

Israel Is Carried To Assyria

2 Kings 17:5-41

MEMORY VERSE

2 KINGS 17:39

“But the LORD your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Two small objects such as a marble or coin.

As many paper plates and tongue depressors as the number of children in your class, markers or crayons, scissors and glue.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

“Secret! Secret! I’ve Got a Secret!”

In our lesson today we will learn that the Israelites sinned against the Lord and they tried to keep it a secret. We can never keep anything from the Lord. This fun game will help us to learn about keeping some things hidden.

Have your class form two teams. Give each team an item that they will try to keep hidden from the other team (for older ages you may use a small item like a marble or coin, for younger classes you can use a larger item).

Have your teams form a line and then sit on the floor facing the other team. Allow enough room behind each team for them to pass the object. Each team will take turns. You will next ask a question to the team who is not chosen to pass the object (you can use review questions from previous lessons, keep them simple enough that the children who were not there can get them). While that group is answering the question the other group is passing the item behind their backs. As soon as the first team correctly answers the

question, then the team moving the item must stop. Choose someone from the “question” team to guess who has the item. Switch which team does the “question” and which team does the “moving.”

You can keep points and have the winning team serve small prizes to the others. Possible scoring: If “question” team guesses who has the item, “question” team gets a point. If “question” team guesses wrong, then the “moving” team gets a point.

LESSON TIME!

When God brought His people out of slavery in Egypt, He gave them the Ten Commandments to show them how to live. The people were taught the Ten Commandments from the time they were children. They knew and understood the law.

God told them in Exodus 20:2-5a “I am Jehovah your God who liberated you from your slavery in Egypt. You may have no other God’s than me. You shall not make yourselves any idols: no images of animals, birds or fish. You must never bow or worship it in any way; for I, the Lord your God am very possessive. I will not share your affection with any other god!”

If the Israelites would follow God’s commandments, He had promised to richly bless them, but if they followed the false gods of the nations around them, they were clearly warned that they would lose the blessings and become cursed. It was clearly the people’s choice. Do good and be blessed or do evil and be cursed.

We also clearly have the same choice. If we stay true to God we will be blessed but if we do evil and follow the ways of the world around us, we will be punished. The choice is ours. God had poured out His love and grace upon Israel and yet they still

rebelled against Him. God is loving, full of mercy and kind. But there also comes a time when judgment comes upon those who willfully turn against Him.

In today's lesson we learn what happened to the people of Israel when they sinned, turned away from God, followed the ways of the nations around them, and worshipped false gods instead of the true Lord God. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 17:5-6

Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years.

In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria 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.

Assyria invaded the land of Samaria. After three years of war, the Assyrians won. They took the Israelites captive, took their homes and land, and moved them to Assyria.

Judgment had come upon Israel. Not one single king from the time of Solomon until the captivity was a good king.

Even though God remained patient and faithful to His people, the kings led the people into sin. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 17:7-12

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,

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.

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.

They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree.

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,

for they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this thing."

The Israelites were carried into captivity for one reason only, because the Israelites sinned against the Lord. They turned away from God even though He had been very good to them. He brought them out of slavery in Egypt and taught them how to live.

But they started worshipping the false gods of the nations around them and followed the sinful practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. Even though they acted like they were doing right, they did secret things against the Lord. They built places of worship and altars to the false gods and worshiped them throughout the land even though God had warned them not to do so.

Do you remember all of the wonderful things that God did for His people in Egypt? These people didn't care at all about what God had done for them in the past. They only looked at what they wanted to do today. They completely gave their lives over to idol worship and sin.

Can we look at the world, the "nations around us" and think that we should be like they are and do the things that they do? We can do that, but what will happen is that it will only end in destruction. God wants us to keep our eyes and focus upon Him at all times. We should never let our hearts drift and become fixed on anything else except for God. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 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."

God warned the people repeatedly through His prophets to turn from their sins and to follow His commands. God always warns us not to continue in sin.

Can you think of ways that the Lord has warned us today concerning sin? The Lord has given us the Bible. The same prophets that spoke in the Old Testament we get to hear from today. They call us and challenge us to a life that is completely dedicated to God.

We also learn in the New Testament how Jesus wants to deliver us out of sin and then give us the Holy Spirit to help us to live for Him. There is never any reason why we should go down the path of sin and destruction. The Lord who loves us always warns us. It is up to us to listen to Him or to walk our own way. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 17:14-17

Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God.

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.

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.

And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

But the people became very stubborn and refused to listen to the prophets of God. They rejected God and His ways, and they followed worthless idols.

Even though God had warned them against doing what the nations were doing, they bowed down to idols, worshiped the sun and stars, practiced palm reading and witchcraft and even sacrificed their children on altars to the false gods.

There are those today who refuse to pay attention to God's Word or to come to Jesus. They have been warned in God's Word, but choose in their heart to turn against God. They may appear to be religious on the outside, but their heart is far from the Lord. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 17:18-23

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

Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

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.

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.

For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them,

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.

God became very angry because the Israelites had forsaken Him, followed other gods, and practiced terrible sins. So God removed His blessing and removed the people from His presence. God allowed Assyria to capture the entire nation. They lost their homes, their possessions, their land, and even their heritage.

When we choose to follow sin instead of the Lord, it only leads to destruction. God loves to bless His people, but when we choose those things that are against the Lord and His Word, consequences (or bad results) will happen. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 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 king of Assyria brought people from other nations into Samaria and gave them the homes, possessions, and lands of the Israelites. They took over Samaria and moved into the Israelite homes. The land became their land.

All of the wonderful promises of the people of Israel having their own land and dwelling places were lost because of their sin. Our sin or disobedience can cause us to miss out on the blessings that God wants to give us. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

Here Today, Gone Tomorrow!

When the Israelites were taken into captivity they had to leave everything behind and begin a new life. Of course they didn't have to if they only repented from their sin. This activity will help you to understand what it may have been like to be uprooted and moved to a new place.

Everyone will need a memorization worksheet. When you get to this section (verse 24) stop the class and tell everyone that they have to move out of their places. They must leave their worksheet, friends and seat. Mix them up and have them sit in new places. They cannot sit with their friends! Have them finish the sheets at their new spot.

Use this to discuss with the children how they felt to have to move. To leave work undone and to finish work started by someone else? How did they feel when they couldn't sit next to friends? How do they suppose the Israelites felt when they were forced to move? What can be learned from the Israelites experience?

2 KINGS 17:25-28

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.

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."

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."

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.

The new nations who moved there didn't worship God so He sent lions against them. It was reported to the king that this was happening because they didn't know what God required. The king ordered a priest of Israel to come in and teach the new nation. So one of the priests came back to Bethel to teach them how to worship the Lord God.

It would seem that even while Israel was in bondage to the Assyrians they still wouldn't turn to the Lord. They continued to follow their idols and their own ways. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 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.

The men of Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima,

and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.

The new nations brought their false gods with them. They too worshiped idols and false gods and practiced evil in the name of religion. They also sacrificed their children to false gods.

How sad that God's chosen people chose to do these terrible things. God had such a better life for them if they would only have turned to Him. God is so good to His people. He loves us so very much and He wants the best for us. How we need to respond to His love through obeying Him. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 17:32-34

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.

They feared the LORD, yet served their own gods; according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away.

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,

They worshiped the Lord but they also worshiped their gods according to the customs of their previous countries. Their worship was not true or from the heart. It was in outward form only. They did not love God or obey the commandments of God. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

2 KINGS 17:35-39

with whom the LORD had made a covenant and charged them, saying: "You shall not fear other gods, nor bow down 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 an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice.

"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.

"And 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; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies."

When God made the covenant with Israel He told them not to worship, serve, or sacrifice to other gods. Only the Lord God who loves them and who brought them out of Egypt has the power to deliver them from their enemies. He is all-powerful. There is no other God. Only the Lord God is worthy of true worship.

They were told to be careful to keep the law and commands that He wrote. They were warned to remember the agreement and to be true to God. If they did He would bless them and take care of them.
We should be faithful to our faithful God.

2 KINGS 17:40

However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals.

But they still refused to listen. Even while they worshiped God they followed the ways of the world around them and served their idols too. They refused to repent of their evil ways and to make a true commitment to love and serve God; therefore, they lost God's blessings.

In today's world we have many temptations to do what the world around us is doing. We want to belong and to be accepted by our friends and others. We have to be careful not to be caught up in sins that will pull us away from God and what we have been taught in His Word, the Bible. We need to follow God and make the right choices.

God loves us. He is not willing that any should perish. He is waiting with open arms to receive us and to bless us. We need to be willing to run from sin, to ask for forgiveness, and ask His Son, Jesus, into our hearts and lives.

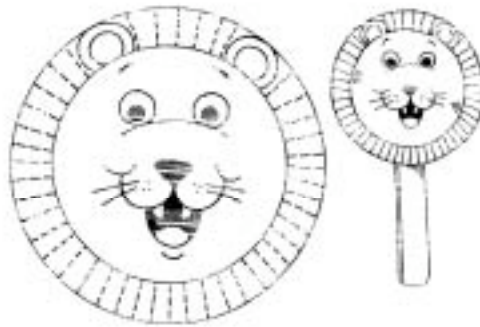
We can't follow both the ways of the world and the ways of God, too. We need to take a stand for what we believe. Do not let other people influence us to follow other ways like the Israelites did. We have to stay true to God. We need to stand up for Jesus and obey His ways. It is our choice, the right choice. **We should be faithful to our faithful God.**

Lion Mask

You will need as many paper plates as the number of children in your class, markers or crayons, scissors and glue.

Draw a lion's face on the paper plate as shown in the picture below. Allow the children to color with crayons or markers. Use the outer edge of the paper plate as the lion's mane. After coloring the lion cut slits along the outside edge on the perforations. This will make the mane stand out more.

Next, cut out the eyes and glue a tongue depressor to the bottom of the lion on the back of the plate. Use this mask to reinforce the theme of the lesson. When we remain faithful to the Lord, great blessing will follow.



PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to follow the Lord no matter what. Ask the Lord to help them to be sensitive to the ways of this world and not allow their hearts to drift towards the things of this world. May the Lord always keep us focused on Him. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.