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Rules applied during the translation:

The translation preserved the paragraph structure published in the contemporary Hungarian transcript.

Bible book, chapter and verses indicated in parentheses were added during the transcription process and preserved in this translation. Typically, such an addition immediately follows the chapter and verse citation Enyedi György provided. In some places the transcriber placed chapter and verse citations in the sermon where Enyedi György spells out text of a Bible verse, but does not include the chapter and verse citation. Both types of additions allow the reader to follow the train of thought of Enyedi György selecting supporting quotes from the Bible.

All Bible quotations use the English of the King James Version, specifically the 1769 modernized version of the 1611 original edition. The Bible quotes are written in italics to match the format of the original codex manuscript of the sermon. The abbreviated Bible quotes Enyedi György closed with the word "etc." have been expanded to their full length, as they were most likely delivered in full in his spoken sermons.

The asterisk (*) marks a Bible verse citation where (most likely an error by the copyist) the citation does not match the subsequent text of the quote.

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The Bible quotation of this sermon is from the Old Testament book 4 Regni, while the translated quote is marked as coming from 2 Kings. In the Vulgate and Septuagint Bibles there were four books on the kingdoms (1 Regni through 4 Regni); starting with the King James Bible books 1 Regni and 2 Regni are titled as 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, while 3 Regni and 4 Regni are titled as 1 Kings and 2 Kings.

Concio 4 Reg. XVII. Causa excidii regni Izraelitici.

Sermon on 4 Kings verse 17. The cause of the destruction of the kingdom of Israel.

Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents.

2 Kings 17:3 KJV

Christians know well that the country of the Hebrews underwent a schism during the time of King Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when ten tribes elected a king for themselves and called him king of Israel, while the tribes of Benjamin and Judah elected a different king and called him king of Judea. God destroyed both countries and had their peoples taken into captivity. While the destruction of those countries did not occur at the same time, it happened for the same reason, namely, for worshipping idols, and disregarding the commands of God. What is even more amazing is that the initial circumstance that led to their eventual peril was identical. The country of Judea was destroyed during the rule of Zedekiah whose kingship was given to him by Nebuchadnezzar, who made Zedekiah swear to remain loyal to him and pay tribute to him. However, Zedekiah broke that agreement, and when he entered into an alliance with the Egyptian king, he angered Nebuchadnezzar who led a large army to Jerusalem, sacked it and destroyed it and took the people captive to Babylon.

The country of Israel suffered a similar fate – as we see from our Bible quote – because Shalmaneser defeated Hoshea, the king of Israel, but did not remove him from ruling the country, and instead forced him to pay tribute. When Hoshea began negotiations with the Egyptian king, and failed to pay the tribute, Shalmaneser led a large army to Samaria, where the king resided, and besieged the city for years. Then he conquered it, captured the king, took the people captive, and settled them in Medean cities from which they have not been released even at this hour.

Thus, we understand that, indeed, those two countries were destroyed in a similar fashion because of an identical initial circumstance. God had these accounts written for our education, so by seeing the peril of others we would be wiser and take better care of our own affairs.

These historic events provide us with three eminent lessons. The first is that we ought to suffer peacefully the perils God sent into our lives and not kick against them. The second is that secretive, treacherous negotiations never have a favorable outcome. The third is that disloyalty and breaking one's agreements always carry a heavy penalty.

The first lesson is based on (2 Kings 17:3): *Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents.* All people naturally enjoy being free and do not subject themselves gladly to the authority of others. But not everyone knows the path to freedom, and even the ones who know the path might not want to follow it. Moses explained to Israel what they needed to do if they wanted to live in freedom as he states in Deut. 28. (Deuteronomy 28:1): *And it shall*

come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth. This was proven true, because the Hebrews lived happily as long as they followed the commands of the Lord.

But when they turned away from the Lord, and turned toward idols they were thrown at the feet of their enemies, and became a payer of tribute. We can see the merciful nature of God in this, as He did not subject them to His ultimate wrath, but, instead, measured to them a lesser punishment to call them to repent and turn toward Him. When the Jews transgressed, He did not eliminate them from this earth He Himself gave to them, nor did he allow them to be taken into captivity, but He struck them with whips and blows of other kinds, so they would somehow come to contemplate their condition and change their behavior. He allowed them to keep their land, and gave them rulers from their ranks, but they had to pay tribute to a heathen king.

Now, the lesson from this is that once God measures such a blow to a country or nation, they ought to suffer and endure it, as this is the reward, the payment for their transgressions. In the days of Christ our Lord, the country of Judea was under the rule of the Roman emperor, and the Jews bemoaned it and would have liked to throw that yoke off their necks. Then came our Lord to liberate the Jews. But we never read that Jesus taught the people to attack the Romans. Moreover, when they asked him if it was appropriate for a Jew to pay taxes to the emperor, he said (Matthew 22:21): *Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's*, and he himself paid the gate tax.

This is why St. Paul says in Rom. 13. (Romans 13:7): *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom.* Moreover, he states in the same chapter that we do not serve out of fear but to quiet our conscience. In another passage he says that servants ought to be faithful not only in the sight of their masters, but in their absence as well. Even more weighty is what is written in Jer. 29 (Jeremiah 29:7): *And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.* That teaching is valuable not only for an average person, but for people of all ranks. If the Lord places someone under the rule of vile and unworthy people, and that subject does not think he deserved his fate to serve such ruler, nevertheless, he must contemplate that God established that authority and placed that ruler on his neck because of his transgressions. For that reason, that person ought to peacefully endure, as he is obligated to be completely loyal and to carry out his service without malice.

You might ask: Are you saying that we aren't allowed to make an effort to escape our suffering and free ourselves from such ruler? The answer is yes, you ought to make an effort. Indeed, you are allowed to, as long as it is appropriate. Granted, it is a badly flawed person who doesn't get free when he could, but it is a foolish person who, while seeking freedom, gets himself into an even worse situation. That can happen when he seeks freedom the wrong way. For example, consider the person suffering from severe

edema, who, wanting to free himself from that affliction, try to help himself by punching holes into his swollen body to release the fluids.

It is obvious that he would aggravate his affliction and make his disease worse. Because the root cause of that disease is not in the visible parts of the body, but rather the inner organs, and that is where the remedy needs to be applied. Similarly, when God subjugates His people under the rule of heathen nations, the root cause of that affliction must be found, and eliminated, rather than trying to remedy it from the outside.

It is obvious that, according to the words of Moses, the people can only hope for freedom if they first give up their practice of ignoring God's commandments. Christ our Lord understood this, and knew that path very well, because while he did come to free the nation of Israel as Zachariah tells us in Luc. 1. (Luke 1:74), and that after being delivered from the hand of their enemies, they would serve the Lord, but when Christ began his ministry he didn't say that every one of them should get a horse and weapons and attack the Romans.

Quite the contrary, Jesus began his ministry by saying (Matthew 4:17): *Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*. He didn't act like King Hoshea, who, wanting to free himself from paying tribute to the Assyrian king, disavowed his allegiance and attacked him, but did he not seek to identify the root cause of why God placed his nation under the rule of a heathen king. King Hoshea didn't call to mind that he himself gained his kingship by murdering the king who ruled before him, and that he then became an idol worshipper for which God punished him and placed him under the rule of the Assyrian king.

Indeed, he did not think about those things, and then, as if he hadn't offended his God enough, he compounded his transgressions by his unfaithfulness when he broke his alliance, and when he compounded his transgressions, he compounded his affliction as well.

It occurs regularly for ungodly people that when they seek to free themselves from their affliction, they place themselves into an even worse situation. We read about godless Ahaz, that when God punished him for idol worship by allowing the Assyrian king to plunder his treasures, he began to worship the idol of the Assyrian king and said as written in 2 Paral. 28. (2 Chronicles 28:23): *Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me*, not even contemplating that such idol worship was the root cause of his affliction, and the destruction of the nation of Israel.

That is why our first lesson is that when God is punishing us according to the measure of our transgression and striking us by putting us under the rule of a foreign and heathen king, then we ought to humble ourselves under the powerful hands of God, and pay tribute and give respect to where they are due. In turn, if we desire to free ourselves from our affliction, let us not put our trust into foreign and futile undertakings, let us not look for the cause on the outside, but let us examine our own transgressions

that provoked the whipping from God, cleanse our lives of those causes, and then we can expect our deliverance.

Now, if we don't carry out those actions, but keep committing one transgression after another, then we will compound the reasons for our peril, and make our suffering last longer. As it is shown in the example of King Hoshea, who perpetrated faithlessness on top of committing murder and idol worship, and through those acts he destroyed the entire nation (2 Kings 17:4): *And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.*

Part Two.

The second lesson from these words is how a treacherous decision leads to ungodliness. Anyone wanting to keep their plans secret, must remember two things: first, even though initially they might conceal their plans, but that will last only a short time, and with the passage of time, they will be revealed. According to the words of Christ our Lord in Matt. 10. (Matthew 10:26): . . . *for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.* Therefore, they ought to do only such things in secret that, when they are revealed, do no harm to them.

Second, they ought to keep in mind that loyal people are rare, and few of them keep secrets for long. Moreover, the deeds of rulers are especially difficult to keep secret. It is not a great surprise then that King Hoshea's secret decision was revealed, and reached the ear of the Assyrian king. Because it is human nature to be always concerned about an opponent, even if it is a conquered opponent. Hoshea's first transgression was to defy his agreement and break up the alliance. People ought to keep their agreements not only with friends who agree with them, but with strangers, and even with enemies, as it is illustrated by our own old historical accounts.

We know well what happened to King Lengyel László when he, on the counsel of the Pope, broke his agreement with the Turkish sultan Amurates.

Hoshea's second transgression was that when he wanted to free himself from the servitude to the Assyrian king, he went about it the wrong way, as we ought not to seek our freedom from an affliction by becoming deceitful. Because even if he would have been certain that he could free himself, he should not have taken that course of action; one does not have to act in an ungodly manner to bring about a favorable outcome. Also, even if such people seemingly obtain relief, their souls may be further ensnared. Therefore, Hoshea shouldn't have broken his agreement to free himself from paying the tribute, because he added more, heavier debt on top of his existing indebtedness. In addition, he should not have negotiated with the Egyptian king, who, being far away, could not have freed him from his enemy, so Hoshea should have looked for support right at home. Had he stopped the idol worship and ungodly

practices, and made his nation do the same, he then would have opened the door to deliverance, and the Lord would have saved him from his enemies.

But because he did not do any of that, he suffered the fate the Scripture describes regarding the Egyptian king (2 Kings 18:21): *Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.*

Once Shalmaneser got word of the deceit by Hoshea, he angrily mustered his large army, occupied Samaria, the residence of the king of Israel; so that was the fruit of those secretive councils and the negotiations with the Egyptians. The Son of Sirach declares such deceitful decisions as one of the reasons for the downfall of countries when he states in cap. 10. (Sirach 10:8): *Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches got by deceit, the kingdom is translated from one people to another.* Christ our Lord states in Jo. 3. (John 3:20-21): *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

Part Three.

Third, let us discuss just what the consequence is, the punishment, for such betrayal. We learn this from the following words (2 Kings 17:4): *And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.*

Here is where the last peril, and the exile of the people of Israel, that is those of the ten tribes, is written, a peril from which they haven't freed themselves even at this hour. Their destruction happened 947 years after their exodus from Egypt, and 240 years after their separation from the other two tribes. Let us see how history recorded their destruction. Samaria, where the king resided, was besieged for three years by Shalmaneser in his attempt to conquer it. That is not unusual, because many years ago cities were fought over for several years, as shown by the example of Troy and other cities. Then they didn't have canons that could easily destroy a fortified city. We can thus believe the length of time for the siege, as Samaria was the residence of the king, so it is expected to be well fortified.

Second, we see that the Assyrian king captured Hoshea and threw him into the dungeon; in that regard Shalmaneser acted similarly to what Nebuchadnezzar did to Zedekiah; Hoshea deserved to fall in such a manner, as he broke his agreement, gained the throne through murder, and was an idol worshipper.

Third, history tells us that the conquering enemy wasn't satisfied with the demise of the king, but took the people of the land, the Jews, captive, and resettled them in the

enemy's homeland. They did that to prevent any further acts of hostility by the Jews, as they could be controlled more easily in the enemy's homeland. You might ask: What did Shalmaneser do with the barren country of Israel? Well, he didn't leave it barren but sent people from Mede to the land of Canaan, and they settled there. Those people, called Samaritans in the New Testament, were always hostile to the Jews of Judea, mostly because the Samaritans did not adhere to the religious practices of the God of the Jews.

The Samaritans were heathen, idol worshippers, and when they settled the land of Canaan, Scripture tells us that God unleashed lions upon them who tore them apart. The settlers sent a message to Shalmaneser in Mede telling him that they would all perish because they didn't know how to worship God. The king then sent a Levite priest who taught them how to worship the God of Israel. Despite the priest's teachings, the Samaritans didn't completely give up idol worship; they worshipped God while also worshipping idols, and in that manner they muddled the worship of the true God, and they did not have a true religion. That is why our Lord says to that Samaritan woman in Joan. 4. (John 4:22): *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.* At this point some of you might marvel just how did it happened that when King Hoshea broke his agreement the entire country was punished, because the only one who deserves punishment is the one who committed the transgression. Response: remember that God is just, His judgements are fair, so the dwellers of the country whom he allowed to be taken captive were transgressors, and were not a bit more pious than their king, and the historical account proves that (2 Kings 17:7): . . . *the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods.* The punishment they suffered was deserved. While it is true that the transgression of the rulers is greater, because, beside their actual transgression, they commit another one by serving an example, as the transgression of a ruler has an effect on everyone, because his subjects will act as they see their ruler acting, so the ruler's transgression influences them and spreads to them. In some cases, the transgression of the ruler provides the trigger for the punishment of the subjects of his kingdom, in which case the punishment of the subjects has been delayed by the will of God.

We do read that the Lord often delays His punishment of His subjects because of the supplication and the saintly nature of the ruler. An example of that is found in Exod. 22* (Exodus 32;34) when God became angered at the Jews because of the golden calf, and He wanted to destroy them, but Moses placated Him. And God said: *Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee . . . nevertheless in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.* As if He wanted to express that right then He overlooked their sin, but He might still punish them at a future date.

Now then, just as the piety and supplication of the ruler can delay punishment, the ruler's wickedness can hasten that punishment and advance it to an earlier date. Therefore, the sons of Israel did commit transgressions and deserved their punishment, and that punishment was advanced to an earlier date because of the foolishness,

ungodliness, and faithlessness of their ruler. Because of the king's transgression the Lord remembered the people's wickedness, so He punished them and destroyed them.

On the other hand, if the people are pious, that is, they truly repent of their wickedness from the heart, God will be merciful to them even if the ruler had committed transgressions, only the ungodly will be destroyed. Just as He destroyed King Saul but sustained the kingdom of Israel and gave the people a more pious king in the person of David.

It is beneficial for us to consider such examples, because the Lord had them written for our education as St. Paul says (Acts 13:17): . . . *give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it*, but now He destroyed them and ruined them for their idol worship and for the abandonment of His godly commandments.

What could we hope for, then? What should we trust in? Because we are guilty of similar transgressions. Let us remember what Christ our Lord said in Luc. 13. (Luke 13:2-3) after he was told that Pilate mingled the blood of Galileans with the blood of sacrificed lambs: . . . *Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*. Let us learn from the fate of King Hoshea and the kingdom of Israel, and, I am telling you this: if we don't repent, we shall all likewise perish.