

2 Kings 18-19

Good evening church, it is a blessing to be with you tonight.

If you are new here, or new to our live feed, we are so happy you can join us.

On Wednesday nights we are going through the Old Testament Books, right now we are in 2 Kings, tonight we will be going through Chapters 18 and 19.

Our Wednesday night study is a survey through the scriptures, we take broader chunks to look at, whereas our Sunday morning studies are a Verse-by-Verse approach, currently we are studying through the Book of Acts.

And we have found that study to be timely for us as a church, as the Lord speaks very clearly through the text each week, in regards to our current affairs.

In fact, every time we come to God's Word, it speaks so profoundly to our lives, and our relationship with Jesus Christ.

So let's pray before we get into our study tonight.

Now remember the Kingdom of Israel, the Northern Kingdom has been taken into captivity at this point.

We will no longer be going back and forth between the two Kingdoms.

The Northern Kingdom was warned, and God had worked through the prophets, and through various

attempts at chastening Israel, to bring them back to Himself.

But they instead remained in idolatry, and the wicked sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who introduced a false Yahweh worship during his reign.

The nation was corrupt from beginning to end, and we did not see one good king in the nation.

Ultimately the Assyrians came and took them away captive.

Now, Judah in the South, although almost all of the kings had great flaws and hang-ups, there were some kings whose hearts were loyal to their God, and this prolonged their time as a nation.

Unlike the Northern Kingdom, Judah kept the lineage of David pure and his decedents remained as the royal family.

God prolonged their Kingdom for the sake of David, but as we saw last time, they too were rebuked for their sins and tendency to be drawn away into false worship.

Now, one way of determining how important a person was in the Jewish history, is by the amount of space is given to the person in God's Word.

And as far as the books of the Kings go, according to this calculation, Solomon would be the most important.

Shallum received two verses, and was the least important.

Now, the king we have come to tonight, must have been incredibly important, because Hezekiah is the third most prominent king in these records, given much space, and if we include Isaiah's writings it boosts him even higher.

Only Solomon and Ahab occupy more space.

Hezekiah came to power during the time that Israel was taken into captivity, his royal counterpart as we will see was Hoshea, who last week we saw taken prisoner by the Assyrian king.

And from Hezekiah's rule on, the Northern Kingdom will be called by its ancient name of Israel as well as Judah, since it is now the only remnant of that nation.

If you remember, Hezekiah's father Ahaz had been an evil king, and had taken Judah down the same path that led Israel into captivity.

Hezekiah will be used by God to turn things around, as the darkness in Judah was growing darker and darker, Hezekiah will turn the Light back on, and He will reinforce the nation's commitment to God, and he will do what is right in the sight of the Lord.

His name means "Yahweh Strengthens."

So let's look at the first few verses here, starting in chapter 18...

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah (2 Chron. 29:1,2: 31:1)

18:1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.

So we see Hezekiah modeled his kingdom after David, even though he had a wicked father.

But God had risen up a very powerful prophet during this time, and Hezekiah was no doubt under the influence of Isaiah.

Isaiah was able to lead the king away from the ways of his father, remember Ahaz introduced Judah into idolatry and brought back the Baal worship.

The accounts of Hezekiah are much more in depth in 2 Chronicles, here we will only get a few of his achievements.

But the fact that he changed course is remarkable.

I remember Jessica's council to many of the youth kids that used to come through our ministry.

Many of them would come from terrible homes, some even feared generational curses from their parents.

And they would come and talk about their home lives, and explain why it was so difficult for them to live for Jesus at home, and how they felt hopeless, it felt futile even.

But I would hear Jess tell them, “Listen, it only takes one of you to get it in your family, and God can use you to turn things around in your household.”

It only takes one to make a stand for Christ, to turn things around in a family.

Often times, when the Light begins to shine in one member of the household, it has an impact on the others.

Those kids who took her challenge, we saw some amazing fruit, as their families would slowly start popping into church to see what was going on.

We have seen whole families impacted by just one person making that stand for Christ.

Even more recently a young lady, from those days in the youth group is experiencing this now, she took the challenge, and is experiencing revival in her life, and now we are seeing her family members and friends starting to trickle into our services.

You know, I used to think about that advice, and why Jess was so confident in giving it, and giving it often.

And one day it clicked for me, because Jess saw the effects of this herself.

When she came to Christ, it turned our family around, I came to Jesus eventually, her mother and father came to Jesus, then family friends were impacted by the Light in her life.

Perhaps you are here tonight, and your family is shrouded with darkness. Maybe the wickedness that surrounds you constantly is even wearing on you, please know, it only takes one.

One person to grab ahold of the Promises of God's Word, to believe in Jesus, it takes one who is empowered with God's Spirit, and you can be that one, that God uses to push back that darkness in your own family.

You can change the course that your family has been on for decades.

You can stop the generational sins that have plagued your family for many years.

It only takes one to make that decision, and like Hezekiah, you can lead them in a great revival unto the Lord.

Beginning in verse 4 now, we will get a short list of accomplishments, again much more is said in 2 Chronicles.

Verse 4 now...

4 He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in

pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. 5 He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. 6 For he held fast to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses. 7 The Lord was with him; he prospered wherever he went. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. 8 He subdued the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.

Here in 2 Kings we only get a few verses describing the reforms and accomplishments that Hezekiah brought about, and in 2 Chronicles we will have 3 chapters.

We see here that Hezekiah was the one who finally removed the high places, the former pagan sites where the people had transformed the altars into altars for Yahweh.

God was never please with this practice, but none of the other good kings did anything about it.

The high place lobbyists were an influential movement among God's people.

Hezekiah boldly stood against it and those who advocated for the high places.

He also removed the sacred pillars and wooden images from the pagan worship of Baal and Asherah.

Although 2 Kings gives us a shorter list, we have something here, that is not mentioned anywhere else in scripture.

He broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made in the wilderness.

It had been preserved in Jerusalem, and it had become somewhat of an idol that people began to offer incense too.

When God had Moses make the bronze serpent He intended it to be a symbol that they were to put their trust in Him for salvation.

But the human heart is so bent on idol worship, centuries later the people had turned it into a religious relic and worshipping it instead of God.

Today, segments of Christianity still look to and pray to religious relics, and fail to come to God directly.

If you have anything in your life, that you pray too, or use to direct your time that should be with your God, do as Hezekiah does here, and destroy.

These type of superstitions run deep, and they are a hindrance, and God all throughout His Word has declared His disapproval of this type of religion.

I remember Jess and I trying to plead with a widow in Lake Havasu who had a crucifix that she would call “My Jesus.”

She would not hear us, her attachment to that dead Jesus upon the cross was too strong.

That relic was where her faith lay.

Here in the text, the widespread worship of this bronze serpent had become so widespread, that the people even had a proper name for it, Nehushtan, meaning the Bronze Thing.

And because of Hezekiah's stand against idolatry he receives the highest score out of all the kings so far.

The historian here even ranks him above Solomon and perhaps King David, because in verse 5 he records

2 Kings 18:5 He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him.

Hezekiah's realm expanded, and he prospered wherever he went.

Obedience to God's Word, always brings about blessings.

Now, Hezekiah's reign was not without trials and hardships, as we will be shown after a brief historical review of the Northern Kingdom in verses 9-12...

9 Now it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. 10 And at the end of three years they took it. In the sixth

year of Hezekiah, that is, the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. 11 Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away captive to Assyria, and put them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 12 because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant and all that Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded; and they would neither hear nor do them.

The historian reminds us of the fall of the Northern Kingdom to connect us to the trials of Hezekiah's rule now, starting in verse 13...

13 And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. 14 Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay." And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15 So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house. 16 At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

Now, after 14 years of prosperity, we have now trouble coming from Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, who had already captured Israel in the North.

We see here that he now comes against Judah, and according to the royal annals of the Assyrians, he claimed to take forty-six cities of Judah and hemmed up Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a “bird in a cage.” Dilday p. 431

The attack was apparently provoked because Hezekiah refused to pay tribute to Assyria as his father Ahaz had done.

And Hezekiah was humbled by the Assyrian’s quick assault, and ended up having to pay the tribute anyhow.

In order to pay the back owed debt, Hezekiah surrendered all the silver in the temple and the royal treasury.

He also had to strip the gold off of the Holy Temple’s doors and from the pillars.

Hezekiah’s faith had weakened, instead of following David’s example here, he follows the wicked kings in negotiating.

David attacked and defeated Israel’s enemies, and Hezekiah could have strengthened himself in the Lord, and had a historic victory here.

But now he has shown weakness, and the Assyrian king will try to exploit this.

You see when God's people try to make deals with the world, try to make compromises, give a little to get a little, they find out that the world cares nothing about fairness or honesty.

Those under the sway of the devil, those who are of this world's systems cannot be trusted.

We cannot compromise one bit, because they will take that as weakness, and try to take more and more.

The church should keep this in mind today, that if we compromise to the demands being made upon us by the world, they will exploit the weakness that is being portrayed.

Look now starting in verse 17...

Sennacherib Boasts Against the Lord(Isa 36:2-22; 2 Chron. 32:9-15)

17 Then the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh from Lachish, with a great army against Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they had come up, they went and stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool, which was on the highway to the Fuller's Field. 18 And when they had called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them. 19 Then the Rabshakeh

said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What confidence is this in which you trust? 20 You speak of having plans and power for war; but they are mere words. And in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? 21 Now look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. 22 But if you say to me, 'We trust in the Lord our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?"' 23 Now therefore, I urge you, give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses — if you are able on your part to put riders on them! 24 How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen? 25 Have I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'"

26 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people who are on the wall."

27 But the Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these

words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?"

28 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and spoke, saying, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! 29 Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he shall not be able to deliver you from his hand; 30 nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, "The Lord will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" 31 Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make peace with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; 32 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, "The Lord will deliver us." 33 Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? 34 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and Ivah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? 35 Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

36 But the people held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him." 37 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

So King Hezekiah's last minute attempt to appease Sennacherib by paying the tribute did not work.

Hezekiah's weakness only emboldened Sennacherib, who sends a three man delegation with some accompanying soldiers to Jerusalem with conditions of surrender.

These terms, Tartan, Rabсарis, and Rabshakeh are not proper names but titles of officials.

Something like, Commander in Chief, Chief Officer, and Chief of Staff.

They were sent to intimidate Hezekiah with their show of force.

Now, since Sennacherib had not come himself, but sent this envoy, Hezekiah responds to him in a similar manner.

He sent his court officials out to discuss the terms with the Assyrian representatives.

The taunts of Sennacherib through his officials are spoken from a place of power and arrogance.

He called out the country of Egypt, because he knew that Israel continually went to Egypt for help.

He called them a broken reed, they will in the end hurt Israel more than help them.

Sennacherib was a very smart man, who studied his foes, here he knows Hezekiah has torn down the high places, which he assumed where the main worship places.

He is brilliantly appealing to those who would have been upset with Hezekiah for doing this.

He also tried to place doubt in the people, by declaring that even if he gave Hezekiah two thousand horses he could not find enough soldiers to ride them.

Hezekiah's ambassadors knew exactly what the Assyrians were doing, and they tried to get them to talk in Aramaic so the Hebrews could not hear their threats and mockery.

They did not want panic to start spreading through Jerusalem.

But of course the calculated Assyrians did not stop talking in Hebrew.

They wanted to lure the people into rebelling against their king as they presented these attractive offers to them.

Notice they are appealing to their worldly comforts.

Come out, and surrender, and you will be allowed to live your life, you can eat and drink of your own vines and wells.

This was a much better alternative for them, then what was offered in verse 27... “eating and drinking their own waste.”

This is how God’s people are tempted often to compromise.

The world will threatened our comforts, they will come against the ease we all try to live for, and many believers are not willing to walk with God, unless they remain comfortable.

Understand, true faith is not comfortable, it is more difficult to stand for truth then it is so compromise with the world.

We are seeing today, many churches compromising, believing the world; that if we just give a little now, we can keep drinking from our wells and eating from our vineyard, but history shows us differently, this road to compromise always leads to captivity and total control.

The church needs to stand strong, confident in our God, not confident in our negotiating skills.

The messengers here confidently remind the Hebrews that none of the other gods of the nations were able to withstand Assyria, and Yahweh would be no different.

But those others gods were not gods at all, Yahweh was the only one and true living God, Creator of all things and God over all people.

And the Assyrians were about to find out that the One True God was not to be mocked, and the measure of His success did not come from the size of the military or the defensive measures set forth by His people.

Judah's secret weapon lay in their confidence in their God, and their Trust in their God, whose presence provided a power that was unlimited.

And today, we share in a similar hope, because of our faith in Jesus, we are able to look past the hardships and trials of this life, and we are lifted above it all, knowing that victory will come in the end.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in... **2 Cor. 4:8-10**

8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed — 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

Then in 2 Cor. 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are

seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Our hope lifts us above our temporary circumstances. Now the people of Judah choose silence here, as they looked to the unseen, and placed their hope in their Powerful God.

And Chapter 19 will show us how their faith led to seek God's face in prayer, and to hear from His Word, from the prophet Isaiah.

God would surely deliver them.

Isaiah Assures Deliverance (Isa. 37:1-7)

19:1 And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. 2 Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. 3 And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but there is no strength to bring them forth. 4 It may be that the Lord your God will hear all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the Lord your God has heard. Therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.'"

5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord: "Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. 7 Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'""

Notice Hezekiah's reaction to the overt threats of the Assyrians.

He humbled himself, by tearing his royal robes and replacing them with sackcloth as a gesture of repentance and remorse.

He went to the house of the Lord, and he admitted that although he was a man with power and position, he was greatly insufficient in himself to handle this great peril that was upon them.

And there comes a time in all of our lives, that no matter our assets, no matter how high of career we have, no matter how smart we are, or how rich we are, we still come up short in ourselves.

There are terrible crisis' that come upon all men and women, and it is during those times, where the only reasonable thing to do is to cry out to God.

Hezekiah was smart enough to know that he could not rely on himself here, he was insufficient in himself.

And he wisely did not try to come against Sennacherib in his own abilities.

But he came with tears and sackcloth and in prayer before His God.

Even his leadership team followed suit, there is just something attractive about humility, when we let down our guard, and just be real with those around us, it inspires them to be real with themselves.

Hezekiah understands here he does not need war committees, military strategies, or fortune tellers, he needs, desperately to hear from God, to hear God's Word.

And you see, we scratch our heads at why such a godly king is experiencing terrible trials, why is someone so blessed of God now going through these testings.

And here is the purpose, and God will often do this in our lives, He will allow the terrible trials and seemingly insurmountable problems to overwhelm our lives.

And understand, oftentimes what happens, is it drives us to this place the Hezekiah is at, where we are desperately seeking God's Word for answers.

Now that is not a bad place to be.

How many times have we come to church, just going through it, and we come here, and our hearts are saying, "God I need to hear from You."

Or in our morning devotions we are desperately trying to hear from God in His Word, and when we are looking like that, for answers, God always obliges us. It seems in times of crisis, God's Word is never more alive, as He begins to open up our hearts and understanding to His Will.

And God here sends Isaiah, and although Isaiah has been very active as a prophet many years prior to this, the historical record only mentions him here, the prophets for the most part go unnoticed in the historical record.

Apart from Jonah, Isaiah is only mentioned.

Isaiah has an answer for the king, you see Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem were not the only ones who heard the blasphemous words of the Sennacherib, God hears everything, and heard him as well, and He has already set in motion His judgement upon the Assyrian king.

And God would use a spirit of fear on the king, allowing a rumor to come that his own land was under attack, and he would leave the region to fight another front.

Look now starting in verse 8...

Sennacherib's Threat and Hezekiah's Prayer(Isa 37:8-20)

8 Then the Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he

had departed from Lachish. 9 And the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, "Look, he has come out to make war with you." So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10 "Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." 11 Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them; and shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?'"

14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. 15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: "O Lord God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16 Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 Truly, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18 and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's

hands — wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God, You alone."

And just as Isaiah had foretold, Sennacherib while warring in Libnah, heard a rumor that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, a very might king during this time, he heard that he was attacking his realm.

Tirhakah actually eventually became the ruler of all of the Nile Nations, he was a very powerful man, and a formidable foe for Sennacherib.

But before Sennacherib dropped his assault upon Judah, he sent one last attempt at garnering a surrender from Jerusalem, through a letter.

It was a similar threat as before, reminding Hezekiah his position was weak and pointless.

He pointed out that he was deceived in thinking God could save him.

This time Hezekiah did not go to the prophet Isaiah, he went directly to the Lord at the Temple.

He spread the letter before the Lord, displaying the blasphemies within, and he called on God to help once again.

And God heard his pleas and prayers, as God hears us today, and Hezekiah is about to find that God had prepared His response already, and once again the prophet Isaiah is sent to relay the message...

The Word of the Lord Concerning Sennacherib(Isa 37:21-25)

20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.' 21 This is the word which the Lord has spoken concerning him:

'The virgin, the daughter of Zion, Has despised you, laughed you to scorn; The daughter of Jerusalem Has shaken her head behind your back!

22 'Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice, And lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel. 23 By your messengers you have reproached the Lord, And said: "By the multitude of my chariots I have come up to the height of the mountains, To the limits of Lebanon; I will cut down its tall cedars And its choice cypress trees; I will enter the extremity of its borders, To its fruitful forest. 24 I have dug and drunk strange water, And with the soles of my feet I have dried up All the brooks of defense."

25 'Did you not hear long ago How I made it, From ancient times that I formed it? Now I have brought it to pass, That you should be For crushing fortified cities into heaps of ruins. 26 Therefore their inhabitants had little power; They were dismayed and confounded; They were as the grass of the field And the green herb,

As the grass on the housetops And grain blighted before it is grown.

27 'But I know your dwelling place, Your going out and your coming in, And your rage against Me. 28 Because your rage against Me and your tumult Have come up to My ears, Therefore I will put My hook in your nose And My bridle in your lips, And I will turn you back By the way which you came.

29 'This shall be a sign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows of itself, And in the second year what springs from the same; Also in the third year sow and reap, Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. 30 And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear fruit upward. 31 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, And those who escape from Mount Zion. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.'

So the message to Hezekiah is that God has heard the threats.

He has heard the Blasphemy, and He is going to turn back this mighty Assyrian Army.

Sennacherib and the Assyrians were used to chasten Israel in the North, and they never once gave God the Glory.

The Lord used the imagery of a virgin for Jerusalem because the Assyrians would not be able to take the

city and violate it the way the pagan soldiers did when they took women into captivity.

Now starting in verse 32...

32 "Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria:

'He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor build a siege mound against it. 33 By the way that he came, By the same shall he return; And he shall not come into this city, 'Says the Lord. 34 'For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake and for My servant David's sake.'"

This seems like an impossible prophecy considering what the Assyrians have done and the power they wield.

But understand, God's Word and His Promises are the most sure thing in our world.

Even though all the evidence points to the impossibility of all of this, God will prevail...

Look now in verse 35...

Sennacherib's Defeat and Death(Isa 37:36-38; 2 Chron. 32:20-23)

35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and

when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses — all dead.

God, as He promised, handled the Assyrians by wiping out 185,000 of them in one night.

By one angel from the Lord.

Angels are a fascinating study for me, they are created beings, and incredibly powerful.

You remember when Jesus' enemies came to arrest Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the swords were drawn, Jesus said... **Matt 26:52-53 "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"**

Now that is something, if one angel can wipe out 185,000 warriors in one night, what could twelve legions of angels do?

Jesus was perfectly able to defend Himself, He surely did not need man's sword.

But He willingly laid down His life for you and I.

Now, this section of 2 Kings, these 2 chapters really take up the time period that the Book of Isaiah records.

A majority of Isaiah anyway.

From chapter 7 on, it is the same period of history.

Isaiah says at the time God wiped out the Assyrian Army that great fear fell upon the men of Judah.

The sinners and hypocrites in Jerusalem were afraid when they saw what God was capable of.

Isa 33:14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;

Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites:

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?

Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Those who were fakes and sinners, thought to themselves "Uh oh, God knows our hearts."

Isaiah uses it as an opportunity to speak some profound truths...

Isa 33:15-16 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, He who despises the gain of oppressions,

Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes,

Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed,

And shuts his eyes from seeing evil:

16 He will dwell on high;

His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks;

Bread will be given him,

His water will be sure.

To live knowing that our God sees is one of the greatest realities that you can live with.

There will be nothing greater for you in regards to your spiritual development to know and understand, that we serve a God who sees.

This religion that is for man's eyes in no good, it is useless, but to live for God, that is real living.

So, Isaiah gives great depth to this time period of history.

Let's finish out this chapter...

36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh. 37 Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

So the end of the reign of Sennacherib, and the end of his blasphemes against God.

Because Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the Lord God of Israel, the Lord was with Him, and prospered Him.

He set forth an example of a man who trusts in God's Word, and the strength this kind of life brings about.

The wicked will always try to come against God's people, they will be strong, mighty, and intimidating according to the world's standards, but our God sits atop of it all.

No matter the odds, when God is with us, who can be against us?

Psalms Chapter 1 lays out two profound realities, and we see in Hezekiah and Sennecherib, these realities played out.

Ps 1 Blessed is the man

Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,

Nor stands in the path of sinners,

Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord,

And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He shall be like a tree

Planted by the rivers of water,

That brings forth its fruit in its season,

Whose leaf also shall not wither;

And whatever he does shall prosper.

4 The ungodly are not so,

But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,

Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,

But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Let's pray...

These men are up here to pray for you tonight, please come up and be ministered to this evening, if you are watching online, leave a comment, or email the church, you can even call the offices in the morning, and we would love to pray with you as well.

Let's worship the Lord...