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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 19, 2024 - Long-Term Consequences

NOVEMBER 19TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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When a person commits a crime, the consequences can be enduring. Depending on the severity of the punishment, the consequences can even span generations. In the case of Israel, their willful disobedience led to a severe judgment, exile. The consequences of this judgment extended for centuries.

When the Assyrians conquered Israel, they deported most of the population and replaced them with other people from Assyria (v. 24). It was likely an attempt to break Israel's connection to their former homeland. These new people were not worshipers of Yahweh but worshiped the gods of their former homelands. God had declared that this land was the place where He caused His name to dwell and demonstrated this by establishing His Temple there (Neh. 1:9). Therefore, when foreigners worshiped other gods there it offended God's holiness. As punishment, He sent lions to kill some of them (v. 24). This shocking predicament alarmed the people. Therefore, when the king of Assyria heard about it, he responded according to the theology of the day.

It was customary to believe that each nation had their own god who had to be worshiped according to the local customs. The Assyrians reasoned they had offended the local god by leaving him out of their worship, so they needed to learn to worship

him (v. 27). An Israelite priest was sent to teach them, but the people simply added Yahweh as one of the deities. They continued to worship the gods of their nations alongside the God of Israel (v. 32). This situation persisted for generations (v. 41) as the newcomers intermingled with the Israelites who had been left behind. The disobedience of Israel resulted in generations distant from the God who delivered them from Egypt.

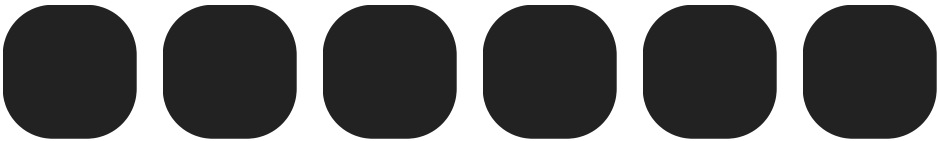
What are you worshiping alongside God? Have you considered that there could be long-term consequences for sharing the worship of the true God with something else?

Teach us, Lord, how to look only to You, worship only You, to seek only Your face, and listen only to Your voice. What a joy to know that our obedience influences future generations! May we treasure and protect our spiritual legacy.

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