

Explore the Bible: August 21

God Hears • 2 Kings 19:10-19, 32-34

By Emily Beth Crews



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Hezekiah became king of Israel at age twenty-five, he was king for twenty-nine years, and he is the thirteenth king of Judah (2 Chron. 29:1). At this point in our passage today, he was in the fourteenth year of his reign. Hezekiah “did what the Lord approved, just as his ancestor David had done” and “he did what the Lord his God considered good and right and faithful” (2 Chron. 29:2, 31:20-21, NET).

There was not another king like Hezekiah regarding his trust in the Lord (2 Kings 18:5-6). This is unbelievable when we

make the connection that his father was Ahaz, one of the worst kings to reign over Judah (2 Kings 16:10-20). But Hezekiah was under the influence of Isaiah, a prophet of God, his whole life who directed him in the ways of the Lord.

Now that we understand briefly who Hezekiah is, we come to the plot of our study today – Assyria's king invades Judah, the king mocks Hezekiah for putting his trust in God to save him and his country, Hezekiah turns to the Lord for deliverance, and the Lord is true to His Word in His deliverance of Judah from Assyria.

The Taunt (2 Kings 19:10-13). Sennacherib captured some of Judah's fortified cities and Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord to make Judah safe (2 Kings 18:13-16). "He was wrong, and his policy only impoverished Judah and the temple and made the king of Assyria more bold than ever against Judah" (Enduring Word).

Assyria's chief advisor spoke on behalf of Sennacherib when he asks Hezekiah, "In whom are you trusting that you would dare to rebel against me" (2 Kings 18:20)? He went on to mock Hezekiah, criticizing his removal of the high places. The Assyrians believed the more the better when it came to the worship of gods. Since Hezekiah had removed all idol worship and commanded the people of Judah to worship at *one* altar of the true God, they believed they were weakened. The Assyrians did not understand that the God of Israel was not a false god.

The taunting and humiliation went on when the chief advisor claimed, "it was by the command of the Lord that I marched up against this place to destroy it" (2 Kings 18:25) and "don't listen to Hezekiah, for he is misleading you when he says, 'The Lord will rescue us'" (2 Kings 18:32).

When King Hezekiah heard of Sennacherib's threats against Judah, he put on sackcloth and went to the Lord's temple (v. 1). Isaiah then prophesied that the king of Assyria would have

his mind taken over by the Lord, “he will receive a report and return to his own land. I will cut him down with a sword in his own land” (v. 7).

Sennacherib’s chief advisor again insulted Hezekiah in a letter with taunting, pridefully detailing how Assyria had “annihilated all lands” (v. 12). The Hebrew word used here, *herem*, means “exterminated” or “destroyed completely.” This man took every opportunity to discourage and build fear within Hezekiah. He wasn’t merely taunting Hezekiah, but the Lord Himself (Is. 37:17).

The Prayer (2 Kings 19:14-19). When Hezekiah received the letter from Assyria’s messengers, he went up to the temple of the Lord where he laid the letter before the Lord (v. 14). He prayed to “Lord God of Israel” (v. 15) or “the Lord of hosts” (Is. 37:16), which means “Lord of armies.” He asked the Lord to make Himself known and defeat the Assyrians “so all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the Lord” (Is. 27:20).

The Answer (2 Kings 19:32-34). The Lord responded to Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah, “I will shield this city and rescue it for the sake of my reputation and because of my promise to David my servant” (v. 34, 2 Sam. 7:10-17). God’s initial response included, “Because you have prayed to me” (v. 20, NASB) – what if Hezekiah had not prayed? Would Judah have been delivered? “We should ask: How many blessings, how many victories, how many souls saved for Jesus’ glory, lay unclaimed in heaven until the LORD can say, ‘because you have prayed to Me’” (Enduring Word)?

That very night, the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 in the Assyrian camp and King Sennacherib fled to Nineveh. Twenty years later, he was worshipping at the temple of a false god and his sons came in and killed him with a sword. Fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah (v. 7) and the prophet Hosea, “But I will have pity on the nation of Judah. I will deliver them by

the Lord their God; I will not deliver them by the warrior's bow, by sword, by military victory, by chariot horses, or by chariots" (Hosea 1:7).

May you be encouraged today as you remember, the Lord is faithful to fulfill His word:

"The one true God acts in a faithful manner;
the Lord's promise is reliable.
He is a shield to all who take shelter in him."

Psalm 18:30, NET

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