

2 Kings 17:24-41

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles going to 2 Kings, 2 Kings chapter 17, 2 Kings chapter 17, we're going to pick up in verse 24, 2 Kings 17 verse 24 where we will pick up.

If you remember, and if you don't, or if you weren't here, I will catch you up. 2 Kings chapter 17 is a very pivotal moment in the nation of Israel as a whole, but it is a very pivotal moment in the northern kingdom which we have been looking at throughout the books of 1 and 2 Kings which we refer to as Israel.

The northern kingdom will be the kingdom of Israel, the southern kingdom the kingdom of Judah. The reason it is so pivotal is because in the 17th chapter in verses 1 through 23 we have the removal of the people of Israel from the land.

That is, they have fallen to the Assyrian Empire. It is a historical event that really begins the transition of God's discipline upon His people.

They have fallen for their sins of rebellion. They have fallen for their lack of commitment to following the ways of the Lord. It tells us very clearly in the chapter this is why. Now this came about, it says in verse 7, because of everything that they did.

[1 : 22] So they fall to the Assyrians and they're carried away into captivity. Now we look at this time as 721, 723 BC.

Severog would be the king of Assyrian at that time. He's not named in here because there's a particular king who begins the siege, Shamasar of Samaria.

But he is, he's dead by the time Samaria falls. So we understand that the king of Assyria who leads them away is also, we can follow it in the Assyrian Empire and see it.

But nonetheless, we've come to this point now where they've been carried away. The practice of Assyria was not just to remove people but to disperse people.

So they would take them out of their homeland and put them on other lands which they conquered. And they would disperse them among the nations. Much more than when the Babylonians came in, they led them away into Babylon.

[2 : 20] So they took large numbers of them. They left some behind. Jeremiah, we find out kind of where Jeremiah is socially because he's left behind. Because, you know, the weakest of the weak and the poorest of the poor are left behind.

And so too was Jeremiah. He stays back there. And they are there to maintain the land and to keep the land. The Assyrians come in and they move you around. And they kind of repopulate.

The Romans do somewhat of the same thing when they capture lands too. To weaken nations so that politically the nations can't arise and rebel and all those other things.

So one thing that we looked at Wednesday night was how devastating this was to the people of God. Not only to be removed from the land. Because remember the Abrahamic covenant has connection to a people in a place.

Right? A particular people in a particular place. And God's blessings would fall upon them. So he removes them from the promised land. But he also separates them from one another.

[3 : 18] They are inter-dispersed among other nations. So we or some historians would refer to the lost tribes of Israel. We don't believe there are any lost tribes when we look at this.

Because there is the remnant that comes back after the Babylonian captivity. But understanding that the kingdom. I know I'm giving you a lot of history and a lot of all those things. But you need to understand before we get into the text why.

The Babylonians kind of engulfed the Assyrian Empire as well. So when those people come back. We begin to see the people of the nation of Israel that return to Jerusalem.

With that being said. In the New Testament. We have a region of the land of Israel. Which even the most devout of Jews will not travel through.

When they are going north to south. Or they are going up to Jerusalem. Even from the region of Galilee. They would cross the Jordan River. Go on to the eastern side of the Jordan River. In the region of the Capilus.

[4 : 18] And go down. And then come back. Just a little north of Jerusalem. Back across the Jordan River. So that they can enter in. Because they are avoiding a particular region.

The region which we refer to as Samaria. And the reason that they avoided it. Is because the region of Samaria. Was a mixed multitude of people. Right?

But yet we find our Savior. Had to go through Samaria. And he met the woman at the well there. And it is this distorted worship that is going on. You remember she said.

You people say. That you have to worship God in Jerusalem. But we say this. And there is all this. You people but we people. And this is where Jesus says. Those who worship the Lord worship in spirit. And in truth.

And there is this reality. So what we see even in the New Testament time. This whole idea of an improper worship. Is already taken root. And it is being played out.

[5 : 13] Among these people in this geographical region. Now we say that because. We begin to see this beginning here. Starting in verse 24.

This is the beginning of this reality. So 2nd Kings 17. Starting in verse 24. The king of Assyria brought men from Babylon. And from Kutha.

And from Ava. And from Hamath. And from Shepharvim. And settled them in the cities of Samaria. In the place of the sons of Israel. So they possessed Samaria. And lived in its cities.

At the beginning of their living there. 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 carried away into exile.

In the cities of Samaria. Do not know the custom of the God of the land. So he has sent lions among them. And behold they killed them. Because they do not know the custom of the God of the land.

[6 : 08] Then the king of Assyria commanded saying. Take there one of the priests. Whom you carried away into exile. And let him go and live there. And let him teach them the custom of the God of the land.

So one of the priests. Whom they had carried away into exile from Samaria. Came and lived at Bethel. And taught them how they should fear the Lord. But every nation still made gods of its own. And put them in the houses of the high places. Which the people of Samaria had made. Every nation in their cities in which they lived. The men of Babylon made Sukkoth Benoth. The men of Kuth made Nergal.

The men of Hamath made Ashima. The men of the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak. And the Shepharbites burned their children in the fire of Adramalek and Anamalek.

The gods of Shepharvim. They also feared the Lord. And appointed among themselves priests of the high places. Who acted for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the Lord.

[7 : 05] And served their own gods according to the custom of the nations. From among whom they had been carried away into exile. To this day they do according to the earlier customs.

They do not fear the Lord. Nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances. Or the law or the commandments. Which the Lord commanded the sons of Jacob. Whom he named Israel. With whom the Lord made a covenant.

And commanded them saying. You shall not fear other gods. Nor bow down yourselves 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 with an outstretched arm. Him you shall fear. And to him you shall bow yourselves down. And to him you shall sacrifice. The statutes and the ordinances. And the law and the commandment.

Which he wrote for you. You shall observe to do forever. And you shall not fear other gods. 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.

[8 : 00] And he will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies. However they did not listen. But they did according to their earlier custom. So while these nations feared the Lord. They also served

their idols.

Their children likewise. And their grandchildren. As their fathers did. So they do to this day. Okay. I know what we want to see here. You say well what does this have to do with anything.

Well this is the beginning of the issue. Which Christ is addressing in the New Testament. Which we find in the Gospel of John. But here I want you to see the influence of a displaced people.

Not the influence they had among the nations that they were displaced to. But rather the influence they had when they were taken out of the land. Right. Because when the people of God.

Who were to be the testimony of God. Among the nations were removed from the land. There was a great void that was left. And in that void there is an influence or a lack of influence.

[8 : 57] Which we have not yet seen in Scripture. We have to be reminded of this reality. That God called a people and put them in a place. So that they could be a testimony to a watching world.

Right. He didn't just call a people to put them into a place. Because he needed somebody to inhabit the land. He called these people. So that they would be his tools and instruments of judgment.

Upon those of that locale.

That is the land of Canaan. And he put them in that place. So that they could be a testimony to the world. Of what it looks like to live in relation with holy God. Yet they failed to do that. And in their failure.

They were removed. This is exactly what God tells them. That he will do in the book of Deuteronomy. That if they were unfaithful. He will remove them. We find this. It is repeated for us. That if they do not obey. Then they will be taken out of the land. This is not something that should take us by surprise. Rather this is something. That we should foresee. In the days ahead.

[9 : 51] Because it is foretold us. Even in the end of the book of Deuteronomy. That they would walk in unfaithfulness. And the Lord would remove them from their land. And we know that this is but a disciplinarian action of God.

That he is renewing. Not renewing. He is correcting a problem that his people have. We saw that Wednesday night. I know a little technical on Sunday nights.

But that's okay. Stay with me. They went into captivity. One of the most polytheistic people. They come out. The most monotheistic people. God is removing from them.

This tendency. Of false worship. Of idol worship. Now. Succeeds in that. But while he is doing that. There is a void in this land. And there is a great influence that happens.

When God's people. His testimony. His witness is removed. So what does it have to do with us.

Let's get to the application really quick. And then we will see. The influence that they have. First and foremost. When the church isn't walking as it should.

[10 : 51] And the church therefore is under the discipline. Of the Lord God. For its lack of obedience. It influences the society around it. We began looking at this morning.

First Timothy. We've seen how Paul writes. The letter of first Timothy. To Timothy. Who's pastoring the church at Ephesus. And we have seen how. The purpose of that letter.

Was so that one. Might know how he would conduct himself. In the household of God. Which is the pillar in support of the truth. So when the church is not. Upholding the truth. It is not.

Working and. Behaving and operating. As it should. Then there is. Discipline like. Let's look at the church at Corinth. Would we say. That the church at Corinth. Was a great pillar.

Of the truth. In the city of Corinth. Well no. Not if. Everything that was going on in the city. Was also going on inside the church. They're not holding. That's why. God corrects them. Through the.

[11 : 46] Correction. And admonition. Of Paul. So. When the church fails to live up to that calling. Then the city. Or the area. Or the region. Much like before us here.

Suffers. Because of the void that is left. Why is it so essential. That the church lives according to its calling purpose. For the same reason. That it is essential to the people of God.

Would do that. Number one. We see. That when the people were displaced. There was a belittling. Of the power. Of God. That is. In the eyes.

Of those who came into the land. The power of God. Was belittled. When they came into this region. The Assyrians. Now.

I want you to understand. Kind of what's happening here. More than likely. A number of years. Have transpired. Since the fall. Of Samaria. And when they displaced.

[12 : 40] The people of Israel. They did not displace. Everyone living there. But they would have displaced. The people living. In the major cities. This is why Samaria. Refers to the whole region. Of

the northern kingdom.

But they speak. Of the major cities. In particular. Because. They would have taken out. The people of power. The people of influence. The people of the cities. And they would have put them. Into other regions.

They. They would have not taken. Every single individual out. But in doing this. It is probably. The cities that are listed here. Did not fall. Until around 701. Or 702 BC.

So you. Have upwards. Of 20 years. That have transpired. Before. Since the fall of Samaria. Until a number of these cities. In which the people. Are moved from. Move into the land.

Now we say that. Because when the cities. Are left empty. We should not be surprised. When the lines come back. Right. We expect. This presence.

[13:36] Of all of the wildlife. And all of the things. That are there. Of the cities. Are void. The people. Aren't there anymore. And so what was. Already present. Begins to manifest.

Itself. In a greater way. Because people. Are pushing in. This is one of the most. Gracious acts of God. When God brought his people. Into the promised land. He didn't. Give them. He didn't cast. Everyone out of the promised land.

All at once. It was a gradual. Removal. Of the inhabitants. Of the land. Why? Because if God had pushed. Everyone out at once. Then they would not have been able. To occupy the entirety of the land.

Therefore. The animals and everything. Would have come back into the land. They would have had to. Begin anew. There would not have been. Wells they had not dug. And gardens they did not plant. And houses they did not build. They would have had to start from scratch.

God was giving them this. By gradually removing people. A little bit at a time. A little bit at a time. A little bit at a time. Before them. So that they wouldn't have to labor. But when the Assyrians are bringing people in.

[14:32] And this is why it matters. Because we want to rightfully understand. Did the Lord God send the lions? Well he's over the kingdoms. He's over the animal kingdoms. And the kingdoms of man. Did he put the lions there?

Probably they were already present. Already there. But when a void is left in the city. Then the lions roam the street. But in the eyes of the new inhabitants. Their gods.

Lowercase g. And we say this because look how they reference the Lord God. We do not know. Quote unquote. The God of this land.

With a lowercase g. So they are belittling the power of God. Because they are seeing the attacks of the wildlife. As being judgments for a lack of knowing.

The God of that land. They brought with them their gods. But they did not know the God of that land. Now. The people of God.

[15:31] The nation of Israel. Were to be those who would display. The Lord God almighty. The one who was over. Not only all of heaven.

But all of earth. One who was not confined. To a particular place. The one who transcended. Geographical boundaries. But yet. The people who inhabited the land.

Because there is no one there. To tell them any different. Because there is no one there. To lead them in any other way. They begin to see that. Well we're getting attacked by lions. Therefore there must be a geographical God.

And they have now. Brought God down to the level. Of the gods they brought with them. Why? Because man always. Likes to make God fit in his box. And he always wants to confine.

God to a particular region. Or particular area of their life. I will let him be God of this. As long as he's not God of this. So really what they were wanting. Is they wanted a God.

[16:27] Who was stronger than the lions. But not a God who was overtaking their lives. So we understand. That when the people of God. Are removed. The power of God.

Is belittled. You want to see it. In living color. Open up the book of revelations. And when the church. Is raptured.

All of a sudden. The power of God. Is denied. And man begins to put. More. Respect. And more authority.

Upon the power of man. And we begin to see this reality. But this is what's going on here. They are seeing. The small things. But they're not looking.

At the large things. They are belittling the power of God. And no one is there. To tell them any different. Second. We notice. Not only is the power of God belittled. We see that there is a misguided.

[17:25] Practice of worship. So. They get upset. And they don't know. What's going on here. They know. They don't want anybody killed by lions. And they know. They'd rather have the lions out of there. Therefore. They. They.

Assume. That this is because. They do not know the. God of this land. They reach out to the king of Assyria. And say. We don't know. So the king of Assyria. Has great advice. Or at least. It seems to be great advice. And I want you to pay attention.

To what he says. He says. Okay. If you want to know the God. Of that land. Then take. One of the priests. That were. Exiled. From the city. Of Samaria. And send them back. Or from the Samaritans. Now. All of a sudden. A red flag should go up. Because. The reason. They were. Exiled. Is because. Their worship. Was not right. So if you take.

A priest. That is. From those. That were exiled. You're not taking. A true priest. Of the Lord God. And your. Worship. Of God. It will always.

[18:20] Be confined. To the one. Who teaches you. About that God. God. And now. We have. Here. That a false. Priest. Is being brought. To a people. With a small.

View of God. And we should not. Be in wonder. Of the reality. That they worship. Their idols. And God. Because the priest.

That is brought in. He returns. To the city. Of Bethel. Bethel. Ought to be. One of those places. That at least. In the divided kingdom. Comes to mind. Really quickly. Because Bethel. Is one of the cities.

In which there was. A golden calf. Set up. So what we have. Is we have a priest. That is not. Of the Levite tribe. We have a priest. That is not. Of the lineage. Of Aaron.

We have a priest. Of the people. Of the northern kingdom. Of Israel. Who was serving. According to their custom. With the golden calves. So we have a priest.

[19:14] That is worshiping God. In a false way. In an idolatrous way. Who is trying to instruct. Others. How they should worship. And now.

This misguided practice. Of worship. Begins to take place. Because they are learning. About the Lord God. Now. We don't need to. Blame the new inhabitants.

Of the land. Because we see. That they are learning. From a false teacher. But they are learning. About this Lord God. But it says. They are also. Worshiping. Their own. It says. But every nation. Still made gods. Of its own. Every nation. That was there. Because a multitude. Of nations. Were brought in. Were still making. Their own gods. But look at where. They put them. It says. And they were putting them.

In the houses. Which the people. Of Samaria. Had built. So it was good news. For the new inhabitants. Of the land. Because those. Who had been. Of the northern kingdom. Had already built. Idle temples.

[20:07] All they needed to do. Was put their false god. In this already constructed. Temple. And they could begin. To worship. In a false way. Because those. Who had lived there. Previously. Had not lived in truth.

And had not lived. In a true worship. And had not lived. In sincerity. And had not lived. In devotion. And now. We begin to see. This further. Influence. Of these people. Not only now.

Are the nation. Of Israel. Worshipping falsely. Now. Even the world. That they were supposed. To be testifying to. Are worshipping falsely. They were to be. A testimony.

To the world. Of what true worship. Looks like. But they are very rapidly. Becoming a testimony. To the world. That is drawn to them. Literally. Of false worship. And all of this.

Because of the third reality. They belittle. The power of God. They misguided. The practice of worship. And there is a forsaken. Position. Of reference. Of reverence.

[21:06] A forsaken. Position. Of reverence. It tells us. To this day. Verse 14. They do according to the earlier customs. They do not fear.

The Lord. They do not fear. The Lord. Now you say. Yes. But pastor. We go down here. Says that they feared the Lord. But it says. They also served. Their false gods.

Reverence. Reverence. True reverence. True. Holy fear. Of Lord God. Is a. Fear of. Solidarity.

For lack of a better word. Of singularity. This is. You alone. Are worthy. Of our praise. We see here. It says that they do not fear the Lord.

Nor. Do they follow. After the statutes. And commandments. Why? Because obedience. Always. Follows. Reverence. We obey.

[22 : 01] That which we revere. Or fear. Always. True obedience. Now it's not. Like. A trembling. Scared.

I'm terrified. Of judgment. Fear. It's not that type of fear. This is a fear of reverence. A fear of. Holiness. A fear of. Understanding. The magnitude. Of who this God is.

That's called us. Because he declares. That he ought to be revered. Because he led them in power. Out of Egypt. He made a covenant with them. It says literally. He cut a covenant with them. He gave them the statutes.

And ordinances. But the reality is. Is they did not maintain. That position of reverence. And since they did not stay. In that position of reverence. They also did not stay. In a life.

Of faithful obedience. Because when we begin. To belittle the power of God. When we begin to. Have misguided practices. Of worship. Then we do not. Truly fear.

[22 : 55] We can say we fear him. But we cannot fear him. And serve others. Because that's not the position. That God calls for. Throughout this. What God says.

Is that he alone. Should be feared. He alone. Shall be worshiped. He alone. Shall be bowed down to. He alone. Should be the only one. That sacrifices are offered to. He alone. Should be the one. That is obeyed.

He alone. Should be that only one. See. See God. Had provided for them. A. An avenue of obedience. And it is to live. In the fear of him. It is to have a reverence for him.

And an awe of him. That would stand in the reality. That he is the savior. Sure. He led them out of Egypt. He is the provider. And he is the sustainer. And he is all that they ought to focus on.

But they began to look outward. And they began. It says to worship those around them. And then. We have these new inhabitants. That come into the land. And the influence is extended to them as well.

[23 : 48] They try to couple fear of Yahweh. Or fear of the Lord. With a worship of false gods. And that is simply not the case. You can't do it.

And they try to blend these two. And this is why. When Christ is there. It really doesn't matter where you worship. Jesus tells the woman.

That those who worship the Lord God. Would worship him in spirit. And in truth. That there is this reverence. This fear of the holiness of God.

And understanding that he alone is truly God. There was still in that day. This mixture of worship. And this kind of picking and choosing. Of the Old Testaments.

And this dismissal of some of the sacrificial system. Until that day. Even up until a little bit more modern times. That type of worship still existed. Among the people of Samaria.

[24 : 42] Why? It began because of the influence of those who were there. Who should have been a living testimony. Of what it looked like to live in reverence to the Lord God. Of what it looked like to live in worship and obedience to him.

Yet they chose not to do that. And they did not maintain that position. Therefore they began to influence those around them. And those who followed them. It is really the impact of these people. That it was not. We've said this before. Sin does not only impact the individual. It extends to others around us. Unfortunately.

The sin of Israel. Extended even to the nations. That were brought to them. And the people who were to be. A testimony to a world.

Of what it looked like to truly worship God. Became the very people. Who led the nations. To worship him in a wrong way. Now we understand that.

[25 : 41] Because it is. Really impossible for any of us. For any of us. On our own. Apart from Christ. To live in such a manner.

With such a reverence. With such a. Determination to obedience. That we could ever be. An example. To a watching world. Of what it looks like. This is again.

Not just a. Down and out sermon. This is a reminder. This is why. We needed. A savior. This is also. Why Christ. Needed. He said. I must.

Go. Through. Samaria. Why? Because the light. That was there once. Was a light. That was full of darkness. But there was a day. That the true light. Showed up. You remember that? When he said. That the fields. Were white for harvest. And a multitude of men. And men that were. Mixed generations. Men that were. A mixed multitude. It said that. They were receiving Christ. Not because.

[26 : 35] Of what the woman said. But because of what. He was declaring to them. Why? Because the truth. Had shown up. And now all of a sudden. A great. Greater. Truer. Testimony.

Of what it looked like. To worship. Was present among them. He had to go through there. Because. Where man had failed. Called Jesus. Would succeed. We failed.

To be those. Who live up. To the standard. But in Christ. We are those. Who are called. To walk according. To the standard. We are called. To lift up the Savior. To point people. To his faithfulness. To point people.

To his obedience. And yes. To walk in reverence. To who he is. To be in awe. Of the splendor. Of who God is. And I know this passage. You say. Well you keep saying. All in reverence.

And you have a great. Pastor's wife. That reminds me. Every now and then. And I get hung up on words. And I say them over and over again. But there are particular passages. In which we need to say that. Because when we look at this passage. It is just this reminder.

[27 : 27] It is the fear of the Lord. Right? It is something that we ought to. Cry out to him. Father. Right? Brother. I am so thankful. Brother Jamie. Apologize. This morning.

He said. My prayer was a little long. He said. I will shorten it up. I am glad you did not. I love the reality. That when we go to that model prayer. Our Father. Which art in heaven. Sure. We have the glorious privilege.

Of crying out. Abba Father. But we are also reminded. Of the awesome position. He holds. Which art in heaven. Right? Hallowed be that name.

You are so far above. And beyond us. We are in glorious. Splendor of your majesty. And we stand in the awe. Of your glory. That we ought to call out to you.

As Father. But we ought to revere you. As the king of kings. And lord of lords. Because when we lose that position. Then we lose our influence. For good. We don't lose our influence.

[28 : 22] But we lose our influence. For good. Even the unfaithful people. Were influencing the worship of others. All of us.

Who name the name of Christ. Are influencers of others. The nation of Israel. Was called to be an influencer of others. And they did influence here. Just not for the good.

May we be those. Who accept the influence. That Christ has called us to. And we be those. Who embrace it. Not knowing that we are competent. But knowing that he is. And it is Christ in us.

That is the one. Who appoint people to the truth. And we see here. The influence of a displaced people. In 2nd Kings 17. Verses 24 through 41. May we be those.

Who influence him. People around us. For the good. Let's pray. And then we will be dismissed. Father we do stand. In awe of who you are.

[29 : 23] Reminded. Of the psalmist who cries at us. Is what is man that you take notice of us. But yet you do take notice of us. And you long to use us.

For the good of your kingdom. That we would be an influence. To those around us. So Lord we know that we have. Opportunities each and every day. To either influence for the good.

Or for the bad. We know there are days. Where we fall short. And that we confess. We cry out for mercy. And for forgiveness. Father we also know there are days.

That through the power of Christ. That we have the opportunity. To walk in faithful obedience. And that we can shine that light. To a watching world. So enable us to do that. Lord in all of our weaknesses.

We want to magnify your strength. In all of our shame. We want to magnify your glory. So we ask that we would be those.

[30 : 21] Who point people not to ourselves. But to the Savior. That we can point them to you Christ. That they would see you high and lifted up. Not just on the cross.

Paying the price of their sins. But also on the throne. Reigning over it all. You are not a king. Who reigns over one region. But you are a king. Who reigns over all.

So may we walk in the lordship of Christ. For the glory of the kingdom. Be with us as we leave here this evening. And may we be utilized for you. According to your purposes and plans.

We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you guys. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you.
[31 : 42] Thank you.
Thank you.