

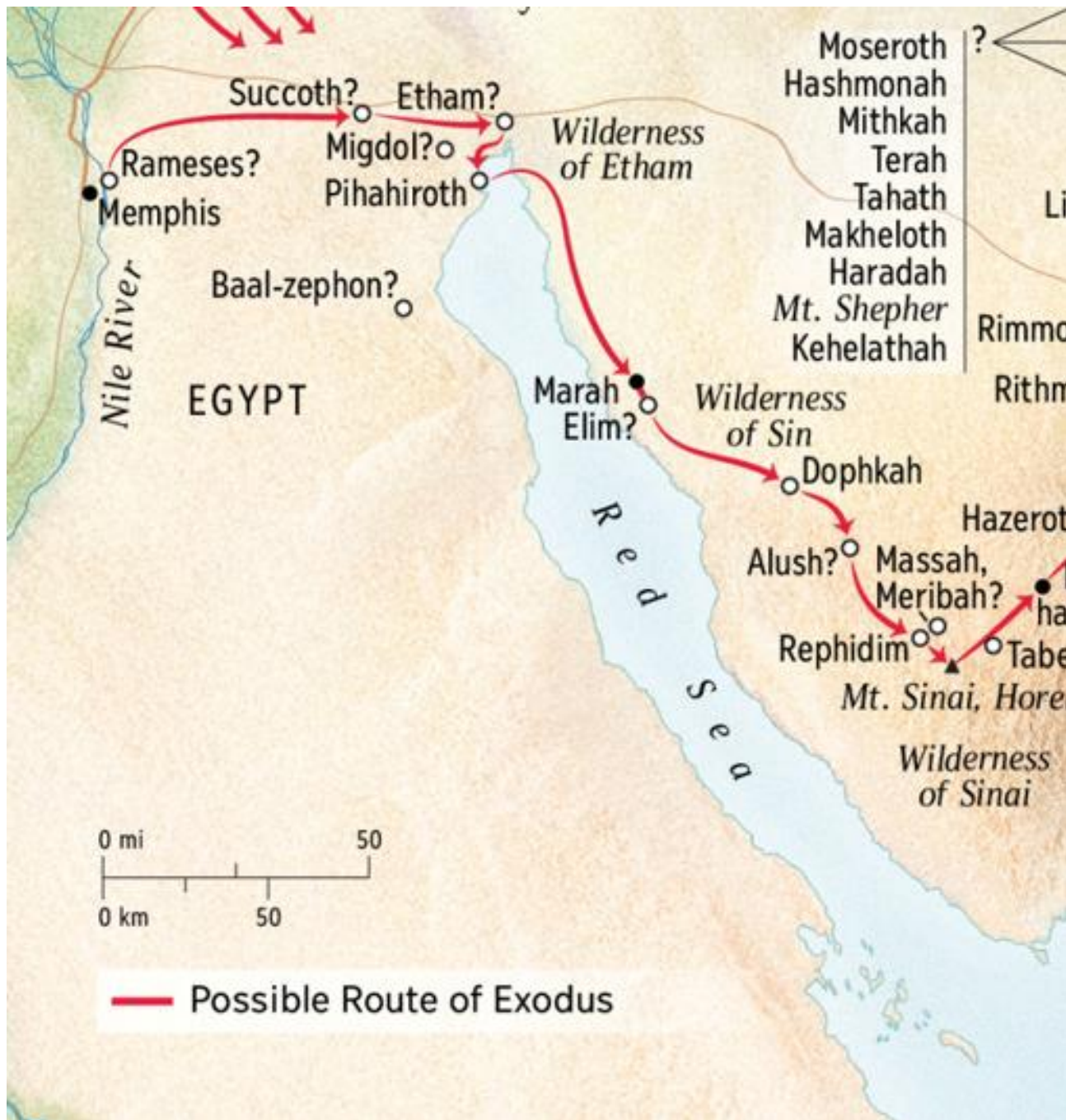


Spiritual Lessons from the life of Moses

Lesson 18 – The Golden Calf (Part 2)

Exodus 32(b)

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(1) Background: About 1446 BC, the Israelites reached the foot of Mt Sinai.

(2) Whilst Moses was on Mt Sinai, the Israelites committed idolatry at the camp site.

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Exod 32: 15

Moses took hold of the two stones on which God had engraved His commandments and started walking down the mountain.



Exod 32: 17-18

Halfway down Moses met Joshua who had been waiting for him. 'It sounds like there is a war in the camp,' said Joshua. 'It is not the sound of victory or defeat,' replied Moses. 'It is the sound of singing.'



Exod 32: 19

When Moses saw the people wildly dancing to the golden calf, he was angry. He threw the two stone tablets to the ground at the foot of the mountain, breaking them into pieces.



Exod 32: 20

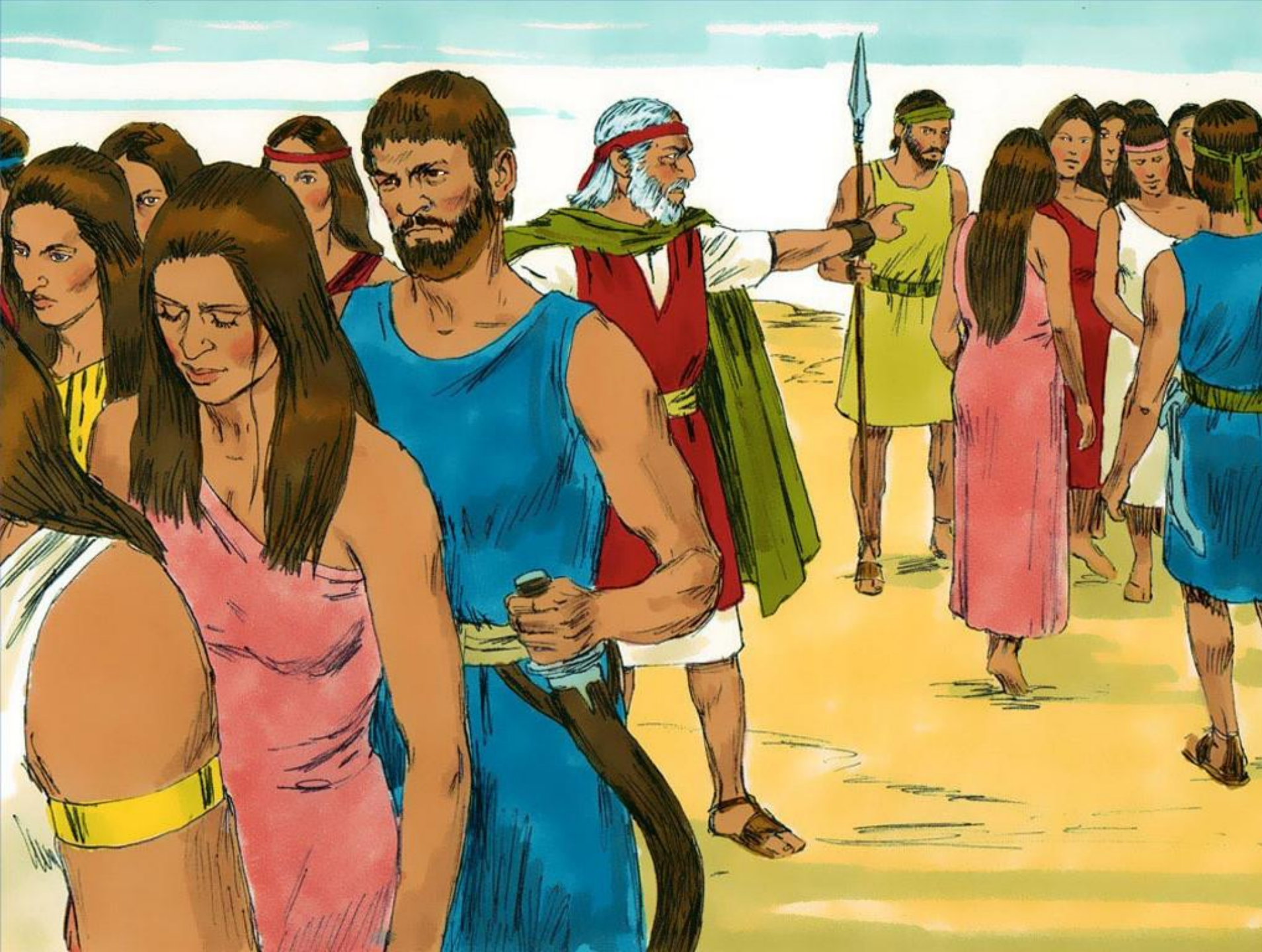
Moses took the calf the people had made and burned it in the fire. Then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.



Exod 32: 21-24

Moses turned on Aaron. 'What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?'

'When they saw you were gone a long time they wanted gods to lead them,' said Aaron. 'I put gold in the fire and out came this calf.'



Exod 32: 26

Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and said, 'Whoever is for the Lord, come to me.'



Exod 32: 27

Those in a tribe called the Levites rallied to him. Moses told them to get their swords and carry out God's punishment on those who had disobeyed Him.



Exod 32: 28

The Levites
carried out
the order.
3,000 people
died that day.



Exod 32:30

Moses called the rest of the people together. 'You have committed a great sin, but I will go up to God to make an atonement for your sin.'



Exod 32: 31

Moses
climbed back
up the
mountain to
ask God to
forgive His
people for
their
disobedience.



Exod 32: 35

God told Moses that those who had worshipped the golden calf would be punished with a plague but the rest would be led on to the land God had promised to give them.



Exod 34: 1

God required 2 new stone tablets for Him to write the Ten Commandments again.

(3) Spiritual Lessons:

(a) Excuses for sins

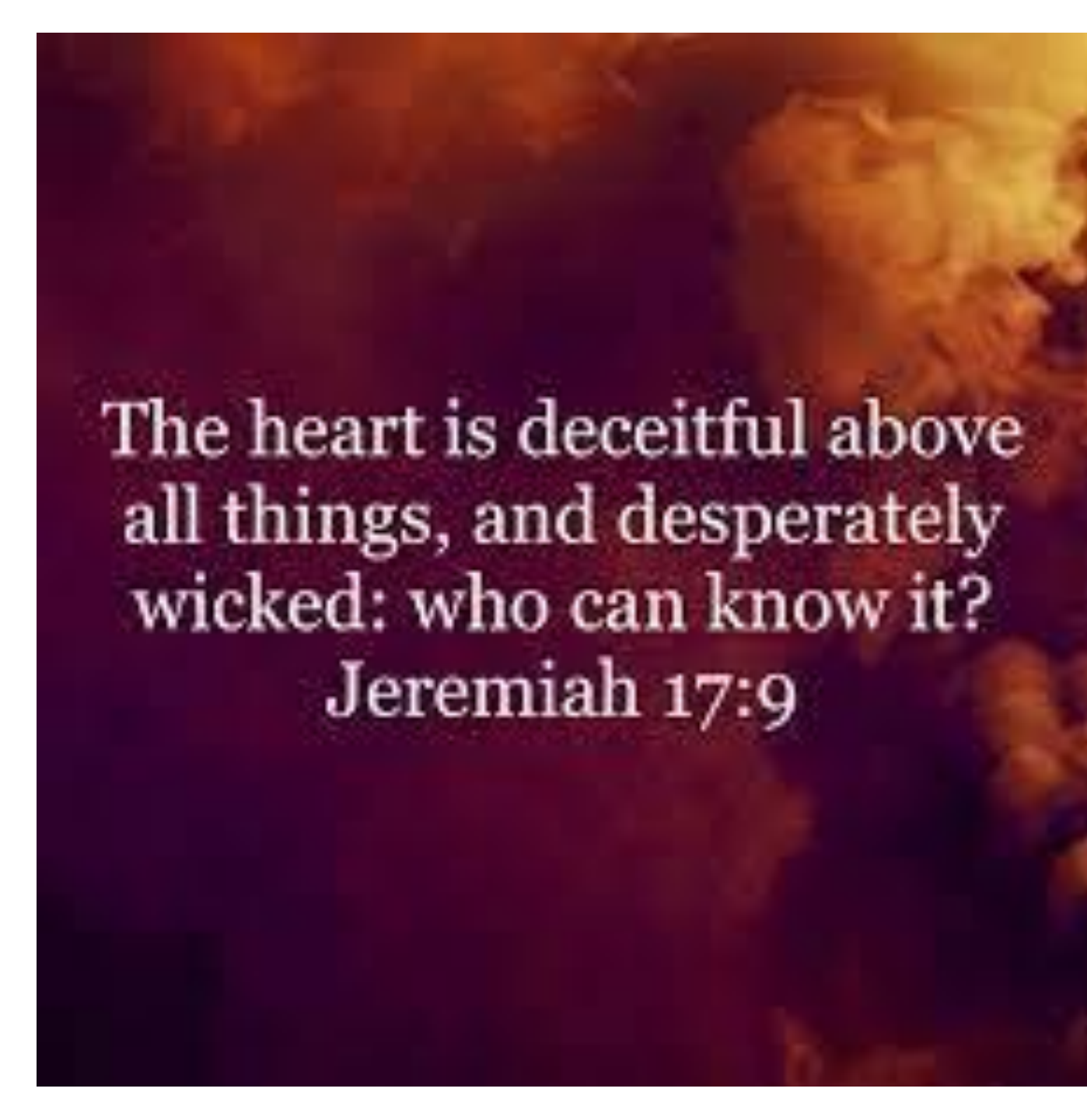


Aaron's excuses:

- 'When they saw you were gone a long time, [40 days- Exodus 25:18]
- they wanted gods to lead them
- I put gold in the fire and out came this calf. (Aaron's lie)

In the same way, we tend to give excuses (or lie) for our sins:

- (i) I have a right to hate because he/she did ...to me.
- (ii) I got drunk because my friends forced me to drink.
- (iii) There is no harm in telling a white lie.



The heart is deceitful above
all things, and desperately
wicked: who can know it?
Jeremiah 17:9

(b) When we sin, God knows:

Jeremiah 17:9

- We should not give excuses for our sin.
- But, confess, repent and seek forgiveness.
- Psalm 51- David's confession for his sin.

(c) God's punishment

Due to the Israelites' sin:

- idolatry,
- refusing to stand with God (2nd chance),

there was punishment:

- death of 3,000 Israelites
- plague

Moses anger and
God's judgment

Exodus 32:15-29

What is the significance of God's judgment against the Israelites?

- Those Israelites who persisted in idolatry were killed. (Exodus 32:26-28)
- Plague (Exodus 32:35)
- These were Israelites who did not seek forgiveness and repent.

What were past circumstances of God's judgment of His people?

S/No.	Sin	God's judgment	Comment
1.	Grumbling at:		
(a)	Marah	Nil	God was merciful. He turned the bitter water to sweet water.
(b)	Wilderness of Sin	Nil	God was merciful. He provided manna in the morning and quails in the evening.
(c)	Rephidim	Nil	God was merciful. God helped the Israelites to defeat the Amalekites. He provided water at the rocks.

What are the circumstances of God's judgment of His people?

S/No.	Sin	God's judgment	Comment
1.	Idolatry at Mt Sinai	(a) 3,000 Israelites died. (b) Plague 1,440 BC	(a) Idolatry was a serious sin. (b) There was no repentance. (c) Severe judgment was meted out immediately.

What are the circumstances of God's judgment of His people?

S/No.	Sin	God's judgment	Comment
2.	Idolatry in the period of the kings of Israel and Judah	<p>(a) Assyrians invaded the Northern Kingdom 722 BC</p> <p>(a) Babylonians invaded the Southern Kingdom 605 BC</p>	<p>(a) God also punished for idolatry.</p> <p>(b) However, the judgments came after the Israelites failed to pay heed to the warnings of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea.</p> <p>(c) No repentance.</p> <p>(d) God was merciful in sending prophetic warnings.</p>

What are the circumstances of God's judgment of His people?

S/No.	Sin	God's judgment	Comment
4.	King David's sin of murder and adultery	(a) 4 sons died. (about 1000 BC)	(a) The sin of murder and adultery was serious. (b) David sought God's forgiveness and repented. (Psalm 51). (c) Although David repented, God punished David for his sin.

God's punishment for sin depends upon the following:

(a) whether the sinner has sought God's forgiveness and has repented.

(b) Seriousness of the sin.

(c) Ultimately, God decides

- whether any punishment would be meted out,
- the severity of the punishment, and
- timing for the punishment.

What we should do:

- We must always be sensitive to our behaviour, lest we sin and be punished.
- God punishes a born-again believer as a loving father punishes his child to reform the child.
- If we have sinned, confess, seek the Lord for forgiveness and repent.
- The confession and repentance for sin is a soul-searching exercise. Be diligent to seek out our sin and seek forgiveness.

- Maintain daily Quiet Time -
 - Prayer
 - Give thanks
 - Seek forgiveness and repent for specific sins
 - Needs and provisions
 - Bible-reading
 - Contemplate on the passage
 - Application in my life