

## 2 Kings Lesson 19

### 2 Kings Chapter 19

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Memory verses for this week: *Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

**Introduction:** In chapter 18 last week, we studied about Hezekiah becoming the king of Judah. He was perhaps the best of all the kings in Judah as he did that was right in the sight of God.

Chapter 19 parallels with Isaiah Chapter 37. The exception is the addition of verse 30 in Isaiah 37. This account is of the response of Hezekiah to the threats of Rabshakeh and the Assyrians followed by Hezekiah's prayer for deliverance. God answered his prayer through Isaiah the prophet. Divine deliverance was then granted as the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 Assyrians soldiers.

### I. Hezekiah Responds to Rabshakeh's Threat

*2Ki 19:1 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.*

*2Ki 19:2 And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.*

Because of the blasphemy of the Assyrian general and because of the straits they were in, Hezekiah humbled himself before Jehovah God by ripping his clothing (a middle-eastern symbol of great distress) and putting on sackcloth. The sackcloth was a coarse, rough material similar to burlap. Not only was it uncomfortable, but it again was a symbol of great humiliation and a willingness to surrender or repent.

The king's cabinet, as it were—his top officials—were sent to the prophet Isaiah. This is the first reference to Isaiah in the Bible. Hezekiah then sought word from the Lord from the man of God for direction in this hour of crisis.

*2Ki 19:3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.*

*2Ki 19:4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left.*

*2Ki 19:5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.*

The officials sent by Hezekiah came to Isaiah and said, "Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth". As the very existence of the nation of Judah was at stake, indeed, it was a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy against God. Hezekiah used the analogy of a pregnant woman in labor, but without strength to deliver the child. Implied was death for both. The situation facing Judah truly was a crisis of life-and-death proportions.

Hezekiah considered that perhaps Jehovah God would take note of what Rabshakeh had said and would rebuke him. Hezekiah directed Isaiah to "lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left." The remnant spoken of undoubtedly was the two remaining tribes of Israel: Judah and Benjamin, which comprised the nation of Judah. Realizing the crisis they faced, Hezekiah knew their only help was through prayer, so he sent word for Isaiah to pray.

*2Ki 19:6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.*

*2Ki 19:7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.*

*2Ki 19:8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.*

It appears that Isaiah wasted no time in replying to Hezekiah. It may be that he was waiting with an answer when they arrived. If so, it would be a model illustration of Isaiah 65:24.

*Isa 65:24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

Appearing once again is the encouragement from God to be not afraid. God had heard the blasphemy and threats of the Assyrians and sent word thru Isaiah. Of interest is the word translated as blast (ruwach). It is the common Hebrew word for 'spirit.' It also is routinely translated as 'breath' or 'wind.'

Though some commentators apply this to the coming victory over Assyria by God in verses 35-37, the context seems to indicate that God sent word, causing the king of Assyria to hear a rumor (or, a report) which distracted him from Judah. This in turn caused him to return home to tend to trouble there. Upon returning to Nineveh, Sennacherib was assassinated there.

In verse 8 we see the Assyrian general departing. Whether or not the message from God thru Isaiah to Hezekiah regarding the Assyrians found its way to Rabshakeh is not clear. However, after delivering his threats to Hezekiah, the

Assyrian general Rabshakeh departed. Lachish (pronounced LaKEESH) was a fortified city atop a hill in southwestern Judah. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, apparently could not prevail against it, or at least had moved on to attack another city in Judah about nine miles north called Libnah.

## II. Rumor comes that the King of Ethiopia Will Fight Hezekiah

*2Ki 19:9 And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying,*

*2Ki 19:10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.*

Meanwhile, as foretold by God through Isaiah, Sennacherib heard a foreboding rumor. While fighting against Libnah, Sennacherib received a report that the king of Ethiopia named Tirhakah was on his way to attack him. Unless Hezekiah should think that God had delivered him as He said He would, Sennacherib sent a threatening letter back to him. In that letter, Sennacherib with blasphemy informed Hezekiah that Jehovah God in whom he trusted would not be able to deliver him. In short order, Sennacherib would return to Jerusalem and destroy it.

*2Ki 19:11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?*

*2Ki 19:12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar?*

*2Ki 19:13 Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?*

With arrogance and haughtiness, Sennacherib warned Hezekiah, “Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?” Once again implying that Jehovah God was no different than the pagan idols of the region. He listed various gentile cities and city-states of the region which Assyria had overrun. Had their gods delivered them. With insolence, Sennacherib asked Hezekiah what had happened to other kings of the regions which had resisted the might of Assyria.

To be Insolent means to be rude or impolite : having or showing a lack of respect for other people. It means being insultingly contemptuous in speech or conduct or being overbearing with boldness.

*2Ki 19:14 And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.*

*2Ki 19:15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.*

*2Ki 19:16 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.*

*2Ki 19:17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,*

*2Ki 19:18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.*

*2Ki 19:19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.*

Once again, Hezekiah was faced with a renewed threat from Assyria. It seemed that Sennacherib was more intent than ever in making an example out of a nation so disdainful as Judah which had ignored his demands to surrender.

This was no small threat. Hezekiah knew he had thumbed his nose at the most powerful king on the face of the earth of that day. He knew the Assyrians would return with vengeance against such an impudent rejection. Hezekiah knew he was in deep trouble. Therefore, he did the best thing he could do. After reading the threatening letter from Sennacherib, Hezekiah went into the Temple of God and spread the very letter out for Jehovah Himself to read.

Hezekiah shows wisdom in verse 15 as he turns to God. Hezekiah then did the only thing he could do. He prayed. Notice how his prayer of desperation began by praising God.

“And O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth”.

He acknowledged God's sovereignty over all nations. Moreover, God was the very Creator of heaven and earth. Hezekiah pled with God to take note of what Sennacherib had said and written. This pagan king had in fact taunted and defied the living God. Hezekiah reminded God of that.

Hezekiah reminded God how that the Assyrians had conquered and destroyed other nations of the region. Moreover, they had destroyed the pagan idols of those same nations. (Implicit was that the testimony of Jehovah was at stake if He allowed the Assyrians to overrun Judah.) The king of Judah pled with God to deliver them. Furthermore in so doing, God would make clear to all other nations that He alone is God.

### **III. Isaiah Sends Message to Hezekiah**

*2Ki 19:20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.*

*2Ki 19:21 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.*

*2Ki 19:22 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou*

*exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.*

God wasted no time in answering Hezekiah's prayer. Once again, God answered through the prophet Isaiah. God acknowledged that He had heard the prayer of Hezekiah in the Temple.

In verse 21, God sent to Hezekiah a 'copy' of a message evidently sent thru Isaiah to Sennacherib. God sent word to Sennacherib that Jerusalem had in fact held his threats in contempt. The "virgin the daughter of Zion" likely refers to Jerusalem or perhaps to Judah itself. The Jews had in effect shaken their heads in contempt at the threats of the Assyrian king. Sennacherib was reaping exactly what he had sown.

God made clear in His message to Sennacherib that this pagan king had in fact taunted and blasphemed the God of Israel. The Assyrians would soon find out with whom they were dealing.

*2Ki 19:23 By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel.*

*2Ki 19:24 I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places.*

*2Ki 19:25 Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps.*

*2Ki 19:26 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.*

God reminded Sennacherib of his foolish threats and threw back into the face of Sennacherib the very threats he had made against Judah. He goes on to remind Sennacherib of his taunts,

"Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. 26 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up".

Though Sennacherib made powerful boasts, God was about to bring to pass His judgment in the matter.

*2Ki 19:27 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.*

*2Ki 19:28 Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.*

God delivered His own warning to Sennacherib. He in effect said, "I know who you are and where you live." Additionally, God informed the Assyrian king that He was quite aware of his forays against other nations. Furthermore, God let this pompous king know that He was aware of his blasphemy against Him. God went on to remind this arrogant pagan king of his blasphemous tumult.

The word tumult is translated from the Hebrew word (Nnav) sha'anana and in this context has the sense of 'arrogance.' God informed Sennacherib that he would put a hook in his nose and a bridle over his lips to shut his mouth and he thus would be turned back in the way he had come. In other words, God would ignominiously defeat him.

*2Ki 19:29 And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.*

*2Ki 19:30 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.*

*2Ki 19:31 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.*

The focus of God's message through Isaiah now turns back to Hezekiah. God informed Hezekiah that as a sign, he and Judah would eat whatever the land brought forth in the wake of the destructive Assyrian siege. In the next year, they would eat what grew up from those trampled crops. However, in the following season, they would be able to return to planting crops in the normal fashion. The implication is that God would deliver them.

Though the Assyrians had devoured their crops by foraging them for themselves, Judah would find enough to live upon in what was left and in a year and a half they would enjoy the harvest of their own crops once again. It was a sign given by Jehovah to them.

Furthermore, God promised Hezekiah, that not only would the crops of Judah once again bear fruit, but also the remnant of the nation itself would again take root downward and bring forth fruit upward. God promised further that a remnant of his people would escape by His hand. The remnant spoken of here undoubtedly refers to the nation of Judah itself. God would preserve His people who had remained faithful to Him.

*2Ki 19:32 Therefore thus saith 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 cast a bank against it.*

*2Ki 19:33 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.*

*2Ki 19:34 For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.*

Regarding the impending Assyrian threat, God had further good news. Sennacherib and the Assyrian army were not far from Jerusalem. II Chronicles 32 implies the same. Hezekiah's fears were certainly real. God promised him that the Assyrians would not enter the city. In fact, they would not even get close enough to shoot an arrow against it or undertake any other military operations against it.

By the same route by which Sennacherib had approached Jerusalem would he return in defeat. For God's own purposes, He would defend Jerusalem. Furthermore, God would still keep His promise which He had made to David centuries earlier. He had promised that He would maintain a posterity of David's seed upon the throne of Judah. God always keeps His Word.

*2Ki 19:35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.*

*2Ki 19:36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.*

*2Ki 19:37 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 Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.*

When the Jews arose the next morning, the main force of their enemies was dead. By dawn's light, 185,000 Assyrian soldiers lay dead in their tents, slain by the angel of the Lord. God had delivered His people. He had heard the blasphemy and taunts of Sennacherib and his subordinates. There was never any question as to what would happen.

Verse 36 tells of fulfillment of prophecy. As foretold by God through Isaiah, the prophet, "Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh". Sennacherib was not in the actual camp of his army which was slain by God. By the same route he had invaded Judah, he and what was left of his forces limped back to Nineveh.

While in a pagan Temple in Nineveh, the elder sons of Sennacherib murdered their own father. They then fled to Armenia for refuge. Thereafter, another son of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, assumed rule over Assyria. As God had said in 19:7, Sennacherib came to an untimely end. Men may lie and fail us, but we can always depend on God. God's Word always comes true.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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