

## FINAL STUDY NOTES – 2 Kings Chapters 16-17! 4/27-28/2026

### CLASSROOM LOCATION AND ZOOM – SIGN IN INFORMATION:

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NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE ONLINE (ZOOM) STUDY!

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM PACIFIC DAYLIGHT SAVINGS Time (US and Canada)**  
**THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY WILL BE MEETING ON ZOOM ONLY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!**  
**MEETING ID - 878 5864 4763 Passcode: 087484**

Join Zoom Meeting -

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>**

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**TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM PACIFIC DAYLIGHT SAVINGS Time (US and Canada).**  
**TUES MORNING MTG PLACE: 1201 KEY WEST, CORONA DEL MAR (shown as 1201 KW, Corona del Mar, CA 92625) on Global Positioning System (GPS) in automobiles. For driving directions, suggest using (waze.com/live map) or *MapQuest* (mapquest.com), AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!**

**MEETING ID# - 853 0915 0746 - Passcode: 715340**

Join Zoom Meeting -

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### OPENING PRAYER

**Review: 2 KINGS – Chapter 14 – Amaziah Reigns in Judah; Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel. Chapter 15 – Azariah Reigns in Judah; Zechariah Reigns in Israel; Shallum Reigns in Israel; Menahem Reigns in Israel; Pekahiah Reigns in Israel; Pekah Reigns in Israel; Jotham Reigns in Judah. (3 Judah kings (790-732BC); 6 Israel kings (782-732BC).**

**THIS WEEK: 2 KINGS – Chapter 16 – Ahaz Reigns in Judah (732BC) – (vs. 1-20); Chapter 17 Hoshea Reigns in Israel – (vs. 1-4); Israel Carried Captive to Assyria (722BC) – (vs. 5-23); Assyria Resettles Samaria – (vs. 24-41).**

### Ahaz Reigns in Judah

**2Ki 16:1 In the seventeenth year of Pekah (about 735BC) the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign.**

- **Jotham had reigned over Judah**, the southern kingdom, for sixteen years. It was at the beginning of Jotham's reign, that Isaiah the prophet began his ministry as a prophet to Judah. During the reign of Ahaz, Isaiah was active as a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah.
- **Isaiah chapter six includes prophecies** made during the reign of Ahaz, who was a wicked king. Up to this point in the history of Judah, he is the most wicked king that they had. He will soon be exceeded in his wickedness, by Manasseh.
- **Ahaz begins the introduction of Baal worship in Judah.** He worshipped Molech, burning his children in the fire. He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, beginning a downward trend in Judah. Hezekiah

evened it off, undoing some of the evils of his father. However, after the death of Hezekiah, his son Manasseh, began the real plunge to the bottom, for the southern tribe of Judah. Ahaz was a very wicked king. We have more about him in 2 Chronicles chapter 28.

**2Ki 16:2-3 Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his father David had done. [3] But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel** (about the worst thing could be said); **indeed he made his son** (Chronicles says sons) **pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations** (in worship of Baal and Molech) **whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel.**

- **Pass through the fire.** The worship of Baal and Molech both involved the sacrifice of children. Unwanted children or in some cases a person really wanted to make a great offering and sacrifice to his god, he would sacrifice his child. This is what Ahaz the king began to do!

**2Ki 16:4 And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.**

- **Very few of the kings of Israel and Judah stopped this practice.** Ahaz not only did not stop the practice, but he participated in it himself! What a sad commentary when the king of the nation endorsed this practice from the very highest position in the land!

**2Ki 16:5 Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to make war; and they besieged Ahaz but could not overcome him.**

- **However, we do read in 2 Chronicles chapter 28, that they killed 120,000 in one day of Ahaz's troops, and they took 200,000 captives.** Though they could not take the city of Jerusalem itself, they did effectively destroy the armies of Ahaz.

**2Ki 16:6-7 At that time Rezin king of Syria captured Elath for Syria, and drove the men of Judah from Elath. Then the Edomites went to Elath, and dwell there to this day** (at time of this writing). **[7] So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant (slave) and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me."**

- **Ahaz offers to make Judah and himself a vassal, a satellite nation as a part of the Assyrian empire.** "I am your servant and your son." Here is my request.

**2Ki 16:8 And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent it as a present to the king of Assyria.**

- **Ahaz made himself a vassal to the king of Assyria.** He is calling upon him for help, to deliver him from this confederacy of the Syrians and the Israelites, the northern kingdom.
- **Isaiah gave Ahaz the word of the LORD, telling him to trust in Him;** that He would deliver him. Isaiah was saying, "If you will just turn your life over to God, turn this issue over to God, God will deliver you out of it. God will save you." Ahaz did not listen, but instead turned to the arm of flesh, asking for the king of Assyria to attack Damascus, and attack Samaria, so that these kings would have to withdraw from their attack against him. In doing that, he subjected himself to the king of Assyria. "I am your servant (slave) and your son."
- **Notice that he is willing to submit himself totally to this pagan king, and yet not willing to submit himself to God!** In (Isa 7:10-14) *Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, [11] "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." [12] But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!" [13] Then he (Isaiah) said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? [14] Therefore the LORD Himself will give you (plural) a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.* Which interpreted is, God with us. That beautiful prophecy of the coming of Jesus Christ.
- **How often do I make the mistake of not submitting to God, but rather willingly submit to another king or idol, as Ahaz did?**

**2Ki 16:9 So the king of Assyria heeded him; for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and took it, carried its people captive to Kir, and killed Rezin.**

- **This is all recorded in Assyrian history.** Records and the inscriptions of the kings coincide completely with this biblical account. How Shalmaneser came against Damascus at the time that he was attacking Damascus, Shallum overthrew him. The whole thing is tied together from a historic standpoint with the secular Assyrian history. It does not prove the bible, the bible proves that the history accounts of Assyria, are correct.

**2Ki 16:10-11 Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the design of the altar and its pattern, according to**

*all its workmanship. [11] Then Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. So Urijah the priest made it before King Ahaz came back from Damascus.*

- **He went up, and he saw the altar of the Syrian/Assyrian kings.** It was customary when the kings would go to war, they would take their altars with them, because they were relying upon their gods to deliver them, and to give them victory. When our men go to war, we pray to God, that God will give us victory over the enemies. We trust in God to help us in the battles. This was common in those days, they would trust in their gods.
- **Here, Tiglath-Pileser had brought his altar.** When Ahaz saw this altar, it fascinated him. Thus, he ordered Urijah the priest to make an altar like it. He drew out the design and all, and sent it down to Urijah, saying “Make me an altar like this.” And Urijah did so.
- **Janus was the Romans, god of war. Whenever the Roman troops were out in combat, the gates of the temple of Janus were opened, and the people would go in and pray to Janus, the god of war, that he would give success to the Roman legions, as they were battling against the enemies.**
- **Turning away from the God of truth to a god of success. Notice how Ahaz turns from the one true and living God, the God of truth, to the god of success! Am I ever inclined to do that in any way?**

*2Ki 16:12-13 And when the king came back from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. [13] So he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering; and he poured his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the altar.*

- **Ahaz’s friendship with the Assyrian king led to more trouble.** Seeing the pagan altar at Damascus, he tried to duplicate it in Jerusalem. In fact, his new altar replaced the God-ordained altar in the temple. How easy it is to imitate the world. (2Ch 28:22-23) *Now in the time of his distress King Ahaz became increasingly unfaithful to the LORD. This is that King Ahaz. [23] For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, saying, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel. Ahaz’s friendship with Assyria led Ahaz into idolatry and the king of Assyria took the money but in the end failed to help Judah at all.*

*2Ki 16:14 He also brought the bronze altar which was before the LORD, from the front of the temple—from between the new altar and the house of the LORD—and put it on the north side of the new altar.*

- **When Urijah set the altar in the courtyard, he moved the bronze altar** that had been made by Solomon, where the offerings were offered, over to the north side, so there would be nothing between this new altar and the entrance into the temple.

*2Ki 16:15 Then King Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, "On the great new altar burn the morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king’s burnt sacrifice, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice. And the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by."*

- **King Ahaz is really saying, “I’ll use the bronze altar, I’ll figure out what we’re going to do with it later, to inquire by.”** In the Hebrew meaning, “I really do not know what I am going to do with it yet, but I will figure out something for it. But we will replace it with this new altar.”

*2Ki 16:16 Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that King Ahaz commanded.*

- **Rather than standing up, as did the priest in the days of Azariah,** went into the temple to offer a sacrifice, and the priest came in and said, “Get out of here! You have no business being here,” and Uzziah was smitten with leprosy. Here Urijah just goes along with anything the king wants.

*2Ki 16:17 And King Ahaz cut off the panels of the carts, and removed the lavers from them; and he took down the Sea from the bronze oxen that were under it, and put it on a pavement of stones.*

- **Ahaz defaced the bases on which the lavers were set and took down the magnificent Sea of cast bronze,** which Solomon had made. These lavers were used by the priests for the required washings. Ahaz seemed especially against them. It is one of the greatest prejudices that can be done to religion to obstruct the purifying of the priests, the LORD’s ministers.

*2Ki 16:18 Also he removed the Sabbath pavilion which they had built in the temple (for the king of Judah), and he removed the king’s outer entrance from the house of the LORD, on account of the king of Assyria.*

- **He removed the Sabbath pavilion, erected either in honor of the Sabbath or for the conveniency of the priests,** when on the Sabbath, they officiated in greater numbers than on other days. Whatever it was, it seems he intended to put a contempt upon the Sabbath, and so to open a wide inlet to all manner of iniquity.

**2Ki 16:19** Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

- We will come to Ahaz again, as we get into 2 Chronicles 28.

**2Ki 16:20** So Ahaz rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

- **Hezekiah is like a rose between two thorns.** Ahaz, his father, was an extremely wicked king. A bad king, and yet perhaps Hezekiah, in seeing the wickedness of his father, determined, “Hey, I’m not going to follow his path!” But the tragedy is, though Hezekiah was a good king, and initiated many reforms. He went as far as to remove the high places, which the other kings had not done.
- **Hezekiah was one of the sons that survived.** Ahaz burnt several of his children in the fires to the gods of the pagans, there in the valley of Hinnom, we will see in 2 Chronicles 28. Hezekiah, his son, removed the high places, was a good king, was heavily influenced by Isaiah the prophet, and God blessed and prospered Hezekiah’s reign. But his son Manasseh even exceeded his grandfather Ahaz in wickedness.

### Hoshea Reigns in Israel

**2Ki 17:1** 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.

- **Hoshea was the last king of Israel.** It was during his reign that Shalmaneser came and attacked Samaria. Tiglath-Pileser took Damascus, but now Shalmaneser became the king of Assyria, and he attacked Samaria during the time of the reign of Hoshea, the last king, who reigned for nine years. Hoshea should not be on the throne. Tiglath-Pileser had established him there.

**2Ki 17:2** And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him.

- He was not as bad as some of his predecessors.

**2Ki 17:3** Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute money.

- Hoshea agrees to pay tribute or taxes. But then he has a change of mind.

**2Ki 17:4** 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.

- **Shalmaneser came, and Hoshea bought him off the first time, giving him presents and all.** Shalmaneser did not attack Samaria at that time. However, when he learned that Hoshea had sent down to the king of Egypt, to send the troops from Egypt, to fortify and to strengthen him against another attack from Shalmaneser. Additionally, when Hoshea did not pay the tribute that he was supposed to pay, Shalmaneser shut Hoshea up and bound him in prison.

**2Ki 17:5** Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years.

- It took a while, even with the greatness of their army, to come in and to break through the capital city.

### The Fall of Israel

**2Ki 17:6** In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria (Shalmaneser began, Shallum finished) 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.

- **Assyrian history tells us that Shallum overthrew Shalmaneser** and was the one who took Samaria, though the three-year siege began under Shalmaneser. Shallum finally took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria and placed them in Halah and by the Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the city of the Medes.
- **So, the northern kingdom ends!** A kingdom that began about two hundred years earlier during the reign of Rehoboam, the grandson of David. The first king, Jeroboam, immediately apostatized. Upon establishing the kingdom, he built the altars with the golden calves, in Dan and Bethel, commanding the people to worship there at those altars, saying these golden calves were the gods that brought them out of Egypt.
- **Each of the succeeding kings of the northern kingdom continued the practice** of worshipping the golden calves. There were no long dynasties, the longest was that of Jehu, four generations. Unlike the southern kingdom, where God had promised David that there would be one of his descendants sitting upon the throne.

- The southern kingdom was always ruled by a descendant of David, except for that brief period with Athaliah, who was a wife of one of the descendants. So that the northern kingdom is now gone.

### Exile Because of Idolatry

*2Ki 17:7 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,*

- *The children of Israel had sinned against the LORD!* That is the number one cause here! Now they had sinned in all directions, but all sin is first and foremost against God before it is ever against anybody else. Remember David in (*Psa 51:4*) *Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight—That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.*
- **The first sign here is this addiction to sin, where a nation begins to choose unrighteousness over righteousness.** When that becomes the predominant attitude of the population of the nation, and they forget God; forgetting His standard and choose sin! We want to choose sin. God birthed us going forward! But now we are going to jettison Him because we love our sin more than we love God.
- **The second characteristic is they had feared other gods. There was no longer any fear of the true and the living God!** That was made manifest in that God's word, which exalts above His name, God's word was no longer the standard of right and wrong in the nation of Israel when they went into captivity!
- **The standard within the nation** was moved away, just as we see it happening and well advanced in our own nation!
- **Choosing righteousness. Fearing God! How am I doing regarding these two criteria of rejecting sin? Do I have any tendency to choose unrighteousness over righteousness? How much do I really fear God? Am I being directed by His word?**

*2Ki 17:8 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.*

- This was expressly forbidden in (*Lev 20:23,26*) *And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them. [26] And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.*

*2Ki 17:9-10 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*

- *They built for themselves high places.* In addition to their private, secret sins, judgment came for public wickedness and idolatry. These were not the high places utilized by Israel for worshiping God before the building of the temple. In direct disobedience to (*Deu 12:2*) *You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.*
- **These high places were in all the habitations of Israel, from small fortified structures to large garrison cities, from the smallest to largest towns.** The "high place" altars were on wooded hills with images of false gods.

*2Ki 17:11-12 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."*

- **God had made a covenant; they broke the covenant.** God said, "You shall have no other gods before Me. You are not to make any idols, images, graven images, any likenesses of things in heaven, or on the earth, to bow down to them, and to worship them.

*2Ki 17:13 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."*

- **Yet the LORD testified.** God had sent the prophets Ahijah, Elijah, Micaiah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea to these people in the northern kingdom of Israel. To the southern kingdom of Judah he had sent the prophets Shemaiah, Joel, Isaiah, and Micah. Later on He will be sending Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah. Every prophet warned the people of both kingdoms what would take place if they did not return to God and forsake their evil ways.

**2Ki 17:14 Nevertheless they would not (not that they could not) hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God.**

- They just hardened themselves to God, to the word of God, to the prophets of God. In (Pro 29:1) He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. If you harden your heart to God; harden your neck to God, become rigid in your attitude towards God, “I’m going to do what I want to do.” God will move with severity and with finality.

**2Ki 17:15 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.**

- His testimonies which He had testified against them. He warned them of these very things!
- They followed idols, became idolaters. Oh, the empty life in this world apart from Jesus Christ! The emptiness of the sex experience outside of marriage. The emptiness of success, the emptiness of the world.

**2Ki 17:16 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.**

- Worshiped all the host of heaven. They began to follow astrology, the casting of the horoscopes, and the following after. Seeking guidance and all, from the influence of the stars, and all upon their lives.

**2Ki 17:17 And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire (Molech), practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.**

- They burned their children in their pagan rituals to Molech.
- Practiced witchcraft and soothsaying. They got into spiritism, into Satanic worship. They got into the occult; they got into witchcraft. Seeking to use these supernatural powers of evil against others.

**2Ki 17:18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.**

- The nation of Israel was removed, carried away as captive to Assyria. The nation is gone! It is a tragic history, for a nation with so much potential and possibility to end up destroyed, about eight hundred years after the exodus from Egypt!

**2Ki 17:19 Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.**

- Unfortunately, the same thing that brought the destruction on Israel, now was infecting Judah. Ahaz the king is doing evil in the sight of the LORD, leading Judah down the same path.

**2Ki 17:20-23 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.**

- Israel is gone! It was the LORD that did this, using the Assyrians to cast the ten tribes of Israel from His sight. They refused His warnings! He had warned them repeatedly that if they did not turn, the judgment would come. And one day it did!

### Assyria Resettles Samaria

**2Ki 17:24 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.**

- The Assyrian records of Shallum tell us that during his reign, they brought 22,242 out of Samaria. They re-populated the area with people from other territories. That was the practice of the Assyrians to demoralize people completely to rebelling, they would move whole segments of the population to other areas. Then they would bring people from other areas, and plant them there. Being small in number and in a different culture, there is no thought of rebelling.

**2Ki 17:25 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.**

- As these people were brought to Samaria by the Assyrians, they did not reverence or worship the LORD. They were not familiar with the area. They were not used to lions, which began to attack and kill them.

*2Ki 17:26 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."*

- We do not know how to survive here. We do not know what their God is like and He has sent these lions!

*2Ki 17:27-28 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.*

- *Send there one of the priests.* In response, the Assyrian king ordered an Israelite priest back to Samaria from exile to teach the people what the God of the land required in worship.
- **He does not know the God of Israel Himself**, because he and others, led the northern kingdom of Israel in the idolatry for hundreds of years. You talk about the blind leading the blind; that is exactly what happened here.

*2Ki 17:29-31 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.*

- **To make gods!** If you can make your god, you have a god that is not worth worshipping or following. Anything you can make, by virtue of you being able to make it, means that you are greater than what you can make. Who in the world wants to make their gods? He is less than the maker. I need a god that is bigger than I am! It is really sad here they continued to make gods of their own, filling the whole land with their idolatry.

*2Ki 17:32-33 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.*

- **What an interesting paradox.** *They feared the LORD yet served their own gods!* We learn about the LORD, that He is there. We reverence Him; we give Him His place, but we really serve our other gods!
- **How many people are like that today?** They reverence Jesus. They celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. But their true god was pleasure, or possessions. They served these things, though they acknowledged, revered the LORD. He will have a place at Christmas, small as it may be, second to Santa Claus of course.
- **They worshiped their own gods, but they feared the LORD.** A strange paradox, but it is one of the things of human nature, which is all too common. People who have a place for Jesus, but not first place. People who believe in Jesus, but He is not the Lord of their lives. People who desire salvation, they desire Jesus, as Savior, but they do not want Him as Lord. There is something else at the center of your own heart. There is another master-passion that governs your life, though you say you believe in Jesus, and reverence Him.
- **How much of that is in me? Saying and thinking that I fear God, but am actually worshipping other gods? (Psa 19:12-13) Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. [13] Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression.**

*2Ki 17:34-41 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 (I must be your God, exclusively, solely, you cannot have these 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. (These were the commandments, the very things that people broke.) [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.**

- **After deporting the best of the people**, the king of Assyria imported citizens from other nations under his rule, thereby preventing Israel from organizing and rebelling. These verses describe the origin of “the Samaritans,” that mixed people we read about in (*Joh 4; Act 8*).
- **Later on a “remnant” of believing Jews did return to Samaria**, but orthodox Jews would have no dealings with this “half-breed” nation. Jesus told a Samaritan woman plainly that the Samaritans did not know what they were worshipping (*Joh 4:22*) and that salvation would come from the Jews.
- **At first, there was no religious faith in Samaria**, so God had to send lions to bring fear into the hearts of the people. Assyria solved the problem, importing a Jewish priest, But he had the people worship *both* Jehovah and their own national gods. “Every nation made gods of their own.”
- **Note the repetition of the phrase “they feared the LORD” (2Ki 17:25, 28,32-34,41)**. They feared the LORD as the “god of the land,” but they worshiped and served their own gods. Their worship of the LORD was an empty formality, a mere outward show of allegiance. Their true worship was of their own heathen gods.
- **Even after seeing the heavy hand of judgment on their land, the people that remained still persisted** in disobeying the LORD. Ultimately this cancer of idolatry spread to Judah, and in 586 B.C. the Babylonians captured and destroyed Jerusalem. A remnant returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, and the nation began to blossom again. But when God sent His Son to His people, they rejected Him, and once again divine judgment had to fall. In A.D. 70, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the nation was scattered across the world.
- (*Psa 32:12a*) **Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD**. These tragic events in the history of Israel ought to cause Christian citizens to fear for their country and pray for their leaders. Godless leaders produce godless generations of citizens (*2Ki 17:41*). Compromising priests lead worshipers farther away from the LORD. When the Word of the LORD is rejected (*2Ki 17:34-38*), there is no hope for a nation’s future. There may be an extension of mercy (God bore with Israel for 200 years), but ultimately judgment must fall.
- **There is no cure for apostasy. Once God’s people have finally turned away from the LORD, God must judge**. He will save for Himself a “remnant” of faithful believers and start His witness again, but He will not bless that part that has rejected His Word and refused His calls.

#### SUMMARY:

- **2Ki 16:8 How often do I make the mistake of not submitting to God, but rather willingly submit to another king or idol, as Ahaz did?**
- **2Ki 16:11 Turning away from the God of truth to a god of success.** Notice how Ahaz turns from the one true and living God, the God of truth, to the god of success! Am I ever inclined to do that in any way?
- **2Ki 17:7 Choosing righteousness. Fearing God! How am I doing regarding these two criteria of rejecting sin?** Do I have any tendency to choose unrighteousness over righteousness? How much do I really fear God? Am I being directed by His word?
- **2Ki 17:33 Worshiping other gods! How much of that is in me? Saying and thinking that I fear God, but am actually worshipping other gods? (Psa 19:12-14) Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. [13] Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression. [14] Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.**

**HOW GREAT THOU ART** – Stuart Hine, Billy Graham/Shea (2;45/2;48)

*How great thou art! How great Thou art! Oh Lord my God when I in awesome wonder Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made I see the stars; I hear the rolling thunder Thy power throughout the universe displayed*

*Refrain: Then sings my soul my Savior God to Thee, How great thou art! How great Thou art!*

*Then sings my soul my Savior God to Thee! How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

*When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!*

*Then I shall bow in humble adoration, And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art. (Refrain)*

#### CLOSING PRAYER

**NEXT WEEK: Study 2 Kings, Chapters 18-19** (The angel of the LORD kills 185,000 Assyrians)