

# ISRAEL DEFEATED

2 Kings 17:5-41

## STRUCTURE

**Key-persons:** Citizens of Israel, and the Assyrians

**Key-location:** Israel (Northern Kingdom)

### Key-repetitions:

- Sin/evil: King Jeroboam sinned and caused Israel to sin (1 Kin 14:16; 2 Kin 17:21); the exile was because the Israelites sinned (2 Kin 17:7); prophets told them to turn from their evil ways (2 Kin 17:13); they did every kind of evil (2 Kin 17:11, 15).
- Idolatry: Israelites worshiped other gods (2 Kin 17:7); they built religious shrines (2 Kin 17:9-10); they followed worthless idols and became worthless (2 Kin 17:15); they frequented shrines of Baal (2 Kin 17:16); they sacrificed their children in the fire (2 Kin 17:17).
- Assyria: captured Samaria (2 Kin 17:6); relocated Israelites into different countries (2 Kin 17:6); brought other people into Israel and relocated them (2 Kin 17:24).

### Key-attitudes:

- God's anger at the Israelites.
- Israelites' persistence in doing evil.

### Initial-situation:

The primary wrong of Israel began shortly after the separation when Israel rebelled against Rehoboam, the grandson of David. The people of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, made Jeroboam their king. King Jeroboam built golden calves at Bethel and Dan for the people to worship instead of going to Jerusalem to worship God in the temple (1 Kin 17:25-33). This was the original sin of idolatry in Israel; however, each of Israel's nineteen kings continued the sin of idolatry for 209 years.

### Initial-problem:

The Lord's anger burned against Israel.

### Final-situation:

Assyria relocated Israel's citizens into different countries that it had conquered. Assyria brought people from other conquered nations and relocated them into the towns near Samaria. The Israelites intermarried with those relocated from other nations. This was the beginning of the Samaritan people.

## BIBLE STORY

King Jeroboam, the first king of Israel, sinned and caused Israel to sin (1 Kin 13:33–34; 2 Kin 17:21). Israel’s kings who succeeded Jeroboam imitated Jeroboam and did evil in the Lord’s eyes (2 Kin 17:22). (*The nation of Israel had nineteen kings during its 209 years of existence.*) The Lord’s anger burned against Israel.

The king of Assyria invaded the land of Israel, captured Samaria, and deported the Israelites. The king relocated the Israelites to other countries which he had captured (2 Kin 17:5-6).

This exile came about because the Israelites sinned against the Lord their God, who had delivered them from the brutal oppression of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods. They openly built sex-and-religious shrines in all their towns. The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets, “Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees.” (*Some of God’s prophets to Israel were Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, Amos, and Jonah.*)

The Israelites wouldn’t listen. They followed worthless idols, and they themselves became worthless. They frequented the sex-and-religious shrines of Baal. They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They did every kind of evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger. The Lord became angry with Israel and he removed them from his presence (2 Kin 17:7-23).

Assyria relocated Israel’s citizens into different countries that it had conquered. Assyria brought people from other conquered nations and relocated them into the towns near Samaria. Each relocated national group served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been exiled. At the same time, they tried to worship the Lord God of Israel. The Israelites intermarried with those relocated from other nations. This was the beginning of the Samaritan people (2 Kin 17:24-41).

### GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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|----|--|----|---|
| 1. | What catches your attention in the story?                  | 5. | How did the characters face their problems?                                       |
| 2. | Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. | How have you faced similar problems?  |
| 3. | Who are the main characters in the story?                  | 7. | Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. | What problems did the characters face?                     | 8. | What does the story tell about God?   |

### SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the nations of Israel and Judah do that provoked the Lord to anger?
2. Who were the prophets?
3. How did God try to prevent Israel’s destruction?
4. Why was Israel destroyed when God was trying to protect the nation?
5. Who was responsible for Israel’s downfall?

6. What warning should Israel's downfall give to our country?

### LIFE-LESSONS

1. **People can know God as either their savior or their destroyer.** God delivered his people from slavery in Egypt, and he desired to always be their savior, liberator, and protector. After the Israelites abandoned God to follow the sex-and-religious gods of the people around them, God became their punisher and destroyed the Kingdom of Israel (2 Kin 17:7-18).
2. **Whatever God predicts will happen. God's warnings are not threats; they are promises that he will keep.** God promised the Israelites that he would punish them with "Exile" and "Scattering" if they did not obey him. Exile was the forced removal of the bulk of the population from their homeland to another country. The process of scattering the Jews across the world began with the destruction of Samaria. God promised exile and scattering on Israel for idolatry and unbelief (Deut 28:64-68; 29:24-28). God gave Israel ample warning (Is 6:11-12; 39:1-7; Jer 6:1-8; Am 8:1-12). God kept his promise (2 Kin 17:6-7).
3. **People who profess to believe in God, but do not obey God, will be punished by God.** God gave the following reasons for the fall of the nation of Israel:
  - God made the Israelites his possession by bringing them out of Egypt.
  - Israel sinned against the Lord.
  - The people worshiped other gods (2 Kin 17:7).
  - They did evil things (2 Kin 17:11-12).
4. **God is sovereign in relation to history.** He used the king of Assyria to punish Israel with defeat (2 Kin 17:3-6). Later, God used King Nebuchadnezzar as his instrument to crush Judah politically, economically, and religiously (2 Kin 24:20 - 25:7).
5. **God will pursue people until they either respond to him, or, by their own choice to reject him, they make themselves unreachable. Then God's judgment is swift.** The grievous fault of Israel began shortly after the separation when Israel rebelled against Rehoboam, the grandson of David, and began to follow Jeroboam as their king. Jeroboam, the first king of Israel, built golden calves at Bethel and Dan for the people to worship instead of going to the temple in Jerusalem to worship God (1 Kin 17:25-33). This was the original sin of idolatry in Israel; however, everyone of Israel's nineteen kings continued the sin of idolatry for 209 years (2 Kin 17:7, 21-23).
6. **People become like the gods they worship.** The Israelites followed worthless idols, and they themselves became worthless (2 Kin 17:15).

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### **Twitter Prayers** (short, concise prayers):

Invite listeners to pray about the story in “twitter” length prayers. Tell God:

- How they feel about the story.
- How they believe their nation is similar to or different from Israel.
- What they should do in order to not be blamed if God were to punish their nation.