

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You are enthroned above the cherubim; you are the “LORD God of hosts” (Ps 80:1, 4). You lead your people like a shepherd, and you care for them like a vinedresser. I praise you today and exalt your name. “Let your face shine, that we may be saved!” (Ps 80:19). Praise the LORD!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about the fall of Samaria and the exile of the northern kingdom of Israel to Assyria. This was Assyria’s third and final invasion. The first had been a warning, and to avoid further attack, Israel had to pay tribute and promise not to rebel (2 Kgs 15:19). The people should have learned their lesson and turned to you in repentance. When they didn’t, you allowed Assyria to invade again, this time carrying off the Transjordan tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh (1 Chr 5:26). Yet Israel still refused to forsake their idolatry, and Assyria invaded for the third and final time, destroying the capital city of Samaria and carrying away most of the people into exile. The Assyrians then resettled the land with foreigners from other nations whom they had conquered. You were doing exactly what the prophets had said, from Moses (Deut 28:63) to Hosea (Hos 10:6). You warned Israel again and again. They knew what was coming, but they still ignored you! Israel had shown itself to be no better (and sometimes worse) than the pagan nations it had conquered in the days of Joshua. The nation had rejected its original purpose to honor you and to be a light to the surrounding peoples. How true the proverb: “He who is often reprov’d, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing” (Prov 29:1).

Reflection

The settlers brought in by the Assyrians are said to have “feared the Lord,” but they also worshipped other gods (2 Kgs 17:33). Thus the author of Kings said that they didn’t *truly* fear the Lord (2 Kgs 17:34–35). This teaches me that divided loyalty is no loyalty at all.

Request

Father, search my heart and reveal to me any area that is not consecrated to you. I want you to be able to say that I served you with my whole heart.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the promise that you will deliver those who fear you (2 Kgs 17:39). You are the protector and restorer of all who put their trust in you!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us](#)” – Dorothy A. Thrupp.

Meditation Verse: Psalm 80:3.