

# Through the Bible- 2 Kings 15-17 & 2 Chronicles 26-28 & Amos

Joshua Tallent – January 10, 2024

## Background

- **[SLIDE - timeline]** We have now reached 767 BCE, about 160 years after the death of Solomon, which is about the same amount of time as between us today and the American Civil War.
- The Northern Kingdom of Israel has been ruled by a series of evil kings, none of which have chosen to follow God's commandments or remove the idolatrous practices from the people.
- The Southern kingdom of Judah, meanwhile, has had some righteous kings and some unrighteous kings, with varying degrees of reform.
- We are starting to get into the part of the scriptures where the Prophets of Israel will become more important.

## Uzziah (Judah)

- Uzziah is also called Azariah in 2 Kings. It might be confusing, but that's the same guy.
- Started off well, doing what was right in the sight of God
- The prophet Amos prophesied during the reign of Uzziah. We'll talk more about Amos in a moment, but there's an interesting historical note in Amos 1:1:
  - "The words of Amos, who was among the shepherders from Tekoa, which he saw in visions concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Jehoash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake."
  - Archaeologists have found extensive evidence of this earthquake in Hatzor and Gath. So much evidence that scientists have been able to determine the epicenter was likely in Lebanon, and that its strength was probably around a magnitude 8.2, with a Modified Mercalli intensity of 9. Geologist Steven Austin, Ph.D., says:
    - [This event] appears to be the largest yet documented on the Dead Sea Transform fault zone during the last four millennia. The Dead Sea Transform fault likely ruptured along more than 400 kilometers as the ground shook violently for over 90 seconds! The urban panic created by this earthquake would have been legendary.
  - Two different intensity-8 earthquakes occurred on the Dead Sea Transform fault, one in 526 CE, killing 255,000 people and one in 749 CE, killing 100,000 people. But the one in Uzziah's time was one intensity level higher.
  - This earthquake was so pivotal that it was mentioned two hundred years later by the prophet Zechariah:
    - Zechariah 14:5 — On that day His [Messiah's] feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west forming a very large valley. Half of the mountain will move toward the north, and the other half toward the south. And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains

will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.

- In 2021 a group of archaeologists excavating in Jerusalem near the City of David unearthed new evidence of this earthquake for the first time in Jerusalem.
- **[SLIDE]** The earliest floor of the southernmost room of a building bore evidence of destruction, but not by fire, and the destruction layer was dated to a time period when no known conquest of Jerusalem occurred.
- **[SLIDE]** Stones from an upper part of the northern walls had collapsed, shattering a row of vessels that had been sitting along the wall beneath.
- **[SLIDE]** 2 Chronicles 26:9 - Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, the Valley Gate, and at the corner buttress, and he fortified them.
  - The city must have been in disarray after such a big earthquake
  - Also, remember that in his father's lifetime: Jehoash king of Israel captured Uzziah's father, Amaziah, after a battle "and came to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate, four hundred cubits." (2 Kings 14:13)
- He also built an army of 307,500 fighting men, very large force in that day.
- However, Uzziah's pride ended up being his downfall
  - **[SLIDE]** He thought so highly of himself that he decided it was appropriate for him to enter the Temple and offer incense on the incense altar
  - This is forbidden for anyone except the priests.
- So, God struck Uzziah with *tzara'at*
  - *Tzara'at* is a skin disease that God gives to people in response to certain sins. (Leviticus 13:1-3, 14:1-32; 18:24ff, plus Numbers 12:1-15 - the connection to *lashon hara*)
  - For some, *tzara'at* was a short term affliction. For others it lasted much longer.
  - Being declared clean from *tzara'at* requires a specific process of sprinkling with a unique mixture, plus sacrifices and separation for 7 days.
- Uzziah never recovered from his affliction. He had to move out of the palace, could not continue in his kingly duties, and had to hand over the rule of the kingdom to his son Jotham
- When Uzziah died he was not even allowed to be buried in the cave where the other kings were buried, they instead buried him in a grave nearby.
- **[SLIDE]** In 1930 someone noticed this stone plaque in a collection of artifacts from the Mount of Olives in a Russian Orthodox convent.
- The Aramaic inscription reads: "Here were brought the bones of Uzziah, king of Judah. Not to be opened." The stone was dated to the first century CE.
- Archaeologists speculate that the field where Uzziah's bones were buried was used for another purpose, probably due to the expansion of Jerusalem in that century. So they dug up his bones and re-buried them on the Mount of Olives, with this plaque over the new location.
- There is another interesting archaeological connection here, too.

- A now lost fragmentary inscription belonging to the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III mentions “Azariah of Judah” (Uzziah’s secondary name) several times. The inscription mentions that around 740BCE Tiglath-Pileser III led a campaign into Syria:
- Nineteen districts of the town Hamath, together with the towns in their circuit, which are situated on the coast of the Western Sea, which in their sin and wickedness sided with Azariah, I turned to the territory of Assyria.
- 2 Kings 14 indicates that the area of Syria or Aram alternated between being allied with the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah during that time, so it makes sense that some of the towns in Syria would have been allied with Uzziah.

## Amos

- **[SLIDE - Map]** Amos prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II in Israel and Uzziah in Judah.
- Amos 7:14 — Amos was not a professional prophet, he was a shepherd from Tekoa, a village south of Jerusalem in the hill country. He was also a *וּבֹלֵס שִׁקְמִים*, *boles shiqmim*, a gatherer of sycamores. The fruit of sycamore trees is referenced in other ancient writings as food of the common people, so Amos was describing himself as a poor person not a person with wealth and honor.
- Amos was sent by God to prophesy at Bethel, in Israel.
  - Where do we know that from? (Jacob, also one of the two cities that Jeroboam I set up with a golden calf after the split of the kingdoms.
  - His prophecies were not only against Israel, however. He also prophesied against the other nations around the northern kingdom, and against Judah, as well.
- Introduction: Chapters 1-2
  - condemnations against all the nations around the holy land, and against Judah and Israel
    - Damascus = Arameans
    - Gaza **[READ Amos 1:6–8]**
    - Tyre (Phoenicians)
    - Edom
    - Ammon
    - Moab
    - Judah
    - Finally, Israel
- Chapter 3: Condemnation against all the tribes of Jacob
  - This chapter, as well as chapters 4 and 5, all start with the phrase “Hear this word.” They form one long admonition to repentance.
  - They are a prophecy about the coming destruction of the nation of Israel and their captivity
  - **[READ Amos 3:11–15]**
- Chapter 4: Discipline has not been heeded

- By “cows of Bashan,” Amos meant the rich, voluptuous, and violent inhabitants of Samaria.
- God recounts all the discipline he has brought upon Israel, and in each case He says, “Yet you have not returned to Me.”
- **[READ Amos 4:12–13]**
- Chapter 5: The day of the LORD is coming.
  - The nation has not followed the Torah, they accept bribes, mistreat the poor and needy, and are hostile to the righteous.
  - **[READ Amos 5:18–20]**
  - The Day of the LORD is the apocalyptic future day when God will bring down his wrath on the earth.
    - The Day of the LORD is spoken of by many of the prophets
      - Isaiah 13:6 — Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.
      - Isaiah 13:9 — Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.
      - Ezekiel 30:3 — “For the day is near, Indeed, the day of the LORD is near; It will be a day of clouds, A time of doom for the nations.
      - Joel 2:1 — Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the LORD is coming; Indeed, it is near,
      - Malachi 4:5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.
    - But the Day of the LORD is not just about the coming destruction of Samaria or Jerusalem, it is also a description of the future coming day when the wrath of God is brought on the earth and the Messiah judges the nations.
      - 1 Thessalonians 5:2 — For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night.
      - 2 Peter 3:10 — But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be discovered.
      - Colossians 3:5–6 -- Therefore, treat the parts of your earthly body as dead to sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience...
      - Revelation 19:15 — From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.
  - The conclusion of chapter 5 is a prophecy about the exile:
    - Amos 5:27 — “Therefore I will make you go into exile beyond Damascus,” says the LORD, whose name is the God of armies.
- Chapter 6: The arrogant leaders of Israel will be humbled

- [SLIDE] Amos 6:4 — Those who lie on beds of ivory, and lounge around on their couches,
  - These are ivory furniture inlays from this time period, found in Samaria.
- Amos 6:14 — “For behold, I am going to raise up a nation against you, House of Israel,” declares the LORD God of armies, “And they will torment you from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of the Arabah.”
- i.e. from north to south
- Chapter 7: Visions
  - Amos recounts some visions that he has had about the coming destruction of Israel
  - Remember, he’s in Bethel when he has these visions and proclaims them to the people.
  - Jeroboam II is king over Israel at the time, and he’s not happy with Amos. He sends Amaziah, the priest of Bethel (who would be in charge of the idolatrous worship of the golden calf set up by the first Jeroboam), to confront Amos.
  - Amos’ response is intense. [READ Amos 7:16–17]
- Chapter 8: A nation ripe for destruction, symbolized by a basket of ripe fruit.
  - The people are supposedly following the Torah, but they are not finding delight in God’s holy days
    - They say, “When will the new moon be over, so that we may sell grain; and the Sabbath, so that we may open the wheat market... (Amos 8:5)
    - So, God says, “Then I will turn your festivals into mourning...” (Amos 8:10)
- Chapter 9: The judgement of God is unavoidable
  - Amos 9:2-4 — “Though they dig into Sheol, From there My hand will take them; And though they ascend to the heavens, From there I will bring them down.... And I will set My eyes against them for harm and not for good.”
  - Amos 9:5 — The Lord GOD of armies, the One who touches the land so that it quakes...”
    - Maybe a reference to the earthquake they just endured?
  - But hope!
  - Amos 9:5 — “Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, And I will eliminate it from the face of the earth; Nevertheless, I will not totally eliminate the house of Jacob,” Declares the LORD.
  - [READ Amos 9:11–15]

## Kings of Israel

- [SLIDE - timeline] Back to 2 Kings 15
- During the reign of Uzziah in Judah, there are multiple kings in Israel
- Jeroboam dies, and his son Zechariah becomes king. He was evil, and only lasted 6 months.
- Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him and killed him.
  - This fulfilled a prophecy given to Zechariah’s great grandfather, Jehu, the general who ended the line of Ahab and Jezebel, in 2 Kings 10:30 — Yet the LORD said to Jehu, “Because you have done well in performing what is right in My eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab in accordance with everything that was in My heart, your sons to the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.”

- The usurper Shallum, however, didn't last long, either. He was king for only one month.
- Menahem the son of Gadi killed Shallum, and he reigned for 10 years.
- Menahem was a ruthless ruler. For example, he put down a rebellion in the city of Tirzah, not far from Samaria, with extreme brutality.
  - 2 Kings 15:16 — Then Menahem attacked Tiphshah and all who were in it and its borders from Tirzah, because they did not open up to him; so he attacked it and ripped up all its women who were pregnant.
- **[SLIDE]** 2 Kings 15:19–20 — Pul, the king of Assyria, came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver so that his hand might be with him to strengthen the kingdom under his rule. Then Menahem collected the money from Israel, from all the mighty men of wealth, from each man fifty shekels of silver to pay the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria returned and did not stay there in the land.
  - Pul is Tiglath-Pileser III, who came to power in Assyria in 745 BCE.
  - **[SLIDE - map]** Tiglath was the governor of Nimrud who rebelled against the Urartu kingdom to the north and increased the power of the Assyrian Empire significantly. He reformed the political system, split the kingdom into smaller provinces so that he could better manage it, and restructured the military, establishing the first professional army ever recorded. He then fought the Babylonians and the Medes to the east, and afterward headed west to attack Syria/Aram and Israel. [All the areas on the map that are not green]
  - **[SLIDE]** In the Israel Museum there is a stele known as the Iran Stele, a reference to where it was found.
  - One section of the inscription records a list of kings who paid tribute to Tiglath-Pileser, divided between those in the West and East. The western list says:
    - “I received tribute from... Rezon of Damascus, Menahem of Samaria, Hiram of Tyre,... gold, silver,...”
    - “In my former campaigns I considered all the cities... that I carried away as booty and... the place of Samaria only did I leave their king.”
  - This mention of “Menahem of Samaria,” corroborates the Biblical account in 2 Kings 15.
- **[SLIDE - timeline]** After Menachem two more kings are mentioned in 2 Kings 15: Pekahiah the son of Menachem, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, who conspired against Pekahiah and killed him.
- It was during the reign of Pekah that Tiglath-Pileser III came back to Israel and led the first set of Israelites into exile. This is a precursor of what is to come soon.
  - 2 Kings 15:29–30 — In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he led their populations into exile to Assyria. 30 And Hoshea the son of Elah formed a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck him and put him to death, and he became king in his place...
  - **[SLIDE]** This event is confirmed in Summary Inscription Four, created by Tiglath-Pileser III and discovered in his palace at Nimrud. The clay inscription has been lost, but the archaeologist who found the inscription took a papier-mâché cast of it, and reconstructed the text from that cast.

- “Israel [literally, Omri-land Bit-Humria]... All its inhabitants (and) their possessions I led to Assyria. They overthrew their king Pekah and I placed Hoshea as king over them. I received from them 10 talents of gold, 1,000 (?) talents of silver as their [tri]bute and brought them to Assyria.”

## Jotham, King of Judah

- **[SLIDE - timeline]** Now we can switch gears back to Judah. Uzziah’s son Jotham officially became king during the reign of Menachem. though he had been co-regent with his father for some number of years before that.
- The text says that “he did what was right in the sight of the LORD,” and he didn’t make the same mistake his father made: He stayed out of the Temple.
- **[SLIDE]** He continued to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, just like his father.
  - 2 Chronicles 27:3–4 — He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD, and he built the wall of Ophel extensively. Moreover, he built cities in the hill country of Judah, and he built fortresses and towers on the wooded hills.
- **[SLIDE]** He also fought the Ammonites, and extracted tribute payments from them.
- Unfortunately, despite being a good king, Jotham was not a good father, and he did not raise his son, Ahaz, in the ways of God.

## Ahaz, King of Judah

- **[SLIDE - Seal of king Ahaz]** The oldest seal of a king of Judah ever found.
- Ahaz became king when he was 20 years old, and he reigned for only 16 years. However, in that time he almost brought the kingdom of Judah to ruin.
- Ahaz “walked in the ways of Israel,” not in the ways of God.
- Made cast metal images for the Baals.
- He burned incense in the Valley of Ben-hinnom
- He even sacrificed his own sons in the fires of Molech, one of the gods of the peoples that had been driven out of Israel centuries before.
- 2 Chronicles 28:4 — He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.
- It’s almost like he was looking for the help of any god but HaShem.
- He needed help, too. Chronicles tells us that Rezin the king of Aram (Syria) attacked Jerusalem and tried to capture it.
- Isaiah 7 describes this event, as well, and Isaiah prophesies to Ahaz about what will happen;
  - Isaiah 7:10–16 — Then the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, “Ask for a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; make it deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I put the LORD to the test!” Then he said, “Listen now, house of David! Is it too trivial a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the young woman will conceive and give birth to a son, and she will name Him Immanuel. He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. For before the boy knows enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be abandoned.

- That boy, the son of Ahaz by a woman who was at that time still a virgin, was Hezekiah, who we will learn about next week.
- The attack against Jerusalem did not succeed, so the Arameans instead destroyed some cities in Judah and took a large number of Judeans captive.
- Then Pekah, king of Israel, attacked Judah, as well, and took 120,000 Judeans captive. However, as they were taking the captives to Samaria, a prophet named Oded met the leaders of the army and the city and warned them that God would punish them if they didn't send the captives back. So they gave the captives clothing and food and sent them home.
- Then the Edomites attacked the cities of Judah and took captives, and the Philistines attacked and took over some cities close to their territory, so Ahaz finally had enough. However, instead of beseeching God and repenting, Ahaz asked Tiglath-Pileser III to help.
- Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath and a tribute payment that included all of the silver and gold in the Temple. He even cut up the holy utensils used in the sacrifices and sent those.
- [SLIDE] Tiglath recorded this tribute in Summary Inscription Seven, which was discovered in his palace.
  - The text says: "From these I received tribute ... Sanipu of Ammon, Salamanu of Moab, ... Mitinti of Ashkelon, Jehoahaz [Ahaz] of Judah, Kaush-malaku of Edom, ... Hanno of Gaza ... including gold, silver, iron, fine cloth and many garments made from wool that was dyed in purple ... as well as all kinds of lavish gifts from many nations and from the kings that rule over them."
- Then Tiglath attacked the Arameans and captured the city of Damascus, exiling king Rezin and the city's inhabitants.
- After that victory, Ahaz went to Damascus himself to offer tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III. Apparently he was so committed to his new master that created a drawing and a model of the altar in Tiglath's temple in Damascus, and sent them to the priests in Jerusalem, instructing them to make a replica of that altar and replace the altar of God in the Temple with it.
- Eventually, Ahaz shut down the Temple completely, either out of concern for how it looked to his new master Tiglath or because he was doubling down on his own idolatry.
- Ahaz died at the age of 36, and his son Hezekiah, the one whose birth was prophesied in Isaiah 7, became king. We will learn more about Hezekiah next week.

## Israel Taken into Exile

- However, something else of great importance happened during the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah.
- The 10 Northern Tribes, the nation of Israel, were taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 BCE.
- The book of Chronicles only mentions the exile in passing in 1 Chronicles 5:25–26, in keeping with its general approach of not talking about the Northern tribes of Israel, or about the bad things that happened in much detail.
- 2 Kings 17 addresses the exile directly, not only talking about *how* it happened, but *why*.
- What happened:
  - Hoshea, king of Israel, who had been put into power by Tiglath-Pileser III, started a conspiracy with the Egyptian Pharaoh So, in an attempt to throw off Assyrian rule.



- Shalmaneser V, king of Assyria, found out about this conspiracy, so he besieged the city of Samaria starting in 725 BCE. The siege took three years, but finally in 722 BCE Samaria fell and was destroyed by the Assyrians.
- **[SLIDE]** There is some potential confusion around which king of Assyria actually defeated Samaria, since Sargon II, in a clay prism discovered in Nimrud, claims to have defeated Samaria himself — not Shalmaneser.
  - <https://armstronginstitute.org/324-the-annals-of-sargon-evidence-of-bible-error-or-insight>
  - That prism says, “The inhabitants of Samaria ... I fought against them ... I settled ... them in the midst of Assyria. I repopulated Samaria more than before. I brought into it people from countries conquered by my hands ....”
- However, both the history and the Bible do line up. How Shalmaneser V died is unclear, but it appears based on the small tidbits in the archaeological record that he was overthrown by Sargon II in some sort of coup in 722, the same year Samaria fell. Sargon then claimed the victory over Samaria as his own, despite not having been in control when it started.
- The Biblical text in both 2 Kings 17:9 and 18:11 seem to indicate the intrigue by naming Shalmaneser explicitly as the king in charge of the siege, but just saying “a king of Assyria” led the people of Israel into captivity after the fall of the city.
- **[SLIDE - map]** A large number of the people of Israel were deported into Assyria, and were settled in various locations, spread throughout the land.
- Not all of the people were deported. In 2 Chronicles 30 we see that Hezekiah invited the remnant of the nation of Israel to join with the tribes in Judah to celebrate the Passover, and some from the tribes of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun came to Jerusalem for the festival.
  - We also have a reference in Luke 2:36 to a woman named “Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.”
  - It’s clear that there were some people who were not exiled.
- The records of Sargon II of Assyria actually indicate that he deported only 27,290 inhabitants of Israel.
- It’s likely that there just weren’t a lot of people left in the northern nation of Israel after all of the other wars and sieges, and the multiple times captives were taken by Assyria and other surrounding nations.
- After deporting the Israelites, Sargon imported captives from other places into the land of Israel and settled them there.
  - 2 Kings 17:24 — Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and settled them in the cities of Samaria in place of the sons of Israel.
- That was the common practice of the Assyrians: mix the peoples so that they can’t form a single national vision or identity, which cuts down on the opportunity for revolt.
- Those new peoples intermarried with the few remaining native Israelites, but they did not give up their own religious customs and practices.

- There were so few people living in the land that the wild animals started to take over. The Bible tells us that the land was filled with lions, and it got so bad that the people wrote to Sargon asking him for help.
- Sargon attributed the lions to the fact that the God of the Land of Israel was unhappy, and figured the best way to fix the problem was to make sure the God of the Land was appeased. This idea that different lands have different gods was very common in the ancient world, and in the Bible.
- So he sent a priest who had been exiled in Assyria back to Israel to teach the imported peoples about the God of Israel.
- That priest moved to Bethel and tried to teach the people the ways of God. However, it didn't work.
  - 2 Kings 17:34 — To this day they act in accordance with the earlier customs: they do not fear the LORD, nor do they follow their statutes, their ordinances, the Law, or the commandments which the LORD commanded the sons of Jacob, whom He named Israel.
- The Assyrian resettlement of these people from places like Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim had a lasting impact on Israel. Eventually they created their own temple on Mount Gerizim, about 7 miles southeast of Samaria, and developed their own versions of the stories of the Bible. The Talmud and other Jewish writings from around the time of Jesus refer to them as Cutheans, as in “those from Cuthah.” You may have heard them called the Samaritans.
- The ten northern tribes that were exiled have been lost to time, either absorbed into the nations where they were exiled, or absorbed into Judah when they fled south during and after the war, or absorbed into the Samaritans and other non-Israelite peoples brought into the land.
- However, we know that in the Messianic Kingdom the Messiah will return all of the tribes to the Land of Israel, and make a new covenant with them, as the prophets have foretold.
  - Jeremiah 31:31 — “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,
  - Jeremiah 33:7 — And I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and will rebuild them as they were at first.
  - Ezekiel 37:19 — say to them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: “Behold, I am going to take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.”’
  - Zechariah 8:13 — And it will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’
- Why did the exile happen?
  - **[READ 2 Kings 17:7–18 and describe]**
- Important Lessons from the exile:
  - 1) The exile of the Jewish people always comes as a result of lack of belief and trust in God.
  - 2) The exile is a physical exile, but it is also a spiritual exile.

- 3) Regardless of the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles, the Jewish people, all of the descendants of Jacob, are still the covenant people of God. As we study the prophets over the next 9 months, keep a close eye out for all the references to God's covenants with Israel, to His faithfulness to those covenants, and to His promise that those covenants will be everlasting.