

Hoshea and the Captivity of Israel

2 Kings 17

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Hoshea: Last King of Israel (Evil - 9 Years) (17:1-6)

CHAPTER 17

1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel, for nine years. **2** And he did evil in the sight of Jehovah, but not as the kings of Israel that had been before him. **3** Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria, and Hoshea became his servant, and tendered him presents. **4** But the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and sent up no present to the king of Assyria as *he had done* from year to year. And the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. **v.4** the prophet hosea speaks of this two-faced behavior... hosea 7:11, Hosea 12:1. Prophetically, just before the assyrian (king of the north) comes down, egypt (king of the south) will come up into the land... this is hinted at here. Isa. 7:18, Dan. 11:40. For the king's captivity, see Hosea 10:7.

5 And the king of Assyria overran the whole land, and went up against Samaria, and besieged it three years. **6** In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. **v.6** the king of assyria here is actually sargon, Isa. 20:1. this location "Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan" is the very location where the Kurds come from.

The Captivity of Israel (17:7-41)

7 And so it was, because the children of Israel had sinned against Jehovah their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods; 8 and they walked in the statutes of the nations that Jehovah had dispossessed from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. 9 And the children of Israel did secretly against Jehovah their God things that were not right; and they built them high places in all their cities, from the watchmen's tower to the fortified city. **vv.8-9** since Israel did the same things the canaanites did, god would be unrighteous *not* to judge them.

10 And they set them up columns and Asherahs on every high hill and under every green tree; 11 and there they burned incense on all the high places, as did the nations that Jehovah had carried away from before them, and they wrought wicked things to provoke Jehovah to anger; 12 and they served idols, as to which Jehovah had said to them, Ye shall not do this thing. 13 And Jehovah testified against Israel and against Judah, by all the prophets, all the seers, saying, Turn from your evil ways, and keep my commandments, my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through my servants the prophets. 14 But they would not hear, and hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, who did not believe in Jehovah their God. 15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant which he had made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he had testified unto them; and they followed vanity and became vain, and *went* after the nations that were round about them, concerning whom Jehovah had charged them that they should not do like them. 16 And they forsook all the commandments of Jehovah their God, and made them molten images, two calves, and made an Asherah, and worshipped all the host of the heavens, and served Baal; 17 and they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger. 18 Therefore Jehovah was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there remained but the tribe of Judah only. 19 Also Judah kept not the commandments of Jehovah their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they had made. 20 And Jehovah rejected all the seed of Israel; and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. **vv.19-20** God mentions Judah in passing... they were no better. Outwardly, Judah "yet walk[ed] with God" (Hosea 11:12); but its ruin had already long been manifest. The condition of their hearts were no better than Israel (Isa. 29:13-14).

21 For Israel had rent *the kingdom* from the house of David; and they had made Jeroboam

the son of Nebat king; and Jeroboam violently turned Israel from following Jehovah, and made them sin a great sin. **22** And the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them: **23** until Jehovah had removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said through all his servants the prophets; and Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria, unto this day.

vv.24-41 Which of these two groups was the GUILTY? When the captives of Judah were restored to their land that they might receive Christ, they deeply despised the Samaritans and had no relationship with them (John 4:9) because the samaritans were not true Jews, But they went further than that, and said to their Messiah, "Thou art a Samaritan!" (John 8:48). They religiously judged other men meanwhile they themselves were even worse. In doing that they were judging God!

24 And the king of Assyria brought *people* from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and made them dwell in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in its cities. **v.24** We see here and also in verse 6 the enormous extent to which the Assyrian kingdom had grown... it controlled Babylon at this time. But God had not made Assyria the head of gold, so its downfall was certain.

25 And so it was, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not Jehovah; and Jehovah sent lions among them, which killed *some* of them. **v.25** Lions... In spite of its desolation, God was caring for the land of His inheritance. He would not allow the samaritans (only stewards) to be taken away, not because they were better than Israel, but because He did not want the land to fall under the curse from which He had delivered it when He had exterminated the Canaanites.

26 And they spoke to the king of Assyria saying, The nations that thou hast removed and made to dwell in the cities of Samaria know not the manner of the god of the land; therefore he has sent lions among them, and behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the god of the land. **v.26** They were more intelligent than the Lord's people in that they understood that to remain in the land required knowing the Lord.

27 And the king of Assyria commanded saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye have brought away from thence; and let them go and abide there, and let him teach them the manner of the god of the land. **vv.27-29** This priest himself had in the past supported the mixture of idolatry with the worship of the true God and so was unable to teach them anything but his own corruption.... They learned "how they should fear Jehovah" (v.28) and

the other hand, “every nation made gods of their own” (v.29).

28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and abode in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear Jehovah. **29** And every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places that the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities in which they dwelt. **30** And the people of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the people of Cuth made Nergal, and the people of Hamath made Ashima, **31** and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim. **32** So they feared Jehovah, and made to themselves from all classes of them priests of the high places, who offered *sacrifices* for them in the houses of the high places. **33** They feared Jehovah, and served their own gods after the manner of the nations, whence they had been carried away. **34** To this day they do after their former customs: they fear not Jehovah, neither do they after their statutes or after their ordinances, nor after the law and commandment that Jehovah commanded the sons of Jacob, whom he named Israel. **v.34** In v.33 it says they feared the Lord and severd other gods... but it adds in verse 34: “they fear not Jehovah.” God does not tolerate mixtures. You can’t mix idolatry in with the fear of the Lord and end up with the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, not something you add in when you’re in trouble.

35 And Jehovah had made a covenant with them, and charged them saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow down yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them; **36** but Jehovah alone, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched-out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice. **37** And the statutes and the ordinances and the law, and the commandment which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods. **38** And ye shall not forget the covenant that I have made with you, neither shall ye fear other gods; **39** but ye shall fear Jehovah your God, and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. **v.39** Following the same principle toward them that He had used with His own people, He left the Samaritans to their own responsibility.

40 And they did not hearken, but did after their former customs. **41** And these nations feared Jehovah, and served their graven images, both their children and their children’s children: as did their fathers, so do they, unto this day.