



LEVEL 7
7·3
LESSON 3

Imperial Academy Bible Lessons



David and the Kings of Israel

David and the Kings of Israel

Every person who has ever lived has faced the powerful temptation of sin. It is how you handle the temptation that shapes your character. King David revealed his character by how he handled sin.

In the previous lesson, you learned about David's sin with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband, Uriah. David thought he could hide his sin. God allowed him to think that for quite a while. God, of course, knew what David had done.

Just like parents must correct their child when he or she disobeys, God had to correct David and Bathsheba. God sent the Prophet Nathan to confront David and make him face his sins. There is always a consequence for sin. Sin is the cause; suffering is the effect.

In this lesson, you will study what God told David through Nathan and about David's punishment for his sins. You will also learn the history of the kings of Israel who reigned after David.

THE CONCLUSION TO DAVID'S REIGN

When Nathan confronted David and exposed his sins, David did not continue to avoid the truth. He finally faced his guilt for his evil actions. He admitted his sinfulness and began to repent toward God. You must always be quick to repent. Do not continue to cover up and ignore your sin against God. God accepted David's repentance for his sins, but He still had to punish him. The first punishment God pronounced was the death of the baby who was born conceived by David's adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12).

Hoping that God would change His mind and spare the baby from death, David humbled himself before God and fasted and fervently prayed for seven days. However, the baby died just as Nathan had said. Verse 14 tells us *why* God had to punish David.

Read verse 14 and explain, in your own words, why God had to punish David in this way. _____

Because of his sin, David would also continue to endure other punishments throughout his reign (read verses 10-11).

As David grew older, his son Absalom began coveting his father's throne (2 Samuel 15). Absalom managed to win the hearts of many of the people in Israel. Eventually, he led a rebellion against his father, breaking God's laws, including the Fifth Commandment. David had to flee, much like he had fled from Saul.

Absalom gathered to himself an army of his followers and fought against those who were loyal to his father. But God defended David and gave his army the victory.

Defeated, Absalom fled for his life. While fleeing from the battle on a mule, Absalom rode under a giant oak tree. He did not see a low-hanging branch, and his hair and head got caught in the tree, lifting him off of his mule and suspending him above the ground.

Joab, David's leading general, was told of Absalom's precarious situation. David had commanded his servants not to kill Absalom, despite his violent rebellion. Instead of obeying David's instruction, Joab killed Absalom.

David's love for his son, even when he rebelled, reflects how much God loves human beings, even when they sin. Your parents are the same way. They correct you when you disobey, but they yearn to forgive you, to help you grow and to be close to you. The love parents have for their child is a type of God's love.



King David taught and prepared the young Solomon for his royal role, shown by this relief in Moscow.

Near the end of David’s reign, Israel was experiencing a time of relative peace. The peace was a blessing from God, yet David became vain about the power of his nation. He wanted a count of all the military-age men in Israel so he could see how strong his army was and compare it to those of his enemies. Throughout David’s life, God had showed him that numbers of soldiers and human effort did not determine the victor—it is God who determines the outcome. David should have known better than to order a census.

God was unhappy that David had forgotten that all his victories had come from God, not men. Any victory that we gain as individuals or as a Church comes from God. Yet it can be so easy to take the credit and to rely on ourselves. God wants to protect and provide for us, but we have to be willing to trust Him and not ourselves. This is one of mankind’s greatest sins—self-reliance.

God sent a prophet to David to tell him he would be punished for his sin.

Read 2 Samuel 24 and list the choices for punishment that David was given.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What did David choose? _____

Why did he choose that? _____

Through the punishment, God taught King David and the nation of Israel the vital lesson of trusting only in God. When we rely on ourselves, things go wrong. David and Israel were about to learn this lesson the hard way.

David received reports that 70,000 Israelites had been killed in a plague of disease, as an angel of God passed over the entire nation. David hated to see people suffering and dying because of *his* sin (verse 17). He humbled himself before God and earnestly prayed for forgiveness. He wanted God to take his life instead of the lives of innocent people.

God was moved by David’s prayer. He instructed him to go to Mt. Moriah, to build an altar there, and to offer sacrifices to God. David quickly obeyed God’s instruction. Then God halted the plague.

David purchased the land where the altar was built. It would later be used as the location for God’s temple, a reminder of the plague and God’s mercy in ending it.

David wanted to build God a temple. But God said he could not build it because he had shed too much

blood (1 Chronicles 28:3). God's perfect character is founded on the nine fruits of His Spirit, which do not include violence or fighting.

List all nine of the fruits from Galatians 5:22-23.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

Throughout David's reign, Israel had fought many wars. God wanted His house to be constructed in a time of peace, prosperity and happiness. This is what Israel would experience under the reign of David's son Solomon. But God loved David's attitude of eagerness to build Him a temple, so He allowed David to prepare for its construction. David diligently drew up plans and set aside materials and money for the temple through the rest of his life. He made sure everything was ready for his son to begin building.

MEMORY TEST

When Absalom seized his father's throne, which commandment did he break? _____

Why was it a sin that David numbered the men in Israel's army? _____

The plague stopped when David offered a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah. What building would later be constructed there? _____

GODLY WISDOM

When God put to death the baby born of David and Bathsheba's sin, He promised that their next son, Solomon, would become king over Israel. He also promised that under Solomon's leadership, Israel would enjoy peace and prosperity (1 Chronicles 22:9). Solomon knew that reigning over God's nation was an enormously difficult task. Becoming king as a young man was an awesome responsibility.

God came to Solomon in a dream one night and told Solomon that he could have anything that he asked for. How would you respond if God gave you such an opportunity?

Write down one wish you would ask God for. _____

You might not even consider asking for what Solomon had asked for.

Fill in the blanks from 1 Kings 3:9 to find out what Solomon asked God for. "Give therefore your servant an _____ to _____ your people."

God was pleased that Solomon asked for wisdom. He could have asked for more wealth or for power to destroy his enemies. Instead, he had a righteous attitude and recognized that he could not rule over God's people without wisdom from God Himself. God granted Solomon his request and made him the wisest man on Earth.

Fill in the blanks from verses 11-12 to read God's response to Solomon's request. "And God said unto him, Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked for yourself _____; neither have asked _____ for yourself, nor have asked the _____ of your _____; but have asked for yourself _____ to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to your words..."

Because God blessed him with wisdom, Solomon was able to judge the people of Israel fairly. The whole nation was happy and prosperous because their leader judged and ruled them with wisdom from God. He had put Israel's needs above his own desires when he made his request to God. As a result, the whole nation benefited.

Because Solomon's request was so selfless, God not only gave him such great wisdom that he was the wisest man on Earth, but He also gave him those things that he surely desired but did not ask for: riches and peace. God also told Solomon that He would give him a long life if he did not compromise with obeying God's commandments (verse 14).

Solomon's example shows us that when you think of others instead of yourself, God hears your requests and He also takes care of you! Think the way that God thinks, and you will constantly focus your thoughts on the needs of others. When you think this way, God will want to bless those people—and bless you!

News began to spread that Solomon had great wisdom from God. His great wealth enabled him to construct major building and agricultural projects. Israel became a great nation. But of all the buildings that were constructed in Israel, the temple in Jerusalem was the most impressive. God had given the pattern for its construction, and it was built with the finest materials as a symbol of God's perfection. People from other nations visited Jerusalem just to view this magnificent structure.

At the peak of his reign, God reminded Solomon of the promise He had made to his father (1 Kings 9:5). God had told David that his descendants would never cease to rule from his throne. This promise is still in effect today.

God told Solomon that if he would continue to obey His perfect law, then he would continue to prosper and live a long life. But sadly, Solomon strayed from God. He married 700 wives and had 300 concubines, which was a sin, and he allowed them to turn him away from God. Many of his wives

and concubines were Gentile, which was against God's instruction, and they worshiped pagan deities. These women corrupted Solomon's worship of the true God.

God was displeased with Solomon's unfaithfulness and sin, but He remembered His promise to his father David. Because of that promise, God did not take the kingdom from Solomon. He waited until after he died and his son Rehoboam ascended to the throne. When Rehoboam began to rule, God split the kingdom as punishment for Solomon's sins.

MEMORY TEST

The temple was built in the city of _____.

Which king built the temple? **David** or **Solomon**

Why did God not allow David to build the temple?



Heads of state from all over the world came to Jerusalem to see the wonders of Solomon's vast wisdom and wealth.

What did Solomon ask God for? _____

What monarch ruling today is a direct descendant of King David and Solomon? _____

At the end of his life, what was Solomon's biggest failure? _____

What curse did God inflict on Israel because of Solomon's sin? _____

THE KINGDOM SPLITS

Solomon had taxed the Israelites heavily. When Rehoboam took the throne, the people asked the new king to reduce the burden.

Rehoboam sought counsel from the senior advisers who had counseled his father. They advised him to lift the heavy tax as the people had requested. But then Rehoboam turned to his peers for advice. They emphasized that as king, he should force the people to do his will and he should make the taxes even heavier.

Rehoboam unwisely listened to his peers instead of the older advisers. Rehoboam "spoke to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kings 12:14). "Scorpions" are whips with metal and glass embedded in them, making them far more painful and destructive than regular whips. Rehoboam was telling the people that he would be an oppressive king who viewed tax reduction as a sign of weakness.

But Rehoboam's reasoning backfired. God used his ill-advised decision to carry out the punishment for Solomon's sins. Ten of the 12 tribes of Israel revolted against Rehoboam. These tribes set up a man named Jeroboam as their king. The only tribes that stayed loyal to Rehoboam were Judah, Benjamin and a portion of Levi.

The 10 tribes in the north that revolted continued to be known as the kingdom of Israel. The tribes in the south became the kingdom of Judah. The peace and prosperity that the united kingdom had experienced

under the reigns of David and Solomon never occurred again. They now entered a cycle of evil kings, curses and war. Very rarely did a righteous king ascend to the throne. But when one did, it was a reminder that God blesses for righteousness and obedience to His law.

MEMORY TEST

What did Rehoboam do to cause the people to rebel?

What was his mistake? _____

After the revolt, who ruled over the northern kingdom?

Who reigned over the southern kingdom? _____

JEROBOAM LEADS CONTRARY TO GOD

Before Rehoboam caused the northern tribes to rebel, God had prophesied to Jeroboam that He would give him the 10 tribes of Israel. But Jeroboam did not believe this promise from God even after it came to pass.

Every year, people from all the tribes would go to Jerusalem on the holy days to worship God. Jeroboam was worried that when the people from the 10 tribes went to Jerusalem for the festivals, they would be tempted to reunite under Rehoboam.

Rather than believe God's promise, Jeroboam determined to solve the problem himself. He decided that the people must remain in Israel during the holy days and not go to Jerusalem in the kingdom of Judah.

Jeroboam set up idols in two of his cities: Dan and Bethel. He proclaimed new holy days of his own during which the people should worship these idols. And he ignored God's priesthood of Levites and chose priests of his own that he could control. Jeroboam quickly undermined the true religion and turned the people of the kingdom of Israel from God to pagan religion.

Jeroboam and the people knew that God's law forbids the worship of idols or anything else besides the one true God! They knew that only God's holy days are sacred. But they rebelled anyway.



Because of King Ahab's disobedience to God, God cursed the nation with a long drought.

God was angered by Jeroboam's lack of faith in His promise and by his fake religion that led people away from Him. God told Jeroboam that He would take the kingdom away from him and all of his descendants would be cut off. All of Jeroboam's sons were eventually killed, fulfilling God's prophecy.

MEMORY TEST

Which two commandments of God did Jeroboam cause the people to break? _____

In which two cities did Jeroboam place idols? _____

Jeroboam did away with God's holy days. List in order the seven festivals that God originally gave Israel (Leviticus 23).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

AHAB AND JEZEBEL

Jeroboam turned the northern kingdom of Israel toward pagan gods (called Baal or Baalim). Kings died and new kings took their place, but none of them

turned the people back to the true God. Out of all these evil kings, the Bible says that Omri "did worse than all that were before him" (1 Kings 16:25). And yet, Omri's son, Ahab, was even more evil.

King Ahab married a Gentile princess, Jezebel, daughter of the king of the Zidonians. Jezebel influenced Ahab to lead Israel to sin even more. She demanded that all the prophets of God be killed and replaced with her own pagan priests.

God was indignant about the increasing sins of His people. He sent the Prophet Elijah to warn Ahab of impending punishment.

Elijah pronounced God's punishment for Israel's sins and Ahab's poor leadership: There would be no rain or dew in the nation until God ended the drought (1 Kings 17:1). Months went by, and no rain fell. Wells dried up, rivers disappeared, and crops withered. The whole nation was afflicted by God's punishment.

Elijah was in Israel, but he had faith that God would provide him with food and water to survive. God miraculously delivered food to Elijah by using ravens, and he had water to drink from a brook in the forest. But as the famine continued, the brook dried up.

God told Elijah to visit a widow whom He had chosen to take care of him. When Elijah arrived at her house, she was gathering wood for a fire to prepare the last meal for her and her son. After they ate that tiny bit of food, she knew they would starve to death.

Elijah made a bold request of the widow: "Prepare me a meal first before making one for you and your son."



God gave the widow unlimited supplies of flour and oil because of her faith and obedience.

“I have barely enough food for my son and me to eat one meal before it’s gone, but you want me to prepare a meal for you first?” she asked.

Elijah encouraged her to have faith, saying that if she did as he said, God would work a miracle for her: Her almost-empty bag of flour and her jar of oil would last all the way until the drought ended.

How much faith do you have in God’s promises? Do you believe that He will do all that He says? This widow believed that God would keep His promise. She obeyed Elijah. And because of her faith, God followed through and caused her supply of oil and flour to last until the famine ended.

After three years, God instructed Elijah to go to King Ahab.

GOD’S GREAT POWER

When Elijah met Ahab, he reminded him that the nation was suffering so badly because of disobedience to God’s law. He told Ahab to gather all of Israel at Mt. Carmel, including the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of the grove.

When all the people had gathered, Elijah boldly said, “How much longer will you waver in your commitment to God? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, then follow him.”

Elijah told the people to bring two bullocks for a sacrifice. He gave one bullock to the prophets of Baal and kept the other one as an offering to God. Elijah told the prophets to prepare an altar to sacrifice the

bullock, but not to light a fire to burn it. The true God would respond to their prayers and miraculously light a fire to consume the sacrifice.

The prophets of Baal prepared their offering first. They built the altar, laid the wood on top, and then cried out to Baal, hoping he would respond. They began their pagan practice early in the morning. From morning to evening, they howled and jumped around the altar, but there was no response.

“Maybe Baal is asleep,” Elijah remarked. The pagan prophets then became even more extreme, cutting themselves and hoping that this drastic commitment to their god would get his attention. But still, they received no answer, because Baal was a false god that did not exist.

In the evening, Elijah prepared to offer a sacrifice to the one true God. He told the people to come closer, so they could observe everything he was about to do. He repaired the altar of God by setting up 12 stones, one for each tribe of Israel, including the tribes in the kingdom of Judah. He then placed the wood on top of the altar and the offering of the bullock on top of it.

Then he did something unexpected: He began digging a trench around the altar. The people were puzzled by his action. He had four barrels of water poured over the bullock, wood and stones. Another four barrels were poured, and yet another four. A total of 12 barrels of water were poured over the sacrifice. Even the trench was now filled with water. Elijah wanted to make it clear that he was not using any sort of trickery.

The people doubted that the God of Elijah could light a fire on this altar, especially when the many prophets of Baal had gone to such extremes for so long and received no miraculous answer. But Elijah was filled with faith. He said a short prayer asking God to show the Israelites that He is the one true God and that Elijah is His servant. The prayer lasted perhaps less than half a minute. Then the true God, the God of Israel, answered His servant’s prayer in a spectacular way!

Fill in the blanks from 1 Kings 18:38 to see how God responded. “Then the _____ of the LORD _____, and consumed the burnt _____, and the _____, and the _____, and the _____, and licked up the _____ that was in the _____.”

God dramatically proved to all of Israel that He indeed is the one true God! The people were amazed by this intense fiery miracle. Elijah ordered them to kill the false prophets of Baal. Then he told Ahab that an abundance of rain was on its way to end the drought. Ahab returned to his palace and told Jezebel everything that had happened. She was infuriated that Elijah had exposed her prophets as false and had executed them. She sent a message to Elijah: “I will do unto you as you have done to my prophets before this time tomorrow.”

Neither Ahab nor Jezebel was moved to repent by God’s miraculous display. Instead, their hearts were hardened. Jezebel sent men to find and kill Elijah.

Elijah fled. He felt oppressed and alone. His faith wavered. But God remained with him, corrected him for doubting, and strengthened him. He told Elijah that he was not completely alone: There were still 7,000 people in Israel who had not worshiped Baal.

Throughout his reign, Ahab continued to rebel against God. Next to his palace was a vineyard owned by a man named Naboth. Ahab looked out his window at the vineyard and desired to possess it. Ahab went to Naboth and offered to trade his vineyard for a better one. But Naboth declined the offer because the vineyard was his family’s inheritance.

Ahab continued to covet Naboth’s property. This sin is very easy to commit. Do you covet the possessions of others? This breaks the Tenth Commandment.



Jezebel plotted the death of Naboth to claim his vineyard.

Indulging in self-centered covetousness can lead to an evil and dangerous attitude.

God wants to give you the desires of your heart, if you obey Him. Ahab did not obey, so God did not bless him. When you feel tempted to desire the possessions of others, turn your thoughts to God and patiently rely on Him to provide what is good for you. Oftentimes, you might think that getting a possession would be good for you, but it actually would be bad for you. God knows, and He provides you with what you need. The more you stay free of the sin of covetousness, the more God can bless you.

After Naboth refused his offer, Ahab returned to his palace and felt sorry for himself. Jezebel decided to take the vineyard. She paid men to spread lies about Naboth. People believed the lies, and Naboth was unjustly taken outside the city and stoned.

Jezebel told her husband what she had done, and Ahab was pleased! Instead of rejecting her evil sin or correcting her, he quickly went to the vineyard and claimed it as his own.

God was very displeased with both Ahab and Jezebel. He sent Elijah to the king once again to deliver His judgment for their sins. Having a guilty conscience, Ahab grew fearful when he saw Elijah approaching. Elijah boldly told the wicked king all that God had spoken to him: All of Ahab’s children would be killed, and dogs would eat his wife.

Grieved by what he had heard, Ahab humbled himself before God. He fasted and asked God for forgiveness. Even though Ahab had done great evil, God took note of his repentance. Sometimes you might feel guilty for committing sins, and you might think God won’t hear you because you have done something evil. But remember all the great evil that Ahab did, and remember that God heard even the prayers of this evil man. Why? Because he turned his heart to God. No matter what you have done, if you will turn to God with a truly humble and repentant attitude, He will hear you! But do not do it only temporarily, like Ahab did. You must do it day after day, whenever you sin.

God had mercy on Ahab and said He would not allow the curses He had pronounced against Ahab’s family to occur while Ahab was still alive.

Three years later, Israel was at war against Syria. Ahab disguised himself as a soldier. He was killed in the battle, and his son Ahaziah became the new king of Israel.



God is always ready to forgive us when we sin, once we repent.

MEMORY TEST

Which prophet of God delivered God's warning to Ahab? _____

Ahab was married to _____.

What pagan god did Israel begin serving? _____

How long did the drought last in Israel? _____

What did Elijah do to prove that the fire on the altar was not a trick? _____

Did Elijah order the people to kill the prophets of Baal?
Yes or No

Which of Naboth's possessions did Ahab want for himself? _____

What did Jezebel do to get Naboth's vineyard for her husband? _____

RESPECT GOD'S GOVERNMENT

Two years into his reign, King Ahaziah became very ill. He sent two messengers to inquire of the prophets of Beelzebub, the god of Ekron, whether or not he would survive. Like the kings before him, Ahaziah rejected the true God and turned to false

pagan gods. He did not call on the prophets of the true God, because he knew that they would tell him what he didn't want to hear.

God sent Elijah to intercept Ahaziah's two messengers and deliver a message from God to Ahaziah: "Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?" (2 Kings 1:3). Elijah then told the messengers what Ahaziah's grave fate would be. "Because you have decided to look to a pagan god," said Elijah, "you will not get up from your bed; you will die in it." Elijah then left, and the messengers turned back to deliver the disturbing news to Ahaziah.

Ahaziah was displeased with the news the messengers brought back. He wanted to speak with Elijah face to face. He sent one of his captains of 50 to locate Elijah. When the captain found Elijah, he disrespectfully demanded that Elijah come before Ahaziah.

Elijah said that if he were a prophet of the true God, fire would come down from heaven and consume all the men. That is exactly what happened.

King Ahaziah sent another captain of 50 who approached Elijah with the same disrespect and also suffered the same fate.

King Ahaziah sent a third captain of 50, but this man took a different approach. He dropped to his knees before Elijah to show respect to him and his God. He asked Elijah to value his life and the lives of his men.

God instructed Elijah to go with the captain and his men to meet Ahaziah. When he arrived at the palace, Elijah asked Ahaziah, "Did you have to inquire of the prophets of Beelzebub because there is not a God over Israel whom you can inquire of?" After posing this question, Elijah again confirmed that Ahaziah would die. Shortly after he left, God's prophecy was fulfilled and Ahaziah died.

MEMORY TEST

Explain the lesson that you learned from the third captain of 50: _____

ASSYRIA TAKES ISRAEL CAPTIVE

After Ahaziah died, one evil king after another ruled Israel. The nation spiraled deeper and deeper into sin. God had to correct Israel on a national scale.

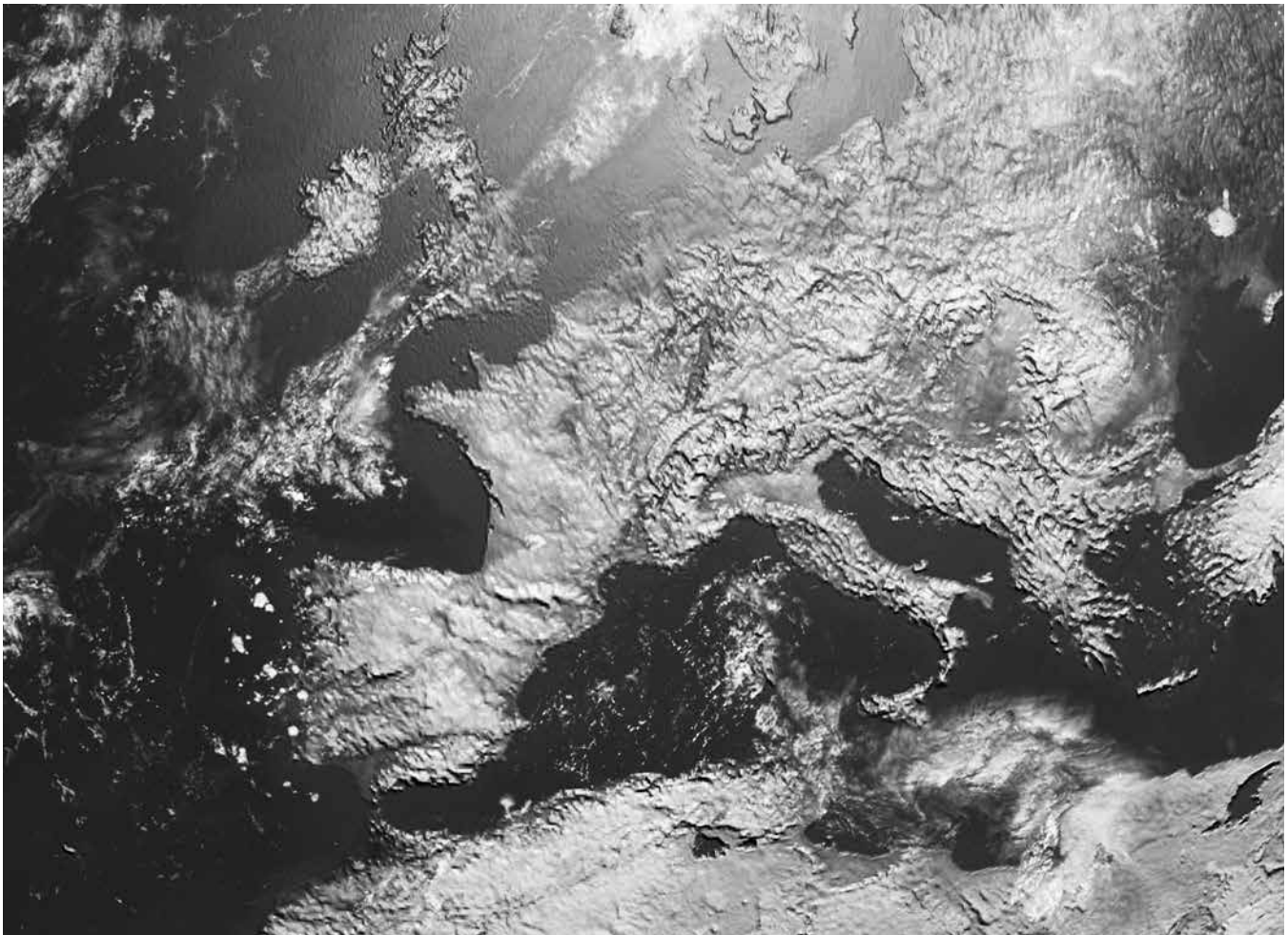
Under the reign of King Hoshea, Israel began paying tribute to the nation of Assyria, a powerful Gentile nation north of Israel. Parts of Israel had already been conquered, and Hoshea grew fearful that the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser, would overthrow him. Instead of looking to God for protection, Hoshea turned to Egypt.

Shalmaneser found out that Hoshea was conspiring with the king of Egypt and immediately put him in prison. After removing the king from his throne, the armies of Assyria conquered all of Israel. “Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years” (2 Kings 17:5). After three years, every city in the northern kingdom had been ransacked and conquered by the Gentile invaders.

Even though Assyria was a powerful nation, God had the power to save Israel from invasion. But the people of Israel were far from God—they did not trust Him, they did not obey Him, and they did not truly believe in Him. The only way the God of Israel could get through to His rebellious people was to use the brutal Assyrian nation to punish them for their sins.

Thousands of Israelites were killed and thousands more were transported to Assyria to be slaves. After they were taken captive, they forgot who they were. They did not have a land of their own. They did not keep the Sabbath and the other commandments of God. They adopted the religions of the surrounding nations. They also began to speak the languages of these nations. They lost their identity and forgot that they were Israelites. For this reason, they became known as “the lost 10 tribes of Israel.”

In the next lesson, we will study what happened to these tribes, as revealed in *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, by Herbert W. Armstrong.



The 10 lost tribes of Israel are mainly scattered across Europe today.

BIBLE MEMORY

Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

God's holy days (Leviticus 23)

1 Kings 3:9

1 Kings 9:5

1 Kings 18:38

1 Chronicles 22:9

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Gerald Flurry

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King David Word Search

C I C H K I N A W K I N G D O M D S J S
A S R T N A A Q P J U D A H H P P A E A
P R J E B A T H S H E B A T U W R C R N
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G F O R G I V E S N O Y R E H O B O A M

ABSALOM

AHAB

AHAZIAH

ALTAR

ASSYRIA

BATHSHEBA

CAPTIVITY

DAVID

ELIJAH

FORGIVE

ISRAEL

JEROBOAM

JEZEBEL

JOAB

JUDAH

KING

KINGDOM

MOUNT CARMEL

NABOTH

NATHAN

NATION

PROPHET

REHOBOAM

REIGN

REPENT

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SOLOMON

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