

Thursday, June 30, 2022

From Darren: 2 Kings 17:1-18:12 Acts 20:1-38 Psalm 148:1-14 Proverbs 18:6-7

2 Kings 17:1-18:12 — “They worshiped worthless idols, so they became worthless themselves.”

Ps 148:1-14 — “Let every created thing give praise to the LORD, for he issued his command, and they came into being.”

Pro 18:6-7 — “Cruisin’ for a bruisin’” is what we used to say

Acts 20:1-38 — Saying goodbye to friends is hard

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2 Kings 17:1-18:12

17 1 Hoshea son of Elah began to rule over Israel in the twelfth year of King Ahaz’s reign in Judah. He reigned in Samaria nine years.

2 He did what was evil in the LORD’s sight, but not to the same extent as the kings of Israel who ruled before him.

3 King Shalmaneser of Assyria attacked King Hoshea, so Hoshea was forced to pay heavy tribute to Assyria.

4 But Hoshea stopped paying the annual tribute and conspired against the king of Assyria by asking King So of Egypt to help him shake free of Assyria’s power. When the king of Assyria discovered this treachery, he seized Hoshea and put him in prison.

5 Then the king of Assyria invaded the entire land, and for three years he besieged the city of Samaria.

6 Finally, in the ninth year of King Hoshea’s reign, Samaria fell, and the people of Israel were exiled to Assyria. They were settled in colonies in Halah, along the banks of the Habor River in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 This disaster came upon the people of Israel because they worshiped other gods. They sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them safely out of Egypt and had rescued them from the power of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

8 They had followed the practices of the pagan nations the LORD had driven from the land ahead of them, as well as the practices the kings of Israel had introduced.

9 The people of Israel had also secretly done many things that were not pleasing to the LORD their God. They built pagan shrines for themselves in all their towns, from the smallest outpost to the largest walled city.

10 They set up sacred pillars and Asherah poles at the top of every hill and under every green tree.

11 They offered sacrifices on all the hilltops, just like the nations the LORD had driven from the land ahead of them. So the people of Israel had done many evil things, arousing the LORD’s anger.

12 Yes, they worshiped idols, despite the LORD’s specific and repeated warnings.

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—the entire law that I commanded your ancestors to obey, and that I gave you through my servants the prophets.”

14 But the Israelites would not listen. They were as stubborn as their ancestors who had refused to believe in the LORD their God.

15 They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their ancestors, and they despised all his warnings. They worshiped worthless idols, so they became worthless themselves. They followed the example of the nations around them, disobeying the LORD 's command not to imitate them.

16 They rejected all the commands of the LORD their God and made two calves from metal. They set up an Asherah pole and worshiped Baal and all the forces of heaven.

17 They even sacrificed their own sons and daughters in the fire. They consulted fortune-tellers and practiced sorcery and sold themselves to evil, arousing the LORD 's anger.

18 Because the LORD was very angry with Israel, he swept them away from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah remained in the land.

19 But even the people of Judah refused to obey the commands of the LORD their God, for they followed the evil practices that Israel had introduced.

20 The LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel. He punished them by handing them over to their attackers until he had banished Israel from his presence.

21 For when the LORD tore Israel away from the kingdom of David, they chose Jeroboam son of Nebat as their king. But Jeroboam drew Israel away from following the LORD and made them commit a great sin.

22 And the people of Israel persisted in all the evil ways of Jeroboam. They did not turn from these sins

23 until the LORD finally swept them away from his presence, just as all his prophets had warned. So Israel was exiled from their land to Assyria, where they remain to this day.

24 The king of Assyria transported groups of people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and resettled them in the towns of Samaria, replacing the people of Israel. They took possession of Samaria and lived in its towns.

25 But since these foreign settlers did not worship the LORD when they first arrived, the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them.

26 So a message was sent to the king of Assyria: "The people you have sent to live in the towns of Samaria do not know the religious customs of the God of the land. He has sent lions among them to destroy them because they have not worshiped him correctly."

27 The king of Assyria then commanded, "Send one of the exiled priests back to Samaria. Let him live there and teach the new residents the religious customs of the God of the land."

28 So one of the priests who had been exiled from Samaria returned to Bethel and taught the new residents how to worship the LORD .

29 But these various groups of foreigners also continued to worship their own gods. In town after town where they lived, they placed their idols at the pagan shrines that the people of Samaria had built.

30 Those from Babylon worshiped idols of their god Succoth-benoth. Those from Cuthah worshiped their god Nergal. And those from Hamath worshiped Ashima.

31 The Avvites worshiped their gods Nibhaz and Tartak. And the people from Sepharvaim even burned their own children as sacrifices to their gods Adrammelech and Anammelech.

32 These new residents worshiped the LORD, but they also appointed from among themselves all sorts of people as priests to offer sacrifices at their places of worship.

33 And though they worshiped the LORD, they continued to follow their own gods according to the religious customs of the nations from which they came.

34 And this is still going on today. They continue to follow their former practices instead of truly worshiping the LORD and obeying the decrees, regulations, instructions, and commands he gave the descendants of Jacob, whose name he changed to Israel.

35 For the LORD had made a covenant with the descendants of Jacob and commanded them: "Do not worship any other gods or bow before them or serve them or offer sacrifices to them.

36 But worship only the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt with great strength and a powerful arm. Bow down to him alone, and offer sacrifices only to him.

37 Be careful at all times to obey the decrees, regulations, instructions, and commands that he wrote for you. You must not worship other gods.

38 Do not forget the covenant I made with you, and do not worship other gods.

39 You must worship only the LORD your God. He is the one who will rescue you from all your enemies.”

40 But the people would not listen and continued to follow their former practices.

41 So while these new residents worshiped the LORD, they also worshiped their idols. And to this day their descendants do the same.

18 1 Hezekiah son of Ahaz began to rule over Judah in the third year of King Hoshea’s reign in Israel.

2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.

3 He did what was pleasing in the LORD ’s sight, just as his ancestor David had done.

4 He removed the pagan shrines, smashed the sacred pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke up the bronze serpent that Moses had made, because the people of Israel had been offering sacrifices to it. The bronze serpent was called Nehushtan.

5 Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before or after his time.

6 He remained faithful to the LORD in everything, and he carefully obeyed all the commands the LORD had given Moses.

7 So the LORD was with him, and Hezekiah was successful in everything he did. He revolted against the king of Assyria and refused to pay him tribute.

8 He also conquered the Philistines as far distant as Gaza and its territory, from their smallest outpost to their largest walled city.

9 During the fourth year of Hezekiah’s reign, which was the seventh year of King Hoshea’s reign in Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria attacked the city of Samaria and began a siege against it.

10 Three years later, during the sixth year of King Hezekiah’s reign and the ninth year of King Hoshea’s reign in Israel, Samaria fell.

11 At that time the king of Assyria exiled the Israelites to Assyria and placed them in colonies in Halah, along the banks of the Habor River in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

12 For they refused to listen to the LORD their God and obey him. Instead, they violated his covenant—all the laws that Moses the LORD ’s servant had commanded them to obey.

Psalm 148:1-14

148 1 Praise the LORD ! Praise the LORD from the heavens! Praise him from the skies!

2 Praise him, all his angels! Praise him, all the armies of heaven!

3 Praise him, sun and moon! Praise him, all you twinkling stars!

4 Praise him, skies above! Praise him, vapors high above the clouds!

5 Let every created thing give praise to the LORD, for he issued his command, and they came into being.

6 He set them in place forever and ever. His decree will never be revoked.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you creatures of the ocean depths,

8 fire and hail, snow and clouds, wind and weather that obey him,

9 mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars,

10 wild animals and all livestock, small scurrying animals and birds,

11 kings of the earth and all people, rulers and judges of the earth,
12 young men and young women, old men and children.
13 Let them all praise the name of the LORD . For his name is very great; his glory towers over the earth and heaven!
14 He has made his people strong, honoring his faithful ones— the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD !

Proverbs 18:6-7

18 6 Fools' words get them into constant quarrels; they are asking for a beating.
7 The mouths of fools are their ruin; they trap themselves with their lips.

Acts 20:1-38

20 1 When the uproar was over, Paul sent for the believers and encouraged them. Then he said good-bye and left for Macedonia.
2 While there, he encouraged the believers in all the towns he passed through. Then he traveled down to Greece,
3 where he stayed for three months. He was preparing to sail back to Syria when he discovered a plot by some Jews against his life, so he decided to return through Macedonia.
4 Several men were traveling with him. They were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica; Gaius from Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.
5 They went on ahead and waited for us at Troas.
6 After the Passover ended, we boarded a ship at Philippi in Macedonia and five days later joined them in Troas, where we stayed a week.
7 On the first day of the week, we gathered with the local believers to share in the Lord's Supper. Paul was preaching to them, and since he was leaving the next day, he kept talking until midnight.
8 The upstairs room where we met was lighted with many flickering lamps.
9 As Paul spoke on and on, a young man named Eutychus, sitting on the windowsill, became very drowsy. Finally, he fell sound asleep and dropped three stories to his death below.
10 Paul went down, bent over him, and took him into his arms. "Don't worry," he said, "he's alive!"
11 Then they all went back upstairs, shared in the Lord's Supper, and ate together. Paul continued talking to them until dawn, and then he left.
12 Meanwhile, the young man was taken home alive and well, and everyone was greatly relieved.
13 Paul went by land to Assos, where he had arranged for us to join him, while we traveled by ship.
14 He joined us there, and we sailed together to Mitylene.
15 The next day we sailed past the island of Kios. The following day we crossed to the island of Samos, and a day later we arrived at Miletus.
16 Paul had decided to sail on past Ephesus, for he didn't want to spend any more time in the province of Asia. He was hurrying to get to Jerusalem, if possible, in time for the Festival of Pentecost.
17 But when we landed at Miletus, he sent a message to the elders of the church at Ephesus, asking them to come and meet him.

18 When they arrived he declared, “You know that from the day I set foot in the province of Asia until now

19 I have done the Lord’s work humbly and with many tears. I have endured the trials that came to me from the plots of the Jews.

20 I never shrank back from telling you what you needed to hear, either publicly or in your homes.

21 I have had one message for Jews and Greeks alike—the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.

22 “And now I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. I don’t know what awaits me,

23 except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead.

24 But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.

25 “And now I know that none of you to whom I have preached the Kingdom will ever see me again.

26 I declare today that I have been faithful. If anyone suffers eternal death, it’s not my fault, 27 for I didn’t shrink from declaring all that God wants you to know.

28 “So guard yourselves and God’s people. Feed and shepherd God’s flock—his church, purchased with his own blood —over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as elders.

29 I know that false teachers, like vicious wolves, will come in among you after I leave, not sparing the flock.

30 Even some men from your own group will rise up and distort the truth in order to draw a following.

31 Watch out! Remember the three years I was with you—my constant watch and care over you night and day, and my many tears for you.

32 “And now I entrust you to God and the message of his grace that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all those he has set apart for himself.

33 “I have never coveted anyone’s silver or gold or fine clothes.

34 You know that these hands of mine have worked to supply my own needs and even the needs of those who were with me.

35 And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard.

You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

36 When he had finished speaking, he knelt and prayed with them.

37 They all cried as they embraced and kissed him good-bye.

38 They were sad most of all because he had said that they would never see him again. Then they escorted him down to the ship.