

## Fearing the Lord & Serving other god's

### I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2 Christmas Services: [and gift cards!]
- B. Slide3 Family Movie Night, Next Wed Night 12/27. *The Peanuts Movie*.
  1. *Charlie Brown, the world's most beloved underdog, embarks upon an epic and heroic quest, while his best pal, the lovable beagle Snoopy, takes to the skies to pursue his arch-nemesis, the Red Baron.*

### II. Slide4 **Intro:** *Fearing the Lord & Serving other god's*

- A. Slide5<sub>map</sub> *Did you know there are still 3-5 million Assyrians today?* 1 of oldest civilizations.
- B. For over 100 years the Assyrians had been pushing west out of Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup>
  1. Their **intent**, building the greatest empire of the world had ever known.
  2. Their **goal**, was conquering Egypt. *Between Assyria and Egypt were several small kingdoms, including Syria and Israel.*
  3. With the fall of Israel, only Judah & the cities of Philistia lay between Assyria and Egypt.
- C. What happens when God's *long-suffering* runs out? [*Does it?* Flood. Sodom & Gomorrah]

### III. Slide6a **THE REVOLT BY HOSHEA (1-6)**<sup>2</sup>

- A. **The abomination by Hoshea** (1,2)
  1. Hoshea reigned 9 yrs. Last king of Is.
  2. Hoshea does *what is evil in the Lord's sight*.
- B. **The annual tribute to Assyria** (3)
  1. King Shalmaneser V of Assyria defeats Hoshea and forces Israel to pay a heavy annual tribute.
  2. Slide6b This was none other than *the rod of divine justice*. Is.10:5 *Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hand is My indignation. I will send him against an ungodly nation, And against the people*

<sup>1</sup> Shepherds Notes, pf.84

<sup>2</sup> Outline from: The Outline Bible, 2 Kings 17

*of My wrath I will give him charge, To seize the spoil, to take the prey, And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.*

### C. **The attempt at freedom** (4)

1. Hoshea conspires with the king of Egypt to break free of Assyria's power.
  - a) He's thinking, better to be a **vassal** (subordinate), **than** to be *overrun completely*.
  - b) **Don't trust in the king of Egypt. Don't trust in** your work, your 401-k, your finances, your supposed future, your wits or wisdom, your personality or your looks. Trust in God.

### D. **The annihilation of Samaria** (4-6)

1. Hoshea had 2nd thoughts & allied himself with **Egypt**.
2. The king of Assyria hears of Hoshea's plan, **so** he **arrests Hoshea, destroys Samaria, and exiles the people** to Assyria.
3. After 3 yr siege, Samaria, the Israelite capital fell...& off to captivity they go.

## IV. Slide7 **THE REASON FOR THE ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY** (7-23)

- A. Despite the Lord's many warnings through his prophets, Israel chose to follow the example of **Jeroboam**, the 1st king, and **practice idolatry**.
- B. Here we have Israel's **moral & spiritual** deterioration.
  1. Note the progression of sin in (9-18). [They started off **secretly** vs.9, end up **selling themselves** to do evil in vs.17]
  2. **They forgot God's mercy** (7) in saving them from Egyptian bondage.
    - a) **Slide8 How to stay true to the Lord?** Ps.103:2 *Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits.* (NLT) *Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me.*
- C. **Slide9a Moses** had warned Israel as a **nation**, & the Israelites as **individuals**, **that they were responsible to live morally and righteously** before God and each other.
  1. And if they failed to do so, they would be uprooted from their land. **See** Deut.28:15-68; 30:1-20. **Repeated by Joshua** in 23:1-16. **And David** 1Kings 2:1-4
- D. These vs.7-23 explain **why** Israel had fallen to Assyria.
  1. **God humbling Himself** to explain the **reasons** for His treatment of His people.

2. Slide9b Israel had failed to **look to the Lord**, their covenant God, for **guidance & direction**. **Instead**, they *trusted themselves, & the pagan gods* of the nations around them. [*Isn't this* the true story of our inner experience?]
3. Do you think God feels the same today? Do you still think God desires, even commands His followers to **look to Him for guidance & direction**?
  - a) Slide9c Think about this...what if God gave man *just 1 rule to follow*, doesn't that seem a-lot more doable? Oh wait, *He did*...Gen.2:17 (*don't eat of this 1 tree*).
  - b) From the beginning of time, God had planned that people should look to Him to *\*Slide9d learn how to live*. Thus man from the beginning has *invented a variety of ways* to **sidestep God**...thus *avoiding Him* altogether.
- E. So, Israel (the northern tribes) lost their land **because** they *consistently* refused to look to God.

## V. Slide10 **THE RESETTLING FOLLOWING THE ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY (24-41)**

### A. **The People** (24)

1. To secure his hold on the land of Israel, the Assyrian king **settled** it w/people from *other lands* that he had **conquered**.
  - a) These people brought *their own religious systems*, representing the *plethora* of Assyrian & Babylonian religions.
  - b) They also *intermarried* with the remnant of Israelites left in land.

### B. **The Problem** (25,26)

1. Slide11a Because these foreigners do not know how to *worship the Lord properly*, **lions** come and kill some of them.

### C. **The Priests** (27,28)

1. One of the deported Jewish priests is **sent back** to Israel to teach the people how to worship the Lord.
2. **Results:** Some turned to the Lord (25-28) **but most** continued to **mix pagan practices** with the revealed Word of God (34-41)

### D. **The Paganism** (29-41)

1. **Read** 28b & 29a. **Then** Vs.33.

2. Slide11b How do we reconcile *They feared the Lord*<sup>(33a)</sup> with *they do not fear the Lord* (34a)?

a) The 1st was **outward worship**. The 2nd, *heart reverence*.

3. *They feared the Lord* but manufactured their own religion. The people **combined** the worship of the Lord w/the worship of their false gods.

a) Jehovah was *the God of the land*, but not the only god.

b) The religion of the Samaritan woman at the well with whom Jesus spoke. John 4.

c) God **rejected** the religion of the Samaritans as He rejects today **all worship** that is *not in spirit & truth*.

d) Slide12 MSG *But the time is coming - it has, in fact, come - when what you're called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter. "It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before Him in their worship.*

John 4:23,24

E. Slide13a This is simply **Syncretism**...

1. **Syncretism** = unite/together. **Too sensitive to Culture. Culture** above the Gospel. Anything goes. Ex: Sadducees. **Ultra-Liberal church** [it's counterpart is...]

2. Slide13b **Sectarianism** = apart. **Separate from the Culture. Church** above the Gospel. The fear? *we'll be contaminated!* Ex: Pharisees. **Hyper-conservative church**. [the answer/balance?...]

a) Slide13c **Contextualization** = or fitted. *"The Gospel never changes, yet it must be contextualized (or fitted) to the **culture** it is brought to."* [or the *individual* it is...]

b) It's asking, how can you contextualize the gospel, or the truth into the culture of our day? [Eg. Buddhism: *suffering/heaven/nirvana/eternal life*]

F. **Illustration**: When you go to our southern California beaches, you notice there're those that are... **laying out**, there are the **toe dippers**, the **knee-high waders**, and the **jumpers**.

1. **Those laying out** - life is a tan. They talk about going in...but never do.

2. **The toe dippers** - 1 foot in, 1 foot out. Brr it's cold. Try again later.

3. The **knee-high waders** - “it’s chilly”, *they enjoy the shallows of religion.*
4. The **jumpers** - they just run & jump in. *They come up with a gasp, but they’re invigorated, inspired, blood is circulating.* They yell to others on shore, *“the water’s great...come on in!”*
5. Been *floating* in the ocean of God’s truth...when you should be out *swimming* in it?