into a time-out. Have them describe why they were put in time-out and how they felt. Then ask if the person who put them in time-out did it because they wanted to or because they loved them.

When our teachers, parents, or guardians put us in time-out, they do it because they love us and don't want us to do something that could hurt us or others. Today we will see how Israel was punished in a similar way.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

To begin the story, remind the students that, at this point, Israel has been divided into two kingdoms with different kings. The northern kingdom was called “Israel,” while the southern kingdom was called “Judah.” While Judah had some good kings and some bad ones, not a single king in Israel followed the Lord. Recall with the students King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. These two are a perfect example of what the people in Israel were like. Hardly anyone followed the Lord. God sent prophets like Elijah and Elisha to warn the people to come back to him, but the people did not listen.

In today’s story, we find out the devastating consequences of their sins: the Assyrians came and sieged Israel. After three years, Assyria defeated the Israelites and took them captive. They were no longer able to dwell in Israel. A large portion of 2 Kings 17 is devoted to explaining why Israel was taken captive. God had blessed them with a wonderful land, but instead they disobeyed God and followed idols. After getting rid of the Israelites, the king of Assyria brought people from other countries to live in Israel, people who worshipped idols and did not know God. Because the people worshipped idols, God sent lions to attack them. The king of Assyria then sent for a priest from the Israelites to teach the people how to follow the Lord. Unfortunately, the people who lived in the land continued to serve their gods in addition to the Lord.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Ever since Israel split, the northern kingdom of Israel was constantly in a state of sin and idolatry. King after king decided to sin against God and turn the hearts of the people to idols. For example, King Ahab and Queen Jezebel led the people of Israel into Baal worship. God had warned the people many times about what they were doing. He sent prophets like Elijah and Elisha to warn the people that they were sinning and that their sin would have consequences. While some listened to the prophets, most continued to live in idolatry.

Still, God was patient with His people. For about 200 years, He continued to warn the people about their sins and urge them to return to Him. However, they refused and continued in their sin. Finally, something had to be done. God punished the Israelites by removing them from their land. Some people look at this punishment and think that God is being mean or unfair, but He gave the people 200 years to repent, yet they did not. That’s a lot of warnings. Perhaps we ought to be more surprised at how merciful God is to wait so long before punishing His disobedient children.

LOOK (Continued)

This punishment is much like a parent punishing a child. When a parent or guardian puts their child in time-out, it is not because they don't love that child, but because the child needs punishment to correct their misbehavior. Israel had been disobedient, so as punishment, God took away their privilege of living in the land He had given them. God disciplined His children to show them that what they did was wrong.

It is important for us to know that sin has consequences. When we disobey our parents, guardians, or teachers, we face punishment. The Bible teaches that when we disobey God, we face consequences from Him. This is not because God does not love us, but as a loving Father, He disciplines us in order to correct us. However, if we have trusted Jesus to forgive our sins, while we still face consequences for our sins, we know that we will never face separation from God, the ultimate punishment for our sins. Jesus took the punishment that we deserve so that we could spend eternity with Him with our sins forgiven. This could be a good segue into a Gospel message.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the class why the Israelites went into captivity. Do we face punishment for our sins? How did Jesus deal with our sins on the cross?

Pray: Thank Jesus for paying the punishment that we deserved on the cross. Ask the Lord for help to obey His commandments.

Parent Question: Why did the Israelites go into captivity?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Kings 17 by David Guzik

THE FALL OF ISRAEL

A. The fall of Samaria.

1. ([2 Kings 17:1-2](#)) The evil reign of Hoshea.

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. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him.

a. **Hoshea the son of Elah:** We last saw **Hoshea** in [2 Kings 15:30](#), as the man who led a conspiracy against Pekah, the king of Israel. After the successful assassination, Hoshea took the throne and started his own brief dynasty.

b. **And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him:** Hoshea was an **evil** man, but by no means the worst of the kings of Israel. Sadly, his bloody overthrow of the preceding king and violent ascent to power did not make him unusually evil among the kings of Israel.

i. “He seems not to have inaugurated or continued the anti-Yahwistic practices for which Israel itself is condemned.” (Wiseman)

ii. This reminds us that *judgment may not come at the height of sin*. When God judges a nation or a culture, He has the big picture in view. For that reason, the actual events of judgment may come when things are not as bad in a relative sense.

iii. “It is not the last sand that exhausteth the hour-glass, nor the last stroke of the axe that felleth the tree; so here.” (Trapp)

2. ([2 Kings 17:3-4](#)) Hoshea’s futile resistance against Assyria.

Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute money. 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 became his vassal, and paid him tribute money:** In the pattern of Menaham before him ([2 Kings 15:17-22](#)), Hoshea accepted the status of vassal unto the **king of Assyria**. If he paid his money and did as the king of Assyria pleased, he would be allowed to continue on the throne of Israel.

i. Hoshea thought he had a strategic opportunity when a new king came to the Assyrian throne, but he was wrong. “When Tiglath-pileser III died in 727 b.c. and was succeeded by his own son Shalmaneser V (727-722), the time seemed ripe for certain western states to renounce their vassal status. Moreover, a seemingly important ally lay southward in the delta of Egypt.” (Patterson and Austel)

b. **And the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea:** King Hoshea hoped to find help among the Egyptians, who were in a constant power struggle with the Assyrian Empire. On account of this **conspiracy**, and the failure to pay the yearly **tribute** money, Hoshea was imprisoned by the king of Assyria.

i. As we might expect among the kings of Israel, Hoshea did not look to the LORD for help — he looked to Egypt. Therefore, Hosea said of him: *As for Samaria, her king is cut off like a twig on the water.* ([Hosea 10:7](#))

ii. The reference to **So, king of Egypt**, is probably better understood as a reference to a place — *Sais*, which was at that time the capital of Egypt. “Thus understood, [v. 4](#) would read ‘he had sent envoys to Sais (even unto) the king of Egypt.’” (Patterson and Austel)

3. ([2 Kings 17:5-6](#)) The Northern Kingdom of Israel is finally conquered by the Assyrians.

Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. 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 king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years:** This was a long, dedicated campaign to finally crush the rebellious kingdom of Israel, who had defied the power of the Assyrian Empire. Though it took a three-year siege, it was worth it to the Assyrians.

i. **Three years:** “The fact that it took Assyria that long to break Samaria’s resistance is a testimony to the good wall Omri and Ahab had built around the capital city.” (Dilday)

ii. This shows us that when God brings His judgment, He *may use human instruments* to do it.

b. **The king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria:** When Samaria finally fell and the Northern Kingdom was conquered, the Assyrians implemented their policy towards conquered nations. They deported all but the very lowest classes back to the key cities of their empire, either to train and utilize the talented or to enslave the able.

i. Two hundred years and 19 kings after the time of Solomon (the last king over a united Israel), the Northern Kingdom of Israel fell. It was not because the God of Israel was unable to help them, but because they had so forsaken God and ignored His guidance and correction that He finally stopped actively protecting them and let them rot and degrade according to their desire.

ii. As they **carried Israel away to Assyria**, they followed their typical custom. When the Assyrians depopulated and exiled a conquered community, they led the captives away on journeys of hundreds of miles, with the captives naked and attached together with a system of strings and fishhooks pierced through their lower lips. God would make sure they were led in this humiliating manner through the broken walls of their conquered cities ([Amos 4:2-3](#)).

iii. This shows another principle of God’s judgment: When it comes, it is often humiliating and degrading.

iv. It seems that Sargon II, the brother and successor of Shalmaneser, *finished* this siege or at least took credit for it: “The men of Samaria with their king were hostile to me and consorted together not to carry out their vassal obligations and bring tribute to me, so they fought me... I clashed with them and took as booty 27,280 people with their chariots and their gods in whom they trusted. I incorporated 200 chariots into my army. The rest of the people I made to dwell within Assyria. I restored the city of Samaria and made it greater than before.” (*Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II from Nimrud*, cited in Wiseman)

B. The reasons for the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

“The rest of this chapter is spent in vindicating the Divine providence and justice, showing the reason why God permitted such a desolation to fall on a people who had been so long his peculiar children.” (Clarke)

1. ([2 Kings 17:7](#)) They disregarded the God of their redemption.

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,

a. **For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD:** In the following verses, the divine historian explains the fundamental reasons for the conquering and captivity of the Northern Kingdom. At the root, it was a problem with *sin*. It wasn’t geopolitical changes or social causes — it was *sin*.

b. **They had feared other gods:** In the central act of redemption in Old Testament history, God **brought** Israel **up out of the land of Egypt**. Remembrance of this act alone should prompt Israel to a single-hearted commitment to the LORD. Yet they did not remember this and instead they **feared other gods**, breaking the covenant God made with His people.

i. However, the kingdom of Israel had **feared other gods** since their founding some 200 years before this. This shows us another principle of God's judgment: It is often a long time in coming, because God holds back His judgment as long as possible.

2. **(2 Kings 17:8)** They conformed themselves to the godless nations around them.

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.

a. **And had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel:** Before Israel occupied Canaan in the days of Joshua, the Promised Land was populated by degenerate, pagan peoples who practiced the worst kinds of idolatry and human sacrifice. One of the fundamental sins of Israel was that they followed in these ancient Canaanite ways.

i. **Whom the LORD had cast out:** God **cast out** the Canaanite nations in the days of Joshua because of these sins. Now He had **cast out** the Northern Kingdom of Israel for the same sins. God's judgment was not against the ancient Canaanites because of race or ethnicity; it was because of their *conduct*. As Israel shared the same conduct, they would share the same judgment.

b. **Which they had made:** It is a little difficult to say if what they **made** refers to the *other gods* mentioned in the previous verse or to the **statutes** mentioned in this verse. Either is valid or true. Men make both their laws and their idols after their own ingenuity and desire.

3. **(2 Kings 17:9-12)** Their secret and openly practiced idolatry.

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. They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. 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, for they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this thing."

a. **Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that were not right:** Rebellion and sin cloud the judgment of men, and clearly the judgment of Israel was affected. Their judgment was impaired enough to think they could sin **secretly** against the God who sees everything.

b. **They built for themselves high places in all their cities:** These were places of unauthorized and idolatrous sacrifice, as were the **sacred pillars**.

c. **Like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them:** The divine historian repeats this theme. The same sins that brought judgment upon the Canaanites also brought judgment on the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

4. **(2 Kings 17:13-15)** They rejected the repeated warnings from God.

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." Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God. 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.

a. **Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets:** In love, God sent **prophets** to the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Their message was a warning against the sins that corrupted God's people and separated them from their God. They invited God's people with the theme, "**Turn from your evil ways.**"

b. **Nevertheless they would not hear:** God sent these messengers to help Israel and to spare them the judgment that would come if they did not **turn from** their **evil ways**. Yet God's people became more stubborn when God brought this call to repentance, and they sank deeper into sin.

i. When God brings judgment, He first brings warning — and often many warnings over a long period. It is only after these warnings are rejected that the judgment comes.

ii. "Their sin was first against law, but finally it was against patient love." (Morgan)

iii. **But stiffened their necks:** "Refused to submit their neck to the yoke of God's precepts; a metaphor from stubborn oxen, that make their necks hard, or stiff, and will not bow to the yoke." (Poole)

c. **They followed idols, became idolaters:** The NIV translates this, "*They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless.*" The NASB has it, "*They followed vanity and became vain.*"

i. "The original is more accurate at this point: 'They worshipped emptiness and became empty.' The word here is *hebel* meaning 'air,' 'delusion,' or 'vanity.' The idea is that they became like the gods they worshipped. They bowed down to nothingness and became nothing." (Dilday)

5. ([2 Kings 17:16-23](#)) **They forsook God and served idols — until judgment finally came.**

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. 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. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone. Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. 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. 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. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, 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. **Made for themselves a molded image and two calves:** This refers to the infamous sin of Jeroboam ([1 Kings 12:26-29](#)). This state-sponsored idolatry did not *immediately* ruin the kingdom — the Northern Kingdom of Israel lasted as an independent nation for another 200 years following the time of Jeroboam. Yet it certainly was the *beginning* of the end.

b. **And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire:** This refers to the abominable worship of the idol Molech, to whom children were burned in sacrifice.

c. **Practiced witchcraft and soothsaying:** The northern tribes embraced the same occult practices that the Canaanite tribes before them had embraced. Collectively, these great sins of idolatry provoked God to anger.

d. **Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone:** This was the end of the ten northern tribes as an independent kingdom. When they were dispersed by the Assyrians, some assimilated into other cultures, but others kept their Jewish identity as exiles in other lands.

i. Yet, it is a mistake to think of these ten northern tribes as *lost*. Far back in the days of Jeroboam and his original break with the Southern Kingdom of Judah, the legitimate priests and Levites who lived in the northern

ten tribes did not like Jeroboam's idolatry. They, along with others who *set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel*, then moved from the Northern Kingdom of Israel to the Southern Kingdom of Judah ([2 Chronicles 11:13-16](#)). So actually, the *Southern Kingdom of Judah* contained Israelites from all of the ten tribes.

ii. Considering all this, we can say that the ten northern tribes were not lost, and they certainly did not migrate to Britain in accord with some British-Israelite theories.

- Some (in particular, the godly of that day) migrated to the Southern Kingdom of Judah in the days of Jeroboam I.

- Some assimilated into other cultures.

- Some kept their Jewish culture and identity in the lands of their exile.

e. **Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made:** Spiritually speaking, Judah was more faithful to God than the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Yet they also began to imitate their sinful neighbors to the north.

i. Judah had the lesson right in front of them — the conquered nation of Israel was evidence of what happened when hearts turned from God. Yet they ignored these plain lessons and imitated the sins of Israel.

f. **For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight:** The summary of Israel's sin is simply that they were given over to *idolatry*. They worshipped the true God in a false way and then began to also worship false gods.

C. The resettlement of Samaria.

1. ([2 Kings 17:24-26](#)) God warns the foreigners who are resettled in Samaria.

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. 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. 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."

a. **Then the king of Assyria brought people:** The policy of the Assyrian Empire was to *remove* rebellious, resistant people and to *resettle* their former lands with people from other parts of the empire.

i. "Not only did the Assyrian monarchs hope to make the repopulated and reconstituted districts more manageable, but they hoped to train and encourage the citizenry to transfer their loyalties to the Assyrian Empire." (Patterson and Austel)

b. **They did not fear the LORD; therefore the LORD sent lions among them:** This shows that there was not only something special about the *kingdom* of Israel, but also something special about the *land* of Israel. God demanded to be feared among the people of the land, even if they came from other nations.

i. "Perhaps because many unburied bodies still remained after the bloody warfare and due to the depopulating of the land, voracious lions began to roam freely through the area." (Patterson and Austel)

ii. [Zechariah 2:12](#) tells us that the land of Israel is the *Holy Land*. God regards it as something special, and will hold accountable those who live there and do not fear Him.

iii. "Hereby also God asserted his own right and sovereignty over that land, and made them to understand that neither the Israelites were cast out nor they brought into that land by their valour or strength, but by God's providence." (Poole)

c. **Because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land:** These Assyrian officials seemed to know what the recently-conquered kingdom of Israel *did not know* — that they had to honor the God of Israel. Yet,

any faith in God among these resettled people was founded in simple fear of the lions — leading to an inadequate relationship with God.

i. “He did send lions among them, and it was these lions that converted them. Their teeth and fangs and fiery eyes and the thunders of their roars converted them. They must have a god to deliver them: they could not bear the lions, therefore they must fear the Lord who could send lions, and who perhaps would cease to send them. Now, dear friends, always be somewhat diffident of your own conversion if you can trace it only and solely to motives of terror.” (Spurgeon)

2. ([2 Kings 17:27-33](#)) A religion for Samaria is established.

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.” 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. 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. The men of Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. 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. They feared the LORD, yet served their own gods — according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away.

a. **Taught them how they should fear the LORD:** The priesthood of the kingdom of Israel was corrupt, but the king of Assyria did not know and was not interested in the pure religion of Israel. Therefore this nameless, corrupt priest taught the new inhabitants of the land a corrupt religion.

i. Certainly, it had *elements* of the true faith in it; but at the same time it was corrupted by the centuries of state-sponsored idolatry that reigned in Israel.

b. **Every nation continued to make gods of its own:** The priest-for-hire brought in by the Assyrians did not tell the new inhabitants of the land that they must *only* worship the LORD God of Israel. He did not teach it because, coming from Israel, he did not believe it.

c. **They feared the LORD, yet served their own gods:** This described the *pagan* peoples that the Assyrians brought in to populate the area of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. They gave a measure of respect to the God of Israel — after all, they did not want to be eaten by lions. Yet they also served their own gods and picked and chose among religious and spiritual beliefs as it pleased them.

- This accurately described the pagan peoples who re-populated Israel.

- This accurately described the Northern Kingdom of *Israel* before they were conquered and exiled.

- This accurately describes *common religious belief* in the modern world.

i. “Are you sure this is not a true description of your own position? You pay an outward deference to God by attending his house, and acknowledging his day, whilst you are really prostrating yourself before other shrines.” (Meyer)

ii. “Is not worldly piety, or pious worldliness, the current religion of England? They live among godly people, and God chastens them, and they therefore fear him, but not enough to give their hearts to him. They seek out a trimming teacher who is not too precise and plain-spoken, and they settle down comfortably to a mongrel faith, half truth, half error, and a mongrel worship, half-dead form, and half orthodoxy.” (Spurgeon)

iii. “Let me be right, and let there be no mistake about it; but do not let me try to be both right and wrong, washed and filthy, white and black, a child of God and a child of Satan.” (Spurgeon)

3. ([2 Kings 17:34-41](#)) The continuance of this false religion.

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, 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; 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. 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. And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods. But the LORD your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.” However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals. 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. **To this day they continue practicing the former rituals:** The area of the Northern Kingdom of Israel was not re-occupied by Judah before their own subjugation and conquest by the Babylonian empire. This mixed religion first promoted by the Assyrians continued for many centuries in Samaria, existing even until New Testament times.

i. It seems that God was more lenient with these Samaritans of corrupt belief than He was with disobedient Israel. This teaches us that those with more revelation from God are held to stricter account before Him.

ii. Yet, [2 Chronicles 30:10-19](#) shows us that in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, there were some worshipers of the true God among the area that was formerly the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Some responded to his invitation to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem.

b. **But the LORD your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies:** The writer states this to remind us that if Israel had been faithful — even *moderately faithful* — to their covenant with God, they would still stand. God would have delivered them from all of their enemies. Instead, they were conquered by the Assyrian Empire after their own self-destruction in sin and rebellion.