

2 Kings 17:1-23

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[0:00] this evening. 2 Kings 17 verses 1 through 23 will be our text. Historically, in date and time, we are making our way up to 721 B.C.

That's where we're at in this passage. So it tells you just kind of the age of the events that we will be reading. We can mark this because it is a historical marker.

However, that's where we'll be at 2 Kings 17, starting in verse 1 and reading into verse 23. Before we get into our text, let's spend some time in prayer.

Father, we're so thankful for the opportunity, the grand privilege of gathering together, fellowshiping with one another over a meal, spending time just meeting one another and talking to one another, Lord, how wonderful it is, the fellowship of the local church.

We thank you for the gift of that, and we thank you that we have the commonality of relationship with Christ and the presence of the Spirit to enable us to do so. Lord, as we come and we open up the Word of God, we pray now that that Spirit would also give us insight and understanding into the text before us.

[1:16] Lord, help us to read it and do so much more than collect and gain information, as we have said before, but may it rather be an encounter with the living God who is speaking even historical truths into our lives, truths that have place in time and space in the past but have application in today.

So may we meet with you over the Word of God, and may you speak to us, and may we see who we are, but more importantly, may we see who you are.

And we ask it all in Christ's name, amen. 1 Kings 17, verses 1 through 23. So we just continue to make our way through Scripture.

We have gotten to this point, and the reason I said just a moment ago that we can't be able to make and mark this at 721 BC, is this is the fall of the Northern Kingdom, or the fall of Israel.

So the title this evening will be The Fall of Israel to the Assyrian Empire. This is where the Northern Kingdom is carried away into exile. We will see, by the time we get to the end of this book, the Southern Kingdom of Judah being carried away into Babylonian exile, but we will transcend nearly 200 years before those events come about.

[2:38] But we have now come to this place of what could have been and is one of the greatest disciplinarian actions of God upon His people, that is the removal of them from the land.

Now if you know anything at all about the covenants of the Old Testament, you will understand that the covenant that really has application to the nation of Israel, there is the Abrahamic covenant, there is the Davidic covenant, sure, but after the Abrahamic covenant, there is the Mount Sinai covenant, the covenant of Mount Sinai.

The promises that were connected to the Abrahamic covenant and the covenant at Mount Sinai are promises that are connected to a people and to a place, right?

It's a particular people as they exist in a particular place, and that God will multiply them and they will be a nation that would display His glory to a watching world. So the promises of God to the people of God are connected to the promised land.

This is why we see the Exodus event. He is bringing them out in order to bring them in. God is not just, go all the way back in your time, because I want you to understand really the weight of what's before us before we read it.

[3:52] When God makes His promise to Abraham, you remember this, and He tells him to look to the heavens and count the stars and say, this will be your descendants.

And He tells Abraham that everywhere that he walks, everywhere that he goes, everywhere that his foot treads, that he will give it to his descendants. That is what we refer to as the promised land or

the land of Israel, the geographical location.

It is there that God begins to set the boundaries that He will bless His people with, putting them really in the heart of what will be, fast forward to it by the time we get to the New Testament, the hub of major commerce throughout the world in that region.

This is why Christ comes in the fullness of time, at the right time, at the right place. It's amazing when we see all this fit together. And God begins to tell Abraham that this people will live in this place, but He tells him there will be an exile, there will be a break, about 400 years.

Now, we know that Abraham's descendants aren't going to live there immediately because we understand there's the Egyptian captivity. There is that reality which was not a discipline of the Lord.

[5 : 04] Understand that, right? He wasn't disciplining them. He was forming them. And He was forming them to understand that He would redeem them. He is their Redeemer. So they would come into the land with the knowledge of what it meant to be redeemed.

Hold on to all this, okay? You'll see why in just a moment. They had been set free from a captivity they were born into from a power higher than them.

And they were led out and brought into the promised land where all the promises and all the covenants could be fulfilled. To be removed from that land is the greatest disciplinary action that God could exercise upon His people.

Because the removal from that land is essentially, in the mindset of the Old Testament, in the covenants of Israel, separating them from the promises of God.

Okay, so you have to kind of... Okay, so you have to kind of... I know in our Western mindset that is foreign to us. But I'm trying to set the stage as best as I can for you.

[6 : 14] I want you to understand what is going on. So now, here we are. 1 Kings 17. In the twelfth year of Ahaz, king of Judah, Hosea, the son of Elah, became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned nine years, hid in evil in the sight of the Lord, only not as the kings of Israel who were before him.

Shalmanasser, king of Assyria, came up against him, and Hosea became his servant and paid him tribute. But the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hosea, who had sent messengers to Saul, king of Egypt, and had offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year.

So the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. Then the king of Assyria invaded the whole land and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hosea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile to Assyria and settled them in Hala and Habor on the river of Gozan and in the cities of the Medes.

Now, this came about because the sons of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and they had feared other gods and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord had driven out before the sons of Israel and in the customs of the kings of Israel which they had introduced.

The sons of Israel did things secretly which were not right against the Lord their God. Moreover, they built for themselves high places in all their towns from watchtower to fortified city.

[7 : 50] They set for themselves sacred pillars and ashram on every high hill and under every green tree, and there they burned incense on all the high places as the nations did which the Lord had carried away to exile before them, and they did evil things provoking the Lord.

They served idols concerning which the Lord had said to them, You shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and every seer, saying, Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments, my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, in which I sent to you through my servants the prophets.

However, they did not listen but stiffened their neck like their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God. They rejected his statutes and his covenant which he made with their fathers, and his warning with which he warned them.

And they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the nations which surrounded them, concerning which the Lord had commanded them not to do like them. They forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made for themselves molten images, even two calves, and made an asherah, and worshipped all the hosts of heaven, and served Baal.

Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and practiced divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him. So the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from his sight.

[9 : 15] None was left except the tribe of Judah. Also, Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the customs which Israel had introduced. The Lord rejected all the descendants of Israel, and afflicted them, and gave them into the hand of the plunderers, until he cast them out of his sight.

When he had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam the son of Nabok king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel away from following the Lord, and made them commit a great sin. The sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, which he did. They did not depart from them, until the Lord removed Israel from his sight. As he spoke through all his servants, the prophets. So Israel was carried away into exile, from their own land to Assyria, until this day. Now we know that 1 and 2 Kings is authored by someone.

We're not 100% sure who it is. We have some, what we think, context clues that we can find there. But it is authored by someone immediately proceeding, or even at the very beginning, of the Babylonian captivity of Judah.

[10 : 27] We would imply from this text that the author is writing in the very beginning stages of the Babylonian captivity. So he is writing this passage nearly 200 years after it happens.

We can gather that information, because in the text before us, he not only speaks of the removal of Israel, he also declares that Judah too was removed. Though, in our text, he is, they have not been yet removed.

But he speaks of what will happen by the time we get to the end of this writing. So we have one looking back and declaring to us, this is how they got to where they're at. But while the author was writing this, they were still in Assyria, which would imply, again, these are how we figure out when a portion of Scripture was written, that it would have been at the very early stages of the Babylonian captivity, while the nation of Israel was still in the land of Assyria, and the nation of Judah was being carried away into Babylon before the Babylonian Empire spread all the way out.

Nebuchadnezzar took all the land from the Assyrians, and then you have Alexander the Great coming in. You remember Daniel and all his visions, right? That's why these all have application. But what we have here is the fall of Israel, something that is not only instrumental to the nation, historical, and gives us proper context to understand what's going on, but it is even really of utmost importance in our understanding of Scripture.

If you were to take a Old Testament survey class, if you were to take even a New Testament survey class, there are certain dates which you need to know, and this is one of them.

[12 : 11] You need to know when they were led away. Not that the date 721 BC is all that important for you to memorize. It is just important because you need to know this is where God begins to transform His people.

We've said this before. The nation of Israel goes into captivity. One of the most polytheistic people in the world.

They come out of captivity, the most monotheistic people in their world. Okay? I'll let you wrap your mind around that again.

The problem God is addressing, we read it in the text, is the multitude of false gods in which they are worshiping. Right? Even when we get to the southern kingdom of Judah, same thing.

They are not worshiping the Lord their God alone. coming out of the Babylonian captivity. Just in hindsight, we never read of the ten tribes coming out of the Syrian captivity.

[13 : 21] They are kind of absorbed among the nations. A remnant comes back out of the Babylonian captivity. These are not lost, quote unquote, tribes. They did not move to America and form the LDS churches.

None of that. Okay? They're not lost. But the Babylonians absorbed the Assyrians and became that one large empire and as many as wanted to came back.

Okay? But when they come out of Babylonian captivity, that polytheism is gone. We don't read in the New Testament. Now, we don't read them worshiping accurately.

The only people that we read in the New Testament that are kind of intermingling polytheistic worship is when Jesus meets the woman at the well in Samaria. Well, what happens in Samaria? We read the rest of this chapter. We know that's where the Assyrians intermingled. Those are not all Jews. Those are a mixed multitude of people there. That's why we have that. But the Jewish people that come out, monotheistic.

[14 : 21] So I say that because here's the good news. What God is correcting gets corrected. Okay? He corrects the problem.

And that's a lot of information just so you can understand historically why this is important. But I want you just to focus on some things here regarding the fall. Number one, that's a lot of introduction to get to these points.

And I promise I won't keep you too long tonight because that's a lot of introduction. But I think when we get into the historical stuff, we need to know what's going on. Number one, in this we see the weakness of man. We see the weakness of man.

And very clearly we see Hosea becomes king. He's last king of Israel. He reigns nine years. But what we see about Hosea is he did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord. But he didn't do as bad as the kings who went before him.

Did you notice that? He was a little bit better. He was not as bad as those kings who went before him. He's not even as bad. It doesn't even say that he walked in the sins of Jeroboam, right? It just says that he didn't do what was right in the sight of the Lord.

[15 : 18] So Hosea represents what we would call one of the better wicked kings. He was not a good king. He did not do what was right. But he wasn't as bad as all the other ones who went before him.

Yet what we find here is that even his goodness is not good enough. Because the best that man can do still falls terribly short of the holiness that God requires.

Hosea is the best that they can do on their own. They don't have the temple. They don't have the priests. They don't have the Levites. Now they have their own priests. They have all these other temples that are there.

But they don't have the ordinances. They don't have any of that. But Hosea still can't do what is right. Why? Because man is weak and he's fallen. In his best efforts, he cannot do that.

Paul would say it this way. All of our righteousness is like filthy rags. The best that we can offer, if we're not as bad as those who went before us, the reality is that's still not good enough.

[16 : 22] If we're a little bit better than the other people, we're still not right. Hosea is a little bit better. He's a little bit stronger.

He only has nine years of reigning. But what we notice about him is that he is the king who is carried away in exile because his weakness and the weakness of all of these around him.

They rejected the Lord, their God. We read it in our passage here and we keep reading, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord. There's a newer translation, Brother Jerry has given a number of them to me.

Some of you have it. The Legacy Standard Bible, which is a really good translation.

It's like the NASB kind of on steroids. It's a little bit more literal than the NASB. They take the NASB and the covenant name of God is not translated. So it says Yahweh.

You really get the weight of it when you read it in that text because in this passage, all you read is Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh. Because we condition ourselves. We hear the name Lord a lot.

[17 : 21] We're thinking like the Lord Jesus or the Lord God. But no, the name that keeps being repeated now, this is talking in relation to the Northern Kingdom, right? The Northern Kingdom, which has rejected Lord God Almighty.

But the name that keeps being brought up is the name Yahweh. Why is that important? Because it's the covenant name of God. And what we find is they are rejecting covenant God.

They're not just rejecting God. They're rejecting the covenant God. So if you really want to get a weight for that, you have to go back to the book of Exodus and you have to see when God made this covenant and he became Yahweh.

Because when he led them out of Egypt, his name was what? I am that I am. Right? The self-revealing name of God. I am that I am. Tell him that I am sent you.

That was his name. It wasn't until Mount Sinai that he became Yahweh because then he entered into a covenant with his people. It's not that he became Yahweh. He revealed the name Yahweh to his people. There's a great transition.

[18 : 24] Now they know another name. So their relationship with him has changed. So when you go to Exodus 24 and following and you begin to see that this covenant God, this is a conditional covenant.

You obey this, this, this. I will be your God. You do this, this, this. And all the people said, yes, we will do it. Remember that? They agreed to that. He called them to himself, entered into a covenant with him, but they reject this covenant.

Why? Because friend, listen to me. No matter how good we are, we can't keep that covenant. We're weak.

These are not worse people than us. This is us without the cross. So we see the weakness of man. Second, what we see here before us is the warning ignored. One thing that has always kind of astounded me, and I guess this was probably one of the driving forces that made me want to study the Old Testament personally, and one of the things that compelled me that I began to think the Lord was leading me to just preach through the Old Testament because I know some people say, man, the Old Testament gets a little tedious.

[19 : 39] It can get kind of dreadful. Understand it. It's because of this misconception that the God of the Old Testament is a big mean judging God and the God of the New Testament is a loving God. And that is completely misconstrued.

And the reason it's misconstrued is because we read here that God exiles them and sends them out of the land. But then it says, this is why they were exiled, right? And so it begins to tell you everything they did, all the abominations, all the choices they made.

They begin to worship the gods, lowercase g, around them. They begin to do this. They begin to do that. You know, everything they did. It says they even did things in secret, but the Lord God knew. And then they openly rebelled against Him on every fortified city and every watchtower. That's to say in the city and in the country. So all throughout the land. So this wasn't a localized, just wicked kings, okay?

That's why that's in there. It says that they were doing it from the fortified cities to the watchtowers. Watchtowers are like out in the country in a remote land. Fortified cities are those garrison towns, right?

[20 : 37] So what he is saying is all over the land, everybody's doing what is wrong. It's not just a wicked king. God can take care of a wicked king. But what we have here is a rebellious people, right?

And we see these rebellious people, but one thing we notice, it says, but in the middle of this, all of this, what they did was wrong, what they did was wrong, what they did was wrong, what they did was wrong.

Look at verse 13. Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah. Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah through all of the prophets and every seer.

Again, covenant name of God. These people entered into a covenant with God. God is not compelled to give warning because the covenant, you say, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a minute, pastor.

These people didn't do it. Their grandfathers' grandfathers did it. This was a long time ago they did it. Right, but they wrote it down. Right? They had a record of it. Moses wrote a book called the Pentateuch.

[21 : 44] And they had it before them. You say, well, not everybody had it, right? But they had access to it, right? They had the temple. They had the Shekinah glory. They had, there was a testimony. Don't discount that. You take all of that astray and go to the book of Romans.

Romans chapter 1. Paul says, what may be known of creator God has been revealed throughout his creation. So no man is without excuse. Right? These are people, don't make it easier than they are.

God does not have to warn them. God does not have to warn them. God does not have to warn them. God does not have to warn them. He's not compelled. But He does.

See, this mercy, there's mercy in the Old Testament. Every prophet that comes on the scene is a display of the patience and the mercy of God.

Book of Leviticus, one sin gets us stoned. They're worshipping false gods. They're doing things in secret. They're doing things out in the open.

[22 : 44] They're going after the gods that the Lord God pushed out before them. They're accepting the abominations of the nations who were defeated before them. They're doing all this. But God keeps sending prophets.

Every seer. We have a number of named prophets during this time that were both to the northern kingdom and to the southern kingdom. There are also a number of unnamed prophets and we don't know how many seers.

What I want you to see is that God was patient. The God of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament, but He will not be mocked.

The word of warning, the warnings continue to be declared. The warning says, please stop, don't do this. You know, turn from your wicked ways. Follow. And these warnings are validated words.

That is, Elijah called down fire. He raised dead people. Elisha did the same thing. You know, these are validated warnings. The first warning given to Jeroboam when the prophet comes before him and says, God's going to judge you.

[23 : 52] All of a sudden, Jeroboam's hand becomes white from leprosy and the altar splits and the ashes fall out. Boom. That's exactly what he said would happen, right? Or think of those prophets that when you depart from here, a group of lions are going to kill you on the way.

Man, that man dies. You know, lions kill them. Why is this there happening? To show us that lions are big and mean? No, to show us that the word of the prophets can be trusted. Right? They were validated.

Proof was given. Let's translate that to the New Testament. The miracles of Christ were not there to convince men of who He was. The miracles of Christ are there to validate the truth He declares.

Think about that. We know the feeding of the 5,000, 5,000 plus, probably more like 10,000, right?

We understand that. 5,000 men, you had women and children there as well. What comes right after the feeding of the 5,000?

They come back looking for food and He teaches them, right? I'm the bread of life. I'm what you're looking for. So, the fact that He just did something supernatural validates what He's about to declare.

[24 : 59] Unless you eat of my flesh and drink of my blood, you have no part in me. Right? It was a validated, they should have, they rejected it, they walked away from that because it was a difficult saying. Why?

It was a validated word. Now they're accountable. It's not like He was just, we walk by faith, but we don't walk through ignorant or blind faith, right? Our faith has what we call validity. It has an assurance.

The things of Scripture, my friend, can be tested by any number of scientific means and they're there. We understand this. And so this warning that continues to be ignored, what does it say?

It says, yet they would not listen but stiffen their necks. That is a willing, intentional, turning away and hardening of an individual. So God is justified in what happens.

He's justified. Third, we see the wages of sin. There's a weakness of man.

[26 : 02] There's a warning ignored. There's a wages of sin. Man is weak. God continues to warn. He stiffens his neck, ignores that warning.

He says, you will reap what you sow. He says, so they were carried away. As a matter of fact, it tells us two times in the passage that they were carried away.

Verse 6, in the ninth year of Hosea, the king of Assyria, captured Samaria. Now, I want to point something out to you. This is a little nuance that I want you to understand because Scripture never contradicts itself. And in case you ever meet a historian or someone who makes you think that Scripture is contradicting themselves, I want you to see this, okay, because I want us to be mature believers who can rightly divide the Word of God.

You go back a little bit. What king of Assyria besieges Samaria? Shamasar, right? Shamasar. Not Salamander, Shamasar. He besieges the city of Samaria.

And he besieges it for three years. But he starts that siege in 723 B.C. Problem is, is he dies. If you read the Assyrian inscriptions, it tells you that Sargon I is the king who actually fully captures Samaria and leads, they fall to Sargon I.

[27 : 13] It's not named in Scripture. But Scripture doesn't tell you that it's Shamasar who leads them away. It says that it's the king of Assyria who leads them away. In reading the text, we seem to imply that it's him.

No, the Scripture doesn't say that. The Scripture just says the king of Assyria besieged them and the king of Assyria carried them away. It's Sargon I. That's who does it. That is actually in the description found in, you know, the archaeological ruins of the Assyrian Empire of when he carried

them away.

So the Scripture doesn't have it wrong. It just tells you who started the besieged by name and it doesn't give you the name of the king who led them away. But they fall. Verse 6 tells you they fall. And in our last verse there, verse 23 says, and they were carried away into exile from their own land to Assyria until this day.

Again, it is the removal from the land. Big deal for the people. Because when he took them away, what did he do? Did he keep them all together and put them in one location?

No. He carried them away and he dispersed them. This is how the Assyrians did their business, right? This is why Samaria is repopulated with different people. The way Samaria, I mean, the Assyrians worked, the Assyrians would go in, capture land, displace the people and take the people and intermingle them with other people and mix them throughout all the lands they had conquered. [28 : 28] And that's why Samaria is repopulated the way they did. Because they knew that if a land was left unpopulated that, you know, Mother Nature would talk, as we would say, Nature takes it back. And so we didn't want to do that.

So they would leave people there to cultivate the land. They would leave people, but it was always this intermingled people. We'll get to that in the remainder of this chapter. But we see here that when they carried them away, they put them in different places. Verse 6 tells us that they put them throughout the cities of the Medes and they put them out throughout the river next to the river of Gozum.

They put them in all these regions. This is important. In Scripture, the closest unit, by the way, this has implications even to the church.

You'll see this maybe Sunday. We're changing books on Sunday, by the way, still praying through that. I'm really excited about it. I think I know where the Lord's leading us. Anyway, you'll see this Sunday as well.

It has real implication to the church. The greatest aspect of your identity was not who you were personally, but who you were among as a people.

[29 : 29] It was your people group, right? Your family. Actually, you know, many biblical historians will tell you and even archaeologists will tell you who your brothers and sisters were were more important than who your wife or your husband was.

Your identity was wrapped up in your family. That's why when we get to the church and we're called brothers and sisters and we're one body, we have forsaken the one thing that really identified us in society.

We have been called away from our family, but we've been connected to another family. That's why the church is so important, right? So when they are displaced and then they are inter-dispersed among other people, they're losing their identity.

This is the wages of sin is you're no longer a distinguished people for the Lord God to display His glory. What a great wage they paid.

Now, there's a lot of doom and gloom in the Old Testament, right? Let me give you one good word here. You have the weakness of man, you have the warning ignored, you have the wages of sin, finally you have the word of comfort.

[30 : 46] I don't often ask you to do this, but I'm going to ask you to do it tonight. Turn to the prophetic book of Hosea. Go into the book of Hosea. Hosea, you remember Hosea, he's the one who, you know, a lot of you men wouldn't want to marry his wife, end up having to go buy her back off the auction block, you know, his wife was a harlot, that kind of picture, but it was, why was Hosea told to marry that woman and have kids and then go back and buy her back off the auction block?

It's because it was a picture, a testimony, right? A living testimony of God's relationship with people. So Hosea is one of these prophets that the Lord sends to warn, I'm not going to ask you to read the whole book, there's 14 chapters, I just want you to turn to the 14th chapter, I don't read it yet, but stay with me.

So Hosea is one of these latter prophets right before this time. As a matter of fact, Hosea is the prophet who keeps speaking of the treachery of Ephraim and the treachery of Israel and the Assyrians that are coming in and surely you're going to follow the Assyrians and he's this last warning, right?

This cry, you're going into captivity, you're going to fall in it, that God has rejected Israel for all these sins we just read about, for everything we see over here in 2nd Kings and Hosea is one of these

saying, you're going, it's not going to go too well for you, right?

This is what you're sowing. Hosea is the one that refers to them as the cows of Bashan, calls the women that, you know, not a good thing. Don't ever do that, men. You know, it's not really a pleasant prophetic book.

[32 : 07] So just like every other book of prophets, he's coming in telling you, you know, you're doing wicked, you're doing wrong, God's going to judge you, you're going into captivity, God has rejected you, you've been unfaithful, I mean, you get it, he says it.

We get to the 14th chapter. I'll just read the 14th chapter 2. And in light of that, in light of what has just happened, right, this is the last word that God is telling them through Hosea, return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to him, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously that we may present the fruit of our lips. Assyria will not save us, we will not ride on horses, nor will we say again, our God, to the work of our hands, for in you the orphan finds mercy. Here's God's reply. I will heal their apostasy. I will love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them. I will be like the dew of Israel. He will blossom like the lily, and he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon.

His shoots will sprout, his beauty will be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon. Those who live in the shadow will again raise grain, and they will blossom like the vine.

[33 : 23] His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon. Oh, Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am a luxuriant cypress.

From me comes your fruit. Whoever is wise, let him understand these things. Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the Lord are right, and the righteous will walk in them, but transgressors will stumble in them.

Look at this word of comfort. God is displacing his people from the land. He is disciplining them. He is chastising them.

He is, as Hosea says elsewhere, striking them a painful blow. But he is not rejecting them. what a display of the loving kindness of God to an undeserving people.

He is saying, return to me and I will love you. I will restore you. I will renew you. You will become the desire of all the nations.

[34 : 39] These are people that have rejected him. These are people that have scorned him.

These are people. This is not just some people who did not know him. These are people called by his covenant name and knowingly, willingly turned away from him and wanted nothing to do with him.

But yet, in the end, this God, who is so deserving of worship, is still crying out saying, come back to me and I will restore you.

For there is no hope in Assyria. There is no hope anywhere else. come back to me. Confess those sins. Listen, restoration comes not to a deserving people, but to an undeserving people.

all of us are weak, all of us ignore the warnings, and all of us have wages of sin that we deserve to pay.

If this God of the Old Testament can say such amazing things, what about after the perfect substitution for our sin has already come and paid our price?

[35 : 47] we come pleading the blood of the Lamb and God calls out saying, I will heal you, I will love you, I will restore you, I will redeem you.

These are great words of comfort. It is easy, it is easy to read the historical works and I know I'm getting a little preachy, I'm almost done. It is easy and get down and out because nobody is doing right.

Should it surprise you that no man or woman you find in scripture does right? No. That shouldn't surprise you. What we need to know is that are the plans and purposes of God still moving forward? Is God still going to redeem man? Is he still going to meet man where he's at? In these words of the prophets we find it, yes. man's failures do not imply that God's not going to restore and redeem and renew.

It's a word of comfort because even when they couldn't hold it together God still had it. He still does. And we stand on this side of the cross praising him that he was faithful in spite of their unfaithfulness.

[37 : 08] 2 Kings 17 1-23 Thank you my brothers. I Thank you.

Thank you.