

The Fall of Samaria 2 Kings 17

The Fall of Samaria Introduction

- After breaking away from Judah, the northern tribes of Israel with their capital in Samaria lasted about 200 years.
- Their kingdom ended in a brutal catastrophe when the Assyrians invaded and sent many into exile.
- What can we learn from their fall?

- Three challenges related to Israel's downfall:
 1. The Problem of Cultural Drift.
 2. The Devastating Effects of Sin on a Society.
 3. The Continuous Stress of Ethnic Conflicts.

- We'll find solutions to them by remembering this:

We can influence the future by taking the lessons of the past and allowing them to guide us in the present.

- Romans 15:4
- 1 Corinthians 10:11

Hoshea's Reign 17:1-5

- Hoshea was an evil king, but there had been worse – Ahab, for example.
- He just happened to reign at a time when Israel's sins were catching up with them.

Israel's Exile 17:6

- Samaria fell to the Assyrians, whose capital was at Nineveh.
- Their practice was to deport large numbers of the most influential citizens and resettle them in other lands.

Israel's Idolatry 17:7-23

- 17:7 And this occurred because ...
- This may be the most important phrase in this chapter.
- It highlights the reasons that Israel fell.

- 17:13-14 the Lord warned Israel and Judah ... But they would not listen, but were stubborn ...
- An unbearably painful commentary.
- Remember: **We can influence the future by taking the lessons of the past and allowing them to guide us in the present.**

- 17:21-23 From the time Israel seceded from Judah, they turned away as a people from the Lord.
- The Northern Kingdom of Israel lasted about 200 years.
- The Kingdom of Judah will follow in about 150 more years.

Samaria's Resettlement 17:24-41

- After removing many of the Israelites, the Assyrians settled the land of Israel with the people of other nations.
- This passage explains the origin of the people who were later known as the Samaritans.
- At this time their religion was a strange mix of genuinely biblical ideas plus their own familiar forms of idolatry.
- It was a *partial or half-hearted* worship of God.
 - *Your god is what or whom you have at the center of your life. You can say that you are a Christian, but if your life is being ruled by money or sex or pleasure or anything else, you are mixing paganism with Christianity. We must worship God with all our hearts or not at all.*
 - *Pastor Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013)*
- Over time, Samaritan religion progressed and came to exclude idolatry.
- Nonetheless, full-blooded Israelites continued to look down on Samaritans.

The Fall of Samaria Three Challenges

All three of these challenges still confront us today:

1. The Problem of Cultural Drift.
2. The Devastating Effects of Sin on a Society.
3. The Continuous Stress of Ethnic Conflicts.

1. The Problem of Cultural Drift.

- Israel's idolatry did not become ingrained overnight.
- It started with just a few idols and a few places of worship.
- After 200 years of continuous practice what was once new became normal – even traditional.
- **Cultural Drift in Our Day:**
 - Changing views on marriage, sexuality, pornography, etc.
 - Violence in entertainment and many computer-based games.
 - The harshness of public discourse.
 - The focus on self as the standard for everything.

- **The Solution to Cultural Drift.**
- We may personally resist the drift, but Christians also need to set the course for cultural advancement.
- We can do so by seriously taking our place in the arts, sciences, media, business and education.
- The more ways we dare to take the lead, the more the culture will tend to follow.

2. The Devastating Effects of Sin on a Society.

- The Kingdom of Israel freely embraced idolatry and a vast array of accompanying evil practices.
- Samaria's end was tragic.
- The long term effects of sin are always that way.

The Way to Prevent the Devastating Effects of Sin.

- Sin starts with individuals and must be attacked first at the individual level. We need to examine ourselves.
- We must also encourage one another.
- See 1 Corinthians 15:33 and Hebrews 3:12-13.

3. The Continuous Stress of Ethnic Conflicts.

- The conflict between Jews and Samaritans was still a reality at the time of Christ over 700 years later. See John 4:9.

The Solution to Ethnic Conflicts.

- Jesus revealed himself as the Messiah to the Samaritan woman he met at the well. See John 4:25-26.
- Before he ascended into heaven, Jesus told his followers they would be his witnesses in Samaria. See Acts 1:8.
- We can think of Samaritans as those who live close by us, but who are very different from us.
- When he was speaking on Mars Hill in Athens, Paul made it clear that "all people everywhere" had the exact same need to repent. See Acts 17:30-31.

In Christ we have:

1. The Solution to Cultural Drift.
2. The Way to Prevent the Devastating Effects of Sin.
3. The Solution to Ethnic Conflicts.

We can influence the future by taking the lessons of the past and allowing them to guide us in the present.