

## Monday

2 Kings 17:6a & 7, "The king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria... this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God."

Israel was on a destructive path. They had continually sinned against God. Not only did they disobey God, but they actively worked against the will of God. They worshiped fake gods in terrible ways and didn't obey any of the commands that God had given them. Because of this, God sent the Assyrians to capture Israel and take them captive.

God does not always need to perform such harsh punishment; however, sometimes He has no other choice. If our disobedience is reaching a level that is too dangerous, God will step in to discipline us however He needs to. He always does this because He loves us and wants us to come back to Him. God warned and warned and warned Israel, but they kept sinning. They even killed the prophets that God sent to them! Unfortunately, sometimes we have consequences too. Even if we're experiencing consequences, know that God is our loving Father and only wants us to come back to His love!

## Tuesday

2 Kings 17:13, "Again and again the Lord had sent his prophets and seers to warn both Israel and Judah: 'Turn from all your evil ways. Obey my commands and decrees.'"

God deeply loved Israel. He loved them so much that he sent prophet after prophet to warn them about turning away from God. He sent Hosea, Jonah, Isaiah, and many others to warn Israel that there would be severe consequences if they didn't turn back to God.

God loves us so much that he allows us time to come to him. Jesus taught that God is patient, wanting everyone to have time and opportunity to turn to Him. Because of Jesus, we do not face dire consequences for every little sin. However, we need to deal with sin as it comes up. Sin in our lives is like a

seed in the soil. It might be small and insignificant, but it will grow into a huge plant or tree in time! God loves us so much He sent His son Jesus to die for our sins, which was the consequence we deserved. If you are struggling with sin, turn away from that sin and be forgiven by Jesus. Even disobedience, a bad attitude, or lying can eventually lead to hurtful consequences.

## Wednesday

2 Kings 17:14, "But the Israelites would not listen!"

Even though God sent prophets to Israel, they did not listen. Even though there were terrible consequences, they would not listen. Even though they were walking away from God, they would not listen. They did not listen because their hearts were hardened. They had disobeyed God so much and for so long that they could no longer surrender their hearts to Him. This led to Assyria taking them over, even though it hurt God to punish them like this.

It is a beautiful thing that we have a God who is perfect and holy. We can trust His word, direction, and instruction. When he tells us to do something, it is so that He can give us the very best. He wanted Israel to experience His love and goodness. But, they hardened their heart or decided that God wasn't good enough for them, and then God couldn't bless them. God gave us Jesus! This means our sins are forgiven; however, to grow close to Him and experience Him in a better way, we have to surrender our hearts to Him. Even today, we can dedicate our lives to Him, choosing to listen to His word by obeying our parents, being honest, and putting others before ourselves.

## Thursday

2 Kings 17:18, "So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from His presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left."

This was the saddest moment for everyone that lived in Israel. God removing Israel from the promised land. This was the ultimate punishment that he told them could ever occur. He even

warned Moses what would happen if the people ever entirely walked away from God. In this way, we see that God is honest and faithful. He gave more opportunities than Israel could count, and they still refused him. But, he had a wonderful plan for Israel. There was always a promise that they would be restored! Remember, God told Hosea that Israel would be returned to Him one day after they were exiled.

Facing punishment for sin is terrible. It hurts God most of all, even if it is what's best for us. When we get in trouble, remember that we can use that as an opportunity to begin to do the right thing and become better! We can always turn away from doing what is wrong! Disobeying, not listening, being unkind, and lying are all sin. Begin to obey, listen, show kindness, and act obediently! When we do this, God can begin to let us experience His love more.

## Friday

Proverbs 3:12, "The Lord disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in."

Even though we don't like it, Godly discipline is needed to become better. Discipline, guidelines, and rules are important for us to be safe and experience goodness in life. Things generally go wrong when we forget about the boundaries we should have. When it comes to God, He loves us more than we can understand. He allowed His Son to be killed terribly on the cross just so that we could know His love and experience His love. He wants us to bring Him glory through accepting the forgiveness that Jesus offers.

Lastly, just like God was a good Father to Israel, He is a good Father to us. Even though He disciplines, He does it out of love. Just like a good father disciplines a son or daughter that he loves, God does the same thing because He loves us. If you are sinning or not listening to God, choose today to turn away from that and begin to follow God! Jesus forgives sins and wants us to know who He is, be our friend, and help us with anything we need. Praise God that Jesus is so good and that God the Father loves us so much!