



WEEK 6 : KINGDOM DIVIDED
(1 Kings 11-2 Kings 31, 2 Chron. 10-31)

Question: Do you find it easy or hard to live the way God says is good for people to live? Why do you think this is?

Read 2 Kings 17

In verses 1-6 of 2 Kings 17, we read that the breakaway northern kingdom of Israel was defeated by the Assyrian army. Their capital, Samaria, was defeated after a 3-year siege and the people were taken away and scattered throughout various towns in other parts of the Assyrian empire.

Verses 7 to 21 explains why this happened. List all the reasons you can find in the text.

Who is responsible for the Israelites' exile?

Hosea was a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, who announced what would happen. Chapter 2 of Hosea is split into two parts. The first tells what will happen because of the nation's sin, but the second part, from verse 14, tells how God intends to show mercy and grace.

What does he say will happen in verse 16 and verse 19-20?

What does John the Baptist call Jesus in John 3:29, and Jesus call himself in Mark 2:20?

What is the significance of that, do you think?

* * *

2 Kings 17:24 tells us that the Assyrian king tried to resettle the land Israel had been removed from with people from other parts of the empire who worshipped other gods.

What did God do? (v 25)

What was the problem, and how did they try to solve it? (v 26-28)

Once the people knew what God required, did things improve? Why or why not? (v29-41)

In Romans 7:21-23, Paul shares something of his own experience that might help us understand this. What does he say?

Do you recognise this conflict at work in your own life?

Paul goes on to explain what's going on and how it can be solved (Romans 8:1-8) Just like the people of Israel, who could not obey God's clear instructions, we all have a problem keeping God's law.

Why is the law powerless to help us live the way God says is good for us? (v3a)

What did God do about this problem? (v3b)

Our 'flesh' – that is, our natural inclinations and desires – cannot keep the law, even if we accept in our minds that keeping God's law is a good thing to do (v7). Jesus had to take the 'flesh' out of the equation. He did this by dying on our behalf in the likeness of our sinful flesh so that our sin could be condemned. The demand of the law – death because of sin – is now paid for us.

What does that mean for us? (v1)

What does God give us to live by instead of the 'flesh'? (v 4,5,6)