

## The Last Kings of Judah

*2 Kings 18:1 - 23:30*

### OUTLINE

<b>- The Last Kings of Judah</b>	<b>2 Kings 18:1 - 23:30</b>
- Hezekiah: King of Judah (Good - 29 Years)	2 Kings 18 - 20
- Manasseh: King of Judah (Evil - 55 Years)	2 Kings 21:1-18
- Amon: King of Judah (Evil - 2 Years)	2 Kings 21:19-26
- Josiah: King of Judah (Good - 31 Years)	2 Kings 22:1 - 23:30

### Hezekiah: King of Judah (Good - 29 Years)

*2 Kings 18 - 20*

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## CHAPTER 18

**1** And 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 began to reign; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Abi, daughter of Zechariah. **v.2** Abi - possible the only good influence in his life as his father was ahaz. her name means "Jehovah is my father".

**3** And he did what was right in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that David his father had done. **v.3** Other good kings did that which was right according to their father, etc. But with hezekiah and josiah it was according to David... "That which was from the beginning."

**4a** He removed the high places, and broke the columns, and cut down the Asherahs, **v.4A** This is the first time we read of a king breaking down the high places. High place sin is using the world's methods to worship the Lord. Finally, a king whose conscience is exercised about it... we know that God will bless him.

**4b** and broke in pieces the serpent of brass that Moses had made; for to those days the children of Israel burned incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. **v.4b** Even past deliverances can be used by the enemy as idols. 700 years had passed. This type of idol is more dangerous than idols to false gods, because it takes that which is most sacred (the cross) to make of it an idol which the eyes of the flesh see, which the lips of the flesh kiss, but is really nothing more than "a piece of brass".

**5** He trusted in Jehovah the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *among any* that were before him. **v.5** The dominant character of

Hezekiah was “trust in God”. This trust caused him to reject all human aid. He does not, like other kings, seek the help of Egypt in order to escape Assyria (Isa. 30:1-5; 31:1-3). This area of his strength was the very area that Satan attacked him... see v.14.

**6** And he clave to Jehovah, and did not turn aside from following him, but kept his commandments, which Jehovah commanded Moses. **v.6** Faith and obedience are linked. If you trust the Lord, you will obey his word. Let us beware of so-called trust in God which links itself to disobedience of His Word.

**7** And Jehovah was with him; he prospered whithersoever he went forth. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. **v.7** the result of trusting and obeying is communion with the Lord. He acted opposite to how his father Ahaz had done, who created an alliance with Assyria to protect him from Syria. Rebellion often is not good, but this rebellion was according to God. Later on, Judah is told not to rebel against Babylon, as we can see in Jeremiah, because it was the government of God.

**8** He smote the Philistines unto Gaza and its borders, from the watchmen’s tower to the fortified city. **v.8** walking in the ways of David his father gave him the moral strength to overcome the Philistines as David had. They represent religious flesh... often the hardest flesh to detect.

## **Assyria takes Israel Captive (vv.9-12)**

**9** And 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. **v.9** Assyria was not coming against Hezekiah first... but against the northern kingdom. Sometimes Satan can get us discouraged by attracting our attention to the failures of our brethren.

**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** And the king of Assyria carried away Israel to Assyria, and settled them in Halah and by the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes; **12** because they hearkened not to the voice of Jehovah their God, but transgressed his covenant, all that Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded; and they would not hear nor do it.

## Hezekiah initially falters when assyria advances (vv.13-16)

**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. **v.13 historical observation:** Hezekiah reigns 29 years, Sennacherib comes against him in his 14<sup>th</sup> year. 2 Kings 20:6 tells us that after his supplication, when he was sick, the Lord added 15 years to his life. Hezekiah's illness therefore took place at  $29 - 15 = 14$  years, the beginning of the Assyrian invasion. It is not presented to us in its chronological place. He went through two trials at once: (1) the invasion of his country, and (2) a fatal illness.

**14** And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have sinned; retire from me: I will bear what thou layest upon me. And the king of Assyria laid upon Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. **v.14** Hezekiah's faith buckled under the pressure. he had just witnessed Israel's Captivity, and now he capitulates under the threat of Sennacherib. Later he rebelled against Assyria in faith... and the record of his life is that he stood against the king of assyria.

**vv.14-16** Chronicles is silent about this failure (2 Chr. 32:1-8) and proceeds, as does Isaiah 36, to the account of Rabshakeh. This is because the books of the kings take up the king in responsibility, whereas Chronicles shows us the action of the grace of God; "grace glasses".

**15** And Hezekiah gave all the silver that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's house. **v.15** Fear gripped him. Like Peter, he beheld the wind and lost sight of the Lord. He compared himself to the king of Assyria, instead of comparing the king of assyria to the Lord.

**16** At that time Hezekiah stripped the doors of the temple of Jehovah, and the posts that Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave them to the king of Assyria. **v.16** whenever we give up the truth in unbelief we don't say in neutral... we go backwards. He started undoing the great work he had begun (II Chron. 29:3)

**vv.9-16** God often allows things to happen in order to teach us to know our own hearts, so that we might have no confidence in our own hearts. Other examples include Abraham (going into egypt) and David (numbering the people, sin with bathsheba).

## vv.17-18 The setting of the spiritual attack

**17a** And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rab-shakeh from Lachish, with a strong force, against king Hezekiah, to Jerusalem. **v.17a** The king of Assyria doesn't come, but he sends his servants:

- the Tartan - the king's general at the head of his armies
- the Rabsaris - the king's personal chamberlain
- the Rab-shakeh - the king's political mouthpiece

**17b** And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the aqueduct of the upper pool, which is on the highway of the fuller's field. **v.17b** The place where this spiritual attack emanates from is the fuller's field, by the upper conduit. The fuller's field is the place where the dross and dirt was cleared away (Mal. 3:2) using soap and water. The conduit provided water (gravity fed) from above. It speaks of the word of God applied to clean defilement (John 13). Satan gets his wedge in when we cease to let the Lord Jesus wash our feet.

**18** And they called to the king. Then came forth to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the chronicler.

## vv.19-20 (#1) Doubting that Hezekiah had strength and wisdom

**19** And Rab-shakeh said to them, Say now to Hezekiah, Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? **v.19** the king presents himself in this argument as "the great king" as a contrast to Hezekiah who was a humble king.

**20** Thou sayest — but it is a word of the lips — There is counsel and strength for war. Now on whom dost thou rely, that thou hast revolted against me? **v.20** In those days two things were required to have a successful war:

1. Counsel - understanding of military strategy, and intelligence as to terrain, and placement of enemy forces
2. strength - raw military force, number of regiments, siege weapons, etc.

Hezekiah did have counsel and strength for the war, but it wasn't human... it was divine.

## **v.21 (#2) Falsely Insinuating that Hezekiah was Trusting in Egypt**

**21** Now behold, thou reliest upon the staff of that broken reed, upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it goes into his hand and pierces it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that rely upon him. **v.21** Sennacherib believed that Hezekiah had done the same thing Hoshea had done in making a secret alliance with Egypt (see II Kings 17:4). The alliance between the northern kingdom and Egypt had been futile, and actually backfired (reed pierced hoshea's hand) when Assyria came earlier... but this accusation was false, Hezekiah's only alliance was with Jehovah. It shows that the world cannot understand courage that comes from the Lord. they say, "these christians must have some human support system."

## **v.22 (#3) Twisting Hezekiah's Faithfulness to doubt his devotion**

**22** And if ye say to me, We rely upon Jehovah our God: is it not he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? **v.22** an extremely clever argument. Sennacherib had heard of Hezekiah's faithfulness in removing the high places. Futhermore, he understood what the high places were; a mixture of the world's methods and the worship of Jehovah. Rabshakeh twisted it around to make Hezekiah look like his removal of high places was against Jehovah! It truth is was for Jehovah. How subtil. This may be an attack against the one place.

## **v.23A (#4) Offer to Judah aid in a mutiny against Hezekiah**

**23a** And now, engage, I pray thee, with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses,

## **Vv.23B-24 (#5) calls attention to Judah's weakness**

**23b** if thou canst set the riders upon them. **24** How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants? And thou reliest upon Egypt for chariots and for horsemen!

## **v.25 (#6) Claiming that the Lord was on Assyria's side**

**25** Am I now come up without Jehovah against this place to destroy it? Jehovah said to me, Go up against this land and destroy it. **v.25** even today when War occurs between two nations, both claim to have the Lord on their side. This spiritual dart was intended to shake the faith of Judah... had the Lord really switched sides? begun to favor Assyria instead of Israel? it looked that way by all outward appearances.

## **vv.26-28 the Purpose to greatly discourage the men on the wall**

**26** And Eliakim the son of Hilkijah, and Shebna and Joah said to Rab-shakeh, Speak, we pray thee, to thy servants in Syriac, for we understand it, and talk not with us in the Jewish *language* in the ears of the people that are on the wall. **v.26** Sennacherib hoped to incite sedition (rebellion among the people) in the city, in order to get possession without laying siege to it... which was an expensive process. But he labored in vain (v.36).

**vv.26-28** The Jews' language was Hebrew. It was being slowly replaced by Syriac (Syrian, or Aramaic) which we can see by this time all the officials in Judah were acquainted with it. The common people were always a little behind. By the time the captivity returned, the mass of the people knew Aramaic and couldn't even understand Hebrew (Neh. 8:8). By the Lord's time, the country people knew Aramaic, the business class knew Greek, and the officials knew Latin. The title over his cross was written in "Aramaic, Greek, and Latin".

**27** And Rab-shakeh said to them, Is it to thy master and to thee that my master sent me to speak these words? Is it not to the men that sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you? **v.27** Rabshakeh makes it clear that the goal of the King of Assyria was to discourage the men on the wall... reduce them to a state of misery and depression. This is one kind of Satan's attack... to influence by terrorism. But he has many tricks, and actually uses the opposite method - to influence by enticement - in vv.31-32.

**28** And Rab-shakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jewish *language*, and spoke and said, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria!

## **v.29 (#7) doubting hezekiah's honesty and leadership**

**29** Thus says the king: Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he will not be able to deliver you out of the *king's* hand.

## **v.30 (#8) doubting Hezekiah's faith in the Lord's ability to deliver**

**30** Neither let Hezekiah make you rely upon Jehovah, saying, Jehovah will certainly deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.

## **vv.31-32 (#9) Promise of peace and prosperity if they capitulated**

**31** Harken not to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: Make peace with me, and come out to me; and eat every one of his vine and every one of his fig-tree, and drink every one the waters of his own cistern; **vv.31-32** earlier he had tried "influence by terrorism", now he tries "influence by enticement". Some may be have a weakness for one trick, others for a different trick.

**32** until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive-trees and of honey, that ye may live and not die; and hearken not to Hezekiah, when he persuades you, saying, Jehovah will deliver us. **v.32** He presents to them a land just as full of good things as the land of Canaan (Deut. 8:7-10). but they would be in bondage to the assyrian... would they ever really be happy? Satan will give us anything it takes to take away our spiritual liberty in Christ (Gal. 5:1). But the prince of this world has never made anyone happy.

## **vv.33-35 (#10) Arguing that Jehovah was no greater than other Gods**

**33** Have any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? **34** Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? **35** Which are they among all the gods of the countries, who have delivered their country out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? **v.35** this argument militates



against the previous argument in v.25. Is the Lord powerful or is he not? We can see that these arguments were really blasphemous mind games... the King of Assyria really had no fear of Jehovah.

## **vv.36-37 the people's recourse in the time of extremity**

**36** But the people were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's command was, saying, Answer him not. **v.36** this is wisdom. don't answer the attacks of the enemy without a word from the Lord. Rabshakeh was hoping to get a conversation going... it would have been downhill from there. A good scripture for this is II Cor. 1:8. Have the sentence of death in yourself, then trust in God who raises the dead.

**37** And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the chronicler, came to Hezekiah with their garments rent, and told him the words of Rab-shakeh. **v.37** they go to Hezekiah, a picture of the oversight.

## **v.1 Step #1: be humbled by the circumstances, take it seriously**

### **CHAPTER 19**

**1** And it came to pass when King Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his garments, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Jehovah.

## **vv.2-5 Step #2: bring the matter to the Lord in prayer**

**2** And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. **3** And they said to him, Thus says Hezekiah: This day is a day of trouble and of rebuke and of reviling; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. **4** It may be Jehovah thy God will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master has sent to reproach the living God; and will rebuke the words which Jehovah thy God has heard. Therefore lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left. **5** And the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

## vv.6-7 Step #3: Listen to the Word of God

**6** And Isaiah said to them, Thus shall ye say to your master: Thus saith Jehovah: Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. **7** Behold, I will put a spirit into him, and he shall hear tidings, and shall return to his own land; and I will make him to fall by the sword in his own land. **v.7** This is the same behavior that will befall the King of the North after his campaign into Egypt (Dan. 11:44)... however, both the king of the north and the king of russia fall on the mountains of Israel, not in their own land.

**8** And Rab-shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah; for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish. **v.8** He found that the king of assyria had advanced north from Lachish to Libnah... drawing closer to jerusalem from the south.

**9** And he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he has come forth to make war with thee. And he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying, **v.9** Once again, the King of assyria believes that hezekiah has an alliance with a southern natio... before he thought it was Egypt (II Kings 18:21) now Ethiopia advances and he is convinced of an alliance. But Hezekiah's only alliance was Jehovah.

**10** Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah saying: Let not thy God, upon whom thou reliest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. **11** Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all countries, destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered? **12** Have the gods of the nations which my fathers have destroyed delivered them: Gozan, and Haran, and Rezep, and the children of Eden that were in Thelassar? **13** Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? **vv.10-13** He repeats Rabshakeh's tenth and most blasphemous argument (II Kings 18:33-35) that Jehovah was no greater than the other gods of canaan.

**14** And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up into the house of Jehovah, and spread it before Jehovah. **v.14** he spread it out physically by unrolling the scroll, but also spiritually by bringing the matter to the Lord.

**15** And Hezekiah prayed before Jehovah and said, Jehovah, God of Israel, who sittest *between* the cherubim, thou, the Same, thou alone art the God of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made the heavens and the earth. **v.15** Five great acknowledgments in his opening statement:

1. acknowledging God's ownership and care for his people. Jehovah, the name by which God had revealed himself in that Dispensation (Ex. 3:14). In our day it would be appropriate to address him as Father (John 20:17). God, elohim, the mighty God, is always included regardless of dispensation. of Israel - acknowledging God's ownership and care for his people. the equivalent of praying to "our Loving God and Father".
2. Acknowledging god's holy nature and holy requirements
3. Acknowledging god's unchanging character.
4. Acknowledging God's sovereignty over all nation.
5. Acknowledging God's creatorial power

**16** Incline thine ear, Jehovah, and hear; open, Jehovah, thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, who hath sent him to reproach the living God. **v.16** Presenting the situation to the lord, primarily concerned with the reproach brought to the name of the Lord.

**17** Of a truth, Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, **18** and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore have they destroyed them. **vv.17-18** Sanctifying (setting apart) the Lord God in his heart... a confession of faith that the other gods were the work of men's hands.

**19** And now, Jehovah our God, I beseech thee, save us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, thou only. **v.19** Finally, bringing Judah's need before the Lord. The order is beautiful... primarily concerned for the Lord's name, secondarily with Judah's physical safety. Even in presenting Judah's need, Hezekiah connects it with the testimony rendered to the kingdoms of the earth through Jehovah's deliverance of His people.

## **v.20 The Lord had heard hezekiah's prayer**

**20** And Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel: That which thou hast prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.

## **v.21 God's people could have absolute confidence in His victory**

**21** This is the word that Jehovah has spoken against him: The virgin-daughter of Zion despiseth thee, laugheth thee to scorn; The daughter of Jerusalem shaketh her head at thee. **v.21** When god's people justify him as hezekiah had, then God justifies the character and honor of His people, guilty but humbled. He refers to Judah as "The virgin-daughter of ZION" ... the object of god's graCE, the earthly bride of Jehovah. In dependence and confidence on the lord, they can laugh as the enemies of God's people, knowing that... (see next verse).

## **vv.22-24 Jehovah's discernment of the underlying blasphemy**

**22** Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted the voice? Against the Holy one of Israel hast thou lifted up thine eyes on high. **v.22** ...anyone who blasphemes God after that manner is destined for defeat. It isn't israel that Sennacherib is blaspheming, but the Holy one of Israel.

**23** By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots have I come up To the height of the mountain, to the recesses of Lebanon, And I will cut down its tall cedars, the choice of its cypresses; And I will enter into its furthest lodging-place, *into* the forest of its fruitful field. **24** I have digged, and have drunk strange waters, And with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the streams of Matsor. **vv.23-24** The assyrian had grown puffed up in His success in the Jordan river valley. He was lifted up with pride, ad the Lord saw his heart:

- I have come up to the mountain...
- I will cut down tall cedars...
- and I will enter the Forest...
- I have digged waters...
- I have dried up streams

Confident that he would secure a victory over "the nest" the land of Judah, Sennacherib's pride rose to new heights... read Isa. 10:13-14.

## **vv.25-26 Assyrian's success was due to them being the Lord's rod**

**25** Hast thou not heard long ago that I have done it? And that from ancient days I formed it? Now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest lay waste fortified cities *into* ruinous heaps. **26** And their inhabitants were powerless, They were dismayed and put to shame; They were *as* the growing grass, and *as* the green herb, As the grass on the housetops, and grain blighted before it be grown up. **vv.25-26** He had been the rod of the wrath of God, who had given him this power from long before, but he had become proud of his success and had not feared to lift himself up against God. In Isa. 10:15 the assyrian is called "the axe", "the saw", "the rod", and "the staff"... all tools in the hand fo the Lord. They are called "Jehovah's Army" in Joel 2:11+25. But they were grown proud and lifted up against the Lord. The result would be that after the useful purpose of that "tool" was accomplished, the Lord would destroy the assyrian.

## **vv.27-28 Assyrian's "rage" would result in their Destruction**

**27** But I know thine abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, And thy raging against me. **v.27** the Lord knew that underneath their militaristic foreign policy was a hatred for Jehovah.

**28** Because thy raging against me and thine arrogance is come up into mine ears, I will put my ring in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, And I will make thee go back by the way by which thou camest. **v.28** The Lord has absolute control over nations and Armies (Dan. 4:32, Isa. 7:18). The figure is of a bull will a nose ring. A massive, powerful animal that can be turned with easy by the master.

## **vv.29-31 Prophetic Sign given the Hezekiah**

**29** And this *shall be* the sign unto thee: They shall eat this year such as groweth of itself, And in the second year that which springeth of the same; But in the third year sow ye and reap, And plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof. **v.29** now the Lord turns to Hezekiah and speaks. The sign is prophetic of the Jewish remnant in the latter days:

- first year they would eat that which would grow from the fallen grain, a poor harvest, but which would keep them from dying of hunger.
- second year there would be a strength of growth
- Third year the harvest and the fruit of the vine should come.

**30** And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward; **31** For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, And out of mount Zion they that escape: The zeal of Jehovah *of hosts* shall do this. **vv.30-31** The sign explained: the “crop” is the Jewish Remnant. First - During the tribulation, the remnant will be deeply persecuted, and will exist only in survival mode. second - when the Lord appears they will receive a boost of strength, when their eyes behold him. Third - the remnant will form the nucleus of the nation in the millennium.

## **vv.32-34 Jehovah’s promise to deliver Judah from the Assyrian**

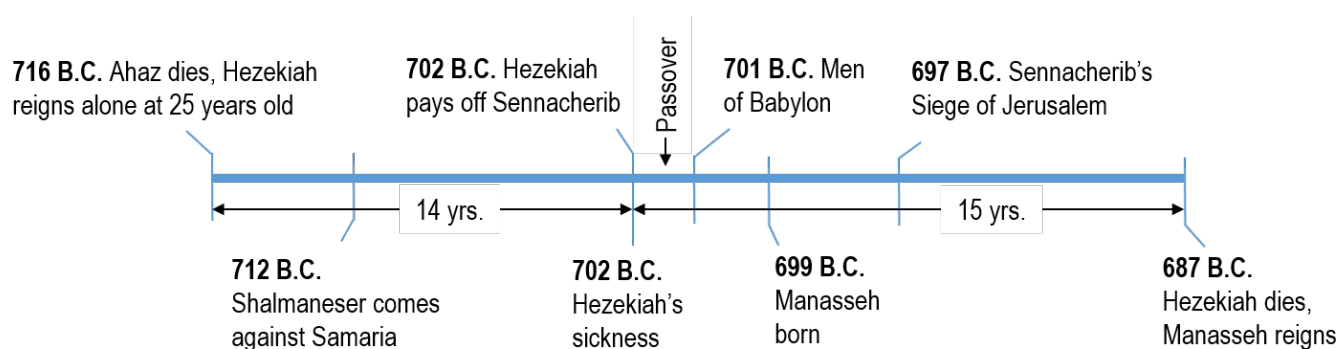
**32** Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor cast a bank against it. **v.32** When the Lord is here on earth, none of the faithful will ever Die or even be in physical danger again.

**33** By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, And shall not come into this city, saith Jehovah. **v.33** The latter-day assyrian will come into the city on the first attack as judgement on apostate Israel, but then the Lord will not allow the “exactor” to pass through again, see Zech. 9:8.

**34** And I will defend this city, to save it, For mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake. **v.34** The Lord’s motives are (1) the glorification of His name, and (2) faithfulness to his unconditional promises. God shows hezekiah that Jerusalem, the son of David, and the beloved remnant occupy His thoughts exclusively.

**35** And it came to pass that night, that an angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and eighty-five thousand. And when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead bodies. **36** And Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and abode at Nineveh. **37** And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer *his sons*

smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.



**Hezekiah's illness.** Prophetically, the sickness of hezekiah is a picture of the setting aside of Israel (lo-ammi). The healing of Hezekiah coupled with his faith is a picture of the national resurrection of Israel. See Hosea 6:2; "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." It is interesting that this healing occurs exactly between the two attacks of the assyrian... so it will be in future events.

**Was his request a failure?** as a Practical application, we might see Hezekiah's request as a failure in not trusting the Lord, but not in the prophetic interpretation. It is the exercise of faith on the part of the Jewish remnant.

## v.1 Hezekiah's sickness

### CHAPTER 20

**1** In those days Hezekiah was sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, Thus saith Jehovah: Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. **v.1** this event historically precedes the enemy's attack against Jerusalem. See notes on II Kings 18:13... He went through two trials at once: (1) the invasion of his country, and (2) a fatal illness. it was necessary to set Hezekiah's faithful career before our eyes before his grievous illness. Otherwise His death might have appeared to have been a judgment of God when his whole life has been spent in integrity. The conflict with assyria touched

Hezekiah officially, but this sickness touches him personally.

## **vv.2-3 Hezekiah's Prayer**

**2** And he turned his face to the wall, and prayed to Jehovah saying, **v.2** Face to the wall? Perhaps a face toward heaven would have been better.

**3** Ah! Jehovah, remember, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done what is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept much. **v.3** He may have been a too generous in his own commendation, see II Chron. 32:26, 31... he had struggled with pride. It was a shame for such a righteous king to die a premature death, a fate most often reserved by God for evil kings. It was a source of grief that the kingdom should be left into the hands of another, especially because Hezekiah had no heir at that time (II Kings 21:1). At this point, he doesn't see all that is in his heart... but he learns it in the next fifteen years (II Chron. 32:31, Deut. 8:2).

## **vv.4-7 The Lord's Answer**

**4** And it came to pass before Isaiah had gone out into the middle city that the word of Jehovah came to him saying, **v.4** The Lord answers very quickly. It is clear that he was praying in the mind of the Lord. The request to live longer was of the Lord... a leader was needed, and he also needed to produce an heir. However, the motives are consequently tested (II Chron. 32:31).

**vv.1-7** The remnant will be called upon to pass through similar circumstances. Upright in heart, having served God all their lives, they must realize in their souls what it is to be cut off from the land of the living under the weight of the governmental indignation of God against Israel of which they form part. The result of this will be national restoration, on the "third day". He is also a feeble type of Christ, the Messiah cut off in the midst of His days, then raised on the third day.

**5** Return, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father: I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up to the house of Jehovah; **v.5** the first place he goes is to the house of the Lord... a proper response for the deliverance the Lord had worked. He ends up a worshipper.

**6** and I will add to thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand



of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. **v.6** this is another proof that the sickness coincided with the attack of the assyrian. Prophetically, the national resurrection of Israel takes place prior to the second attack of the assyrian. Also, it doesn't say "i will heal you so you can defeat the assyrian"... god will resurrect Israel, and God will defeat Gog and Magog, but his own hand alone. The victory was attributed to two reasons:

1. for mine own sake - to maintain his own glory
2. for my servant David's sake - the remain faithful to his promises.

**7** And Isaiah said, Take a cake of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. **v.7** there is no medical reason why a lump of figs would heal a boil... it was the power of the Lord's word through Isaiah. However, the fig tree is a picture of the nation of Israel. The fruit is the features of Christ reproduced in the faithful remnant... Matt. 24:32. The Lord will use the arousal of affections in the hearts of the remnant to effect a national restoration.

## **vv.8-11 The sign of hezekiah's Recovery**

**8** And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, What *shall be* the sign that Jehovah will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of Jehovah the third day? **v.8** Hezekiah desires a sign of Jehovah's favor... a remarkable contrast with his father ahaz who despised a sign offered to him (Isa. 7:10-13). Perhaps this shows the boldness of His faith.

**9** And Isaiah said, This *shall be* the sign to thee from Jehovah, that Jehovah will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? **10** And Hezekiah said, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: no, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. **vv.9-10** to ask the Lord To advance the dial would be, in a certain way, only natural, although it might would still be an extraordinary act of God. But to make the dial go back was a far more striking proof of the interference of Jehovah. The sun dial never goes back... always steadily marching downward, like the apostacy of the successive dispensations. Only God can intervene and reverse the course of nature.

**11** And Isaiah the prophet cried to Jehovah, and he brought the shadow back on the degrees by which it had gone down on the dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.

**Babylon** was destined to defeat the Assyrian empire (which was over them at this time) and

to be the head of Gold, to which the power transferred at the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. the first universal monarchy does not begin to appear in God's ways toward His people until the historical (not the prophetic) role of the Assyrian has ended.

**What treasures did the Babylonian embassy see?** Hezekiah had given away his treasures in order to ward off the king of Assyria's attack against Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:15-16). but then, in II Chron. 32:23-27, After Hezekiah had been delivered from Sennacherib, "many brought gifts unto Jehovah to Jerusalem, and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah... Hezekiah had very much riches and honor". these god-given treasures were the treasures that the embassy from Babylon saw.

**A different attack.** Hezekiah seemed to know exactly how to deal with the assyrian's attack... but this was a different more subtle attack. Satan has many different strategies (II Cor. 2:11) but the Lord can help us through them all.

**12** At that time Berodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. **v.12** "at that time" - the sending of the ambassadors is linked to the illness of Hezekiah, which began at the beginning of the conflict with assyria (year 14). There were three conflicts going on at once:

1. the assyrian - an external attack that revealed his faith
2. Sickness - a personal trial that revealed his weakness
3. the men from babylon - a private attack that exploited his pride.

why not presented chronologically? see notes on v.1.

**13** And Hezekiah hearkened to them, and shewed them all his treasure-house, the silver and the gold, and the spices and the fine oil, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found among his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah did not shew them. **v.13** the Lord wanted to teach Hezekiah what was in his heart (II Chron. 32:25-26, 31)... pride. it's a wonderful thing to have the Lord teach us... he loved Hezekiah too much to let him go. The same was true of job, see Job 42:5-6. there was a root of pride in Hezekiah's heart (in our's too) that drove him to overlook the danger of letting the world in (Men of babylon), in exchange for momentary glory and admiration from these uncircumsized men. according to II Chron. 32:31 the ambassadors came "to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land", perhaps referring to the reversal of the sun dial. sometimes the world is intrigued by the christian's happiness, etc. and what to know

“what’s your secret?” but they have ulterior motives. it says Hezekiah “hearkened to them” - they had some request to make of him, perhaps an alliance to propose to him against their common enemy assyria. historically, at this time babylon had thrown off the yoke of assyria and was trying to forge alliances... but all we know is that the king received the ambassadors favorably.

**casting our Pearls before swine.** Hezekiah did what the disciples were warned of in Matt. 7:6... throwing our pearls before swine. we need to be careful not to bring unholy individuals into the most sacred things of Christianity. blinded by pride, Hezekiah recklessly showed all that was in his house. Also, sometimes the world wants to give us credit for the fruits of grace in our life... they will flatter us to puff us up... but it comes with a price. they want something from us.

**14** Then came the prophet Isaiah to king Hezekiah and said to him, What said these men? and from whence came they to thee? And Hezekiah said, They came from a far country, from Babylon. **15** And he said, What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah said, All that is in my house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewn them. **vv.14-15** Isaiah comes to the king, the Lord being unwilling to let the King continue without his conscience being touched by the prophetic word of God. Isaiah asks three searching questions:

1. What said these men? - Hezekiah doesn’t answer this question... perhaps because he had done all the talking?
2. from whence came they? - hezekiah answers this question. they were from babylon, the place of confusion... in our terms, they were men of this world, a “far country” INDEED (Luke 15:13). THAT SHOULD have been all he needed to know to have his guard up. so should we in our assemblies, homes, and personal lives.
3. What have they seen in thy house? - notice how he says “my house” and “my treasures”. These things were really the Lord’s, but under the influence of flattery, he began to think of them as his! before he knew it, the enemy had become acquainted with every aspect of his house.

**16** And Isaiah said to Hezekiah, Hear the word of Jehovah: **17** Behold, days come that all that is in thy house, and what thy fathers have laid up until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith Jehovah. **v.17** this is how those vessels ended up in the drunken feast in Daniel 5.

**18** And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be chamberlains in the palace of the king of Babylon. **v.18** this is how Daniel and the other royal seed ended up as eunuchs in babylon. it is amazing to think of the long range consequences of our actions.

**19** And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, Good is the word of Jehovah which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not so? if only there shall be peace and truth in my days! **v.19** how sad! This was a great failure with Hezekiah. He was content for there to be peace in his generation, but no care for those to come. It would be sad if an older brother saw a storm brewing in the Next Generation but resigned himself to his study, enjoying the spiritual riches that he had dug out, and didn't concern himself with the spiritual health of the Next Generation. david (II Sam. 24:17) and Paul (Rom. 9:1) demonstrated a very different spirit... to rather sacrifice themselves for the flock. for example, if there are those in my local assembly who don't like the truth of gathering, i might refrain from teaching that truth in order to preserve peace... but it would have disasterous consequences on the next generation... perhaps they would be "carried away" completely.

**20** And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool and the aqueduct, and brought the water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

**Hezekiah's Tunnel** is a water tunnel that was dug underneath the City of David in Jerusalem to prepare Jerusalem for an impending siege by the Assyrians (II Chron. 32). the city is on mountain, making it natually defensible, but the major challenge is water supply during a siege. the tunnel leads from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam. The tunnel still has water flowing through it today.

**21** And Hezekiah slept with his fathers; and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead. **v.21** Often a period of revival is followed by a steep decline. perhaps Hezekiah's failure to provide for the next generation (v.19) had a negative impact on manasseh?