

## 2 Kings 18-20; 2 Chronicles 29-32

### Hezekiah

### Lesson 12

#### Key Verse

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

—Romans 15:4

**Key Verse Thought:** Read the key verse. Not only is the Bible written for our learning, but also by watching as God revealed Himself mightily to His people when they obeyed His Word, it not only comforts us, but gives us hope – a confidence that God keeps each and every promise.

**Emphasis:** We are to recognize God’s Word was given so we could have confidence that God will hear anyone who will call upon Him with a repentant heart. God will then reveal himself mightily to all of the world.

**Lesson Summary:** We have now learned about the first twelve kings of Judah, with only six good kings so far. After ending on such a sour note in our last lesson (remember wicked King Ahaz), it is quite refreshing to learn of the best king Judah ever had – King Hezekiah. “He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him” (2 Kings 18:5). Hezekiah was 25 when he became king and reigned for 29 years. “And he did *that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done*” (2 Chronicles 29:2). In the first month of the first year of King Hezekiah’s reign, he “*opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them*” (2 Chronicles 29:3). Not only that, but he reestablished the offices of the priests and Levites. After acknowledging the nation’s sin, King Hezekiah led the people in the reestablishment of the broken relationship between God and His people by reinstituting the Temple worship. After this, King Hezekiah sent letters to all of Judah, calling them to keep the Passover. Hezekiah led the people by example when he brought great offerings into the house of the Lord. Once the people began bringing their first fruits into the Temple, there was such abundance; they had to build extra storage space. What they did not know, was that in their obedience to God’s commands, God was preparing them for the future siege by their enemy. Sennacherib, king of Syria, sent his army to besiege Jerusalem. Hezekiah prepared and encouraged the people. Then he prayed for God’s deliverance. God

answered by defeating the enemy for them. In this mighty victory, all of the nations around recognized God's hand in the deliverance.

The next thing we read about King Hezekiah was that he was sick unto death. When he prayed, God extended his life by 15 years. God gave him a sign – the sun's shadow went backward ten degrees. However, we also learn of a very foolish thing King Hezekiah did toward the end of his life, and the consequences of that foolish act that would come.

The period of King Hezekiah's reign can be considered the greatest revival Judah experienced.

“And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead” (2 Kings 20:21).

### **Suggested Bible Reading to Prepare for This Lesson**

- Monday: 2 Kings 18-19
- Tuesday: 2 Kings 20
- Wednesday: 2 Chronicles 29
- Thursday: 2 Chronicles 30
- Friday: 2 Chronicles 31
- Saturday: 2 Chronicles 32

### **2 Kings 18-20; 2 Chronicles 29-32**

#### **Hezekiah**

1. Hezekiah's Reforms (2 Kings 18:1-6; 2 Chronicles 29)
  - King Hezekiah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord – according to King David
  - The reforms of King Hezekiah – cleansed the Temple and restored Temple worship
2. Preparations to Reestablish the Passover (2 Chronicles 30)
  - Proclamation to all of Judah
  - Hezekiah's prayer for forgiveness; God's healing
3. More Reforms of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:7-8; 2 Chronicles 31)
  - Reestablishment of the courses of the priests and Levites
  - The people brought their first fruits to the house of the Lord
4. Hezekiah Deals with Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13 – 19:37; 2 Chronicles 32:1-23)
  - Sennacherib's demands
  - Hezekiah seeks God, and God answers King Hezekiah's prayer
5. Hezekiah's Great Failure (2 Kings 20; 2 Chronicles 32:24-33)
  - Isaiah's message of death, then extension
  - Hezekiah's foolishness in his pride

**Note:** In our last lesson, we learned that Amaziah became king when his father, Jehoash, died. He reigned for 29 years and was a good king, but after winning a great battle, he challenged the king of Israel to a fight. Israel defeated them. There was a conspiracy against him; they killed him, and his son. Azariah (Uzziah) became the next king of Judah. He, too, was a good king, “**and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper**” (2 Chronicles 26:5). He did much good for Judah, “**But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God**” (2 Chronicles 26:16), and God struck him with leprosy. His son, Jotham, judged the people until Azariah’s death, and then he became king of Judah. Jotham was a good king, but when he died his son, King Ahaz, became king. He was a very bad king. “**He walked in the way of the kings of Israel ...**” (2 Kings 16:3). Worse than that, he “**made his son to pass through the fire**” (2 Kings 16:3) which means he offered his son to the false god Molech. He also had the priest build an altar to a false god, took things from God’s temple, and implemented them into his false worship. After that, “**... the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria ...**” (2 Chronicles 28:5). We also recognized the relationship between the king’s departure from the house of the Lord and the departure of the people’s relationship as it deteriorated – away from God. If nothing else, this should help us see the importance of frequenting the house of the Lord – often. It is there that man remembers to fear God and seek for His mercy. See what happened today when King Hezekiah began his reign by opening the house of the Lord.

After King Ahaz’s death, his son Hezekiah became king of Judah.

### **1. Hezekiah’s Reforms (2 Kings 18:1-6; 2 Chronicles 29)**

Remember how wicked King Ahaz was. He not only walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, he worshiped false idols – even sacrificing his own son to Molech (“**made his son to pass through the fire**” 2 Kings 16:3). We ended our last lesson with, “**And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead**” (2 Kings 16:20).

In this lesson, we will learn about Hezekiah. He became king in the third year of Hoshea, king of Israel. If you remember, Hoshea was the last king of Israel, and he reigned for nine years. It was during King Hoshea’s reign that Israel was carried away captive. That will help us know what timeframe Hezekiah became king.

Read the beginnings of King Hezekiah.

1. Hezekiah began to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem ... 2. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. 3. He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them. 4. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, 5. And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy *place*. (2 Chronicles 29:1-5)

Notice that he, too, was compared back to King David. However, unlike the others, he did “according to all that David his father had done” (2 Chronicles 29:2). That was a great compliment if you remember what we have learned about the other kings we have studied thus far. Israel did not have one good king. We have learned about six good kings of Judah so far, but only the first two good kings measured up to the standard David left behind. Nevertheless, today we read that Hezekiah measured up to that standard of King David. Hezekiah has been the first king to walk in the ways of David since King Jehoshaphat (the second good king of Judah).

See what else we can read:

3. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did. 4. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he 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 *any* that were before him. 6. For he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. (2 Kings 18:3-6)

He was not only a good king, but we read that he was the best king the nation of Judah had (see 2 Kings 18:5-6). Not only did he do that which was right according to all that David had done, notice that in the first month of the first year of his reign he opened, cleansed, and repaired the house of the Lord. He even reinstituted the office and duties of the priests and Levites. His kingship began the right way.

Why?

6. For our fathers have trespassed, and done *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned *their* backs. 7. Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy *place* unto the God of Israel. 8. Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. 9. For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives *are* in captivity for this. (2 Chronicles 29:6-9)

Not only did he recognize the sin of the nation, Judah, but he also recognized God's chastisement upon His people. What was in King Hezekiah's heart? "Now *it is* in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us" (2 Chronicles 29:10). Hezekiah then gave direction to the priests and Levites, and the Temple was cleansed (2 Chronicles 29:11-19).

Once the priests and Levites were in order and the Temple was cleansed, read what he did next. "Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD" (2 Chronicles 29:20). They prepared and offered sacrifices to the Lord. "And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded *that* the burnt offering and the sin offering *should be made* for all Israel" (2 Chronicles 29:24). And then the music began! (See 2 Chronicles 29:25-30.) Especially notice the following: "And all the congregation worshipped, and

the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and all this continued* until the burnt offering was finished” (2 Chronicles 29:28).

Once the people were consecrated unto the Lord: “35b. ... So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order. 36. And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was *done suddenly*” (2 Chronicles 29:35b-36). Hezekiah understood the correct order in which things needed to be done, according to God’s Word, and he made sure it was done. When it was done God’s way, the people could worship God.

**A Deeper Path:** In the life of King Hezekiah, we can read of a hope for someone whose family does not know of God or the things of God. Remember, King Hezekiah was the son of a terrible king of Judah. King Ahaz had not only forsaken God, but also worshiped idols – even sacrificing a son to the false god Molech. Still through all of that, Hezekiah *knew* God and pleased him in all that he did. He removed all of those high places where his father worshiped and even broke down all of those images the people worshiped.

How was Hezekiah able to come to know God, knowing the family into which he was born? Read the following verses: “But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29). One has to seek God. Also read the following: “The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and seek God*” (Psalm 14:2). God knows when someone seeks after Him, for He is watching and waiting!

According to the following verses, we can understand that King Hezekiah took the time to seek God’s Word so he would know what God required to reestablish the relationship that had been severed by the previous bad kings. “22. And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses, 23. *Even* all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded *Moses*, and henceforward among your generations; 24. Then it shall be, if *ought* be committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering. 25. And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it *is* ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto

the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance: 26. And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people *were* in ignorance” (Numbers 15:22-26). That was what God required in the Old Testament times, while the kings ruled. It is always important to know what God requires – and it is recorded in His Word. As we read the New Testament, Jesus came to set us free from the rigorous duties of the Law. “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect” (Hebrews 10:1). See simply what Jesus did: “8. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; 9. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*” (Hebrews 10:8-10). We will learn more about this later.

Read what God did for Hezekiah for seeking Him with all of his heart. “*And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered*” (2 Chronicles 31:21). God made King Hezekiah to prosper.

Anyone who seeks God can know God. However, what does it take to *know* God? “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*” (Hebrews 11:6). It takes faith. “*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*” (Galatians 3:26).

## **2. Preparations to Reinstitute the Passover (2 Chronicles 30)**

King Hezekiah wanted to do everything right in his service to God. Where to begin? “1. And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel ... 4. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation” (2 Chronicles 30:1, 4). They began at the house of the Lord. They planned to observe the Passover because it had not been done in such a long time (2 Chronicles 30:5). A letter was sent throughout the land, saying:



6. ... Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. 7. And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, *who* therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. 8. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers *were*, *but* yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. 9. For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God *is* gracious and merciful, and will not turn away *his* face from you, if ye return unto him. (2 Chronicles 30:6-9)

We have understood that most kings had forgotten this fact – that if one will turn, repent, and seek God, God will be found. King Hezekiah understood this and reminded all of Judah of this fact.

The letters went throughout the land, and the people humbled themselves and came. “*And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation*” (2 Chronicles 30:13). Notice what happened when the people gathered to obey God. “15. Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD ... 17. For *there were* many in the congregation that *were not sanctified* ...” (2 Chronicles 30:15, 17). Notice they were ashamed and recognized they were not clean before the Lord. Man is sinful and cannot stand before a perfect and righteous God. Nevertheless, remember that if man will acknowledge that sin, God is forgiving. Read the prayer of King Hezekiah for God’s grace. “18. ... The good LORD pardon every one 19. *That* prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though *he be not cleansed* according to the purification of the sanctuary” (2 Chronicles 30:18-19). Hezekiah understood the grace of God. “*And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people*” (2 Chronicles 30:20).



The feast lasted for seven days, and they praised the Lord with instruments. There was great joy in Jerusalem. “Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came *up* to his holy dwelling place, *even* unto heaven” (2 Chronicles 30:27). Once the people were right before God again, God heard their prayers.

**A Deeper Path:** Remember what God wants to see. “The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit” (Psalm 34:18). He then hears the prayers.

Remember the parable Jesus told to help the people understand that God sees the heart and recognizes a contrite spirit. “9. And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:9-14).

### 3. More Reformations of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:7-8; 2 Chronicles 31)

See what happened after the Temple worship and then the Passover, were restored, reaffirming the relationship between God and His people. “Now when all this was finished, all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities” (2 Chronicles 31:1). They destroyed all of the idols and places of idol worship. Notice they did this in the correct order: First, the heart had to be restored on the inside, and then the outside corrections, removing sin, could be made.

King Hezekiah continued to appoint the priests and Levites to their duties. King Hezekiah then gave a portion of his substance to the house of the Lord, commanding the people to give as well (see 2 Chronicles 31:2-4). Moreover, the people obeyed. “5. And as soon as the

commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all *things* brought they in abundantly. 6. And *concerning* the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* by heaps” (2 Chronicles 31:5-6). This was what they were supposed to do. “And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD, and his people Israel” (2 Chronicles 31:8). There was plenty for the priests to live on with much left over in abundance. As a result, they built a place to store the excess (2 Chronicles 31:11). However, see what the people continued to do. “And brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated *things* faithfully ...” (2 Chronicles 31:12).

“And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did *it* with all his heart, and prospered” (2 Chronicles 31:21).

Read what God did for King Hezekiah when he fully trusted and followed God – never departing from God’s commandments. “7. And the LORD was with him; *and* he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. 8. He smote the Philistines, *even* unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city” (2 Kings 18:7-8). He took back the nation – back from the king of Assyria to whom King Ahaz had made Judah servants.

**A Deeper Path:** Hezekiah understood the principle of the tithe. “9. Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine” (Proverbs 3:9-10).

Later, God gave another promise. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it*” (Malachi 3:10). Watch to see what happened in Hezekiah’s day!

#### **4. Hezekiah Deals with Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13 – 19:37; 2 Chronicles 32:1-23)**

In about the fourth year of King Hezekiah’s reign, Samaria (in the Northern Kingdom of Israel) was besieged. At the end of three years, the king of Assyria took it, carrying away the people as captives – ending the kingdom of Israel.

It is amazing that when we show ourselves faithful to God, He proves Himself mightily to us. Unlike the kingdom of Israel who worshiped idols and never worshiped God, see what happened to King Hezekiah and the nation Judah, once they established their ways according to God's Word. "After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself" (2 Chronicles 32:1). In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, came up against all of the fenced cities of Judah.

After Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up against Judah, he proceeded to demand money. Hezekiah paid him. Hezekiah sent silver and gold. "And Hezekiah gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house" (2 Kings 18:15). Nevertheless, as we continue reading, that was not enough, and Sennacherib proceeded to send three men with an army to Jerusalem. One of those men, Rabshakeh, had a message to be delivered to King Hezekiah from King Sennacherib. The messengers of the king asked Rabshakeh to speak in the Syrian language, so the people of Judah who were nearby on the wall could not hear. Rabshakeh began with an accusation of rebellion by King Hezekiah. The message is recorded in 2 Kings 18:19-35. In brief, it began by challenging the king's army and preparations of war (see 2 Kings 18:20), proceeding to a challenge of the king's leadership in placing their trust in God. The message continued with a blatant lie. Read the lie that was told to the people of Judah. "But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is* not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?" (2 Kings 18:22). Do you remember what King Hezekiah had done? "He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves ..." (2 Kings 18:4). We can also read of something else very important King Hezekiah did after removing all of the false places of worship in the land. "And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD" (2 Chronicles 31:2). He reestablished the worship of the one true God. It was not enough to remove the false religion; worship of the one true God had to be reinstated. Rabshakeh did not understand that the people of Judah had forsaken those false gods and trusted the true God under the leadership of their king, Hezekiah. Rabshakeh quit speaking in the Syrian language. He began to shout in a loud voice in the Jewish language,

saying, “28b. ... Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: 29. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: 30. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria” (2 Kings 18:28b-30). However, that was exactly where King Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem had placed their trust – in God.

Just as commanded by the king, the people did not answer Rabshakeh a word. “But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not” (2 Kings 18:36). The messengers took the message back to the king, “with *their* clothes rent” (2 Kings 18:37).

How did King Hezekiah deal with the threat of an invasion of an enemy king? “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” (2 Kings 19:1). That is exactly where one is to go when there is a problem. Not only that, but he sent a message to the prophet of God, Isaiah. “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. 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” (2 Kings 19:3-4). King Hezekiah understood that the nation of Judah was at the point that either it would become a mighty nation, or it would be defeated (as Rabshakeh was proclaiming). King Hezekiah believed God heard Rabshakeh’s words, and understood they were a reproach unto God, so he asked for prayer.

Isaiah, God’s prophet, responded to King Hezekiah’s messengers. “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. 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” (2 Kings 19:6-7). God promised that He would take care of the enemy for King Hezekiah.

Meanwhile, Rabshakeh returned to the king of Assyria where he was warring against another land. But, he heard that the king of Egypt was coming. (Remember, God said “... *he shall* hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land ...”). After he heard that “rumor,” he sent a

written message to King Hezekiah. "... Let not thy God in whom thou trustest 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 lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?" (2 Kings 19:10-11). He went on to tell them that no other nation had been protected from the Assyrian army by their gods. What neither King Sennacherib, nor Rabshakeh realized was that the God of Judah could never be compared to the false gods of the other nations (because they are false and He is the one true God). When King Hezekiah received the message, read what he did. "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. 15. And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD ..." (2 Kings 19:14-15). Hezekiah knew it was true – Assyria had destroyed the nations around.

Read what Hezekiah prayed.

17. Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed 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 they have destroyed them. 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. (2 Kings 19:17-19)

King Hezekiah understood that all of the other nations that had been destroyed had false gods, manmade, that were easily destroyed. Nevertheless, he asked God to reveal Himself as *the* God by saving Judah from their enemy, Assyria.

God used His prophet, Isaiah, to answer King Hezekiah. The people had heard what Sennacherib had done (that destruction of the nations around), but they must remember what God had done for His people through the centuries. God knew all of the plans Sennacherib had made against Judah, and God would take care of him (2 Kings 19:20-34). Read the encouraging words Isaiah left with King Hezekiah. "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. 33. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not

come into this city, saith the LORD. 34. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake” (2 Kings 19:32-34).

After reading about this event in Second Kings, we read of the great prayer and seeking Hezekiah did unto God, and the great encouragement Isaiah gave King Hezekiah from God. Remembering that, see the action King Hezekiah set about to do in the following verses from Second Chronicles: “2. And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

- 3. He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which *were* without the city: and they did help him. 4. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?
- 5. Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised *it* up to the towers,
- and another wall without,
- and repaired Millo *in* the city of David,
- and made darts and shields in abundance.
- 6. And he set captains of war over the people,
- and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying, 7. Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: for *there be* more with us than with him: 8. With him *is* an arm of flesh; but with us *is* the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles.
- And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah” (2 Chronicles 32:2-8).

Hezekiah took action. He stopped the waters so the enemy would be without. They proceeded to build up the walls, make repairs, prepared armaments, organized the army and people, and finally, King Hezekiah encouraged the people.

Remember, King Sennacherib sent a messenger, Rabshakeh, who is totally omitted in Second Chronicles (he was only the voice of the enemy king). Instead, read the words of King Sennacherib:

10. ... Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem? 11. Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 12. Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it? 13. Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of *other* lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? 14. Who *was there* among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? 15. Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?" (2 Chronicles 32:10-15)

Now that we have much insight in Second Chronicles that we did not have in Second Kings, we know that Judah had food and water. The people had brought so much into the house of the Lord; they had to build extra storage space! Moreover, King Hezekiah stopped up the water, holding it in the city, so that the enemy would have none. That was the first thing King Sennacherib challenged. Recognize that God had already provided the things His people would need to survive the besiegement from the enemy king. Finally, King Sennacherib then challenged their faithfulness to God. We can see the ignorance of King Sennacherib about the one true God because he accused Hezekiah's actions for removing the idol worship and restoring the right worship of the One true God. By the final words that Sennacherib sent to King Hezekiah, we can understand that he thought he was stronger than God. Moreover, it did not end there. "*And his servants spake yet more against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah*" (2 Chronicles 32:16).



Something very important for us to recognize: when a decision is made to serve God completely, in the right way, the enemy will come to oppose – vehemently! This instance of King Sennacherib challenging King Hezekiah and Judah’s trust in God was not an exception:

**2 Chronicles 32:17-19:**

- “17. He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel,
- and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.
- 18. Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that *were* on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them;
- that they might take the city.
- 19. And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* the work of the hands of man.”

What should one do when the enemy comes to oppose? See what King Hezekiah did: “And for this *cause* Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven” (2 Chronicles 32:20). Just what he was supposed to do – make his request made known to God (see Philippians 4:6: “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”).

What did God do for Judah?

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. 36. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt 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 Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead” (2 Kings 19:35-37). See also, “Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of

Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and guided them on every side.”  
(2 Chronicles 32:22)

They did not have to do anything – God did it all. Not only did the angel of the Lord kill the leaders and captains of the enemy army that besieged Jerusalem (plus 185,000 soldiers), but the rest of Sennacherib’s army went home, defeated. Furthermore, when Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, two of his sons killed him. Everything God had promised King Hezekiah, God did. Not only did Judah see God work mightily, but also all of the nations around recognized God delivered His people. “*And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth*” (2 Chronicles 32:23).

**A Deeper Path:** Can you understand how King Hezekiah felt? They were God’s chosen people, yet the enemy nation had them surrounded with the threat of imminent invasion. Remember, David recorded a time when he did not understand the success of the “world” while the faithful seemed to have troubles. “12. *Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.* 16. *When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;* 17. *Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end*” (Psalm 73:12, 16-17). Once he turned to God and His house, he then understood.

Today, when we have trying times, we are to respond the same way King Hezekiah did – we are to take our troubles to God in prayer. “*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive*” (Matthew 21:22). Also see: “*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God*” (Philippians 4:6).

King David recorded the following verses, and as we read about King Hezekiah, we can understand that he believed (and lived) it. “18. *The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.* 19. *He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.* 20. *The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy*” (Psalm 145:18-20).

Read the following verses to understand why King Sennacherib did not worry King Hezekiah with his idle threats by the words of Rabshakeh. “8. *It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.* 9. *It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in*

princes” (Psalm 118:8-9). We, too, are to practice this same thing. It does not matter what man may say about or against us, we are to trust God in all things. “... for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6. So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Hebrews 13:5b-6).

### **5. Hezekiah’s Great Failure (2 Kings 20; 2 Chronicles 32:24-33)**

Read the next event recorded for us about King Hezekiah in the book of Second Kings. “In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live” (2 Kings 20:1). When King Hezekiah heard these words, he prayed. “I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore” (2 Kings 20:3). See what God told Isaiah as he was leaving the king’s court. “5. Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, 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 unto the house of the LORD. 6. And I will add unto 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” (2 Kings 20:5-6).

How could King Hezekiah know this was truth?

8. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day? 9. And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? 10. And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. 11. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward ...” (2 Kings 20:8-11)

God promised to turn back time – and He did. Once again, we read something sad. “*But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit *done* unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem*” (2 Chronicles 32:25). Nevertheless, he rendered not again. Understand that the words **rendered not again** means “to not turn oneself; to not turn back; to not spiritually return to the Lord.” It is important to notice he did not repent, the pride in King Hezekiah’s heart (that his heart was lifted up), and that God’s wrath would be upon Judah and Jerusalem for that pride. Nevertheless, read the encouraging words that come next. “*Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah*” (2 Chronicles 32:26). Because Hezekiah humbled his heart, God suspended his wrath for a time.

**Read the summarization of the acts of King Hezekiah found in 2 Chronicles 32:27-30:**

- “27. *And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches*
- *and honour:*
- *and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels;*
- 28. *Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil;*
- *and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.*
- 29. *Moreover he provided him cities,*
- *and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance:*
- *for God had given him substance very much.*
- 30. *This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David.*
- *And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.”*

Read of the final test that God gave to King Hezekiah and his outcome. “*Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all *that was* in his heart*” (2 Chronicles 32:31). The results of that test are not recorded in Second Chronicles but in 2 Kings 20:12-19. The son of the king of Babylon sent letters and a present to King Hezekiah because he heard the king had been sick. Remembering the pride King Hezekiah felt for what God had done by extending his life, read the following verse: “*And Hezekiah hearkened unto*

them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not” (2 Kings 20:13). When Isaiah heard, he asked what the king had showed them, and he asked from where they came. When King Hezekiah answered, read what Isaiah had to say to him. “16. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. 17. Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon” (2 Kings 20:16-18). Isaiah told him what a foolish thing that was for him to do – to show another king all of his great wealth. God would allow that same kingdom to come and steal not only all of his treasures, but the sons of the land as well.

“Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they *are* written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel” (2 Chronicles 32:32).

“And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead” (2 Chronicles 32:33).

**A Deeper Path:** King Hezekiah was not afraid of man, but trusted God. With this trust in God, he was able to encourage the people. Remember the verses we have looked at before: “5. Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 7. Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD *is*” (Jeremiah 17:5, 7). God showed himself mightily to King Hezekiah, Judah and even the surrounding nations when the enemy of King Sennacherib was defeated by God – without Judah even having to fight.

Isaiah 38 – 39 is another recording of the sickness of Hezekiah, his prayer for recovery, and God’s extension of his life of 15 years.

### **2 Kings 18-20 at a Glance:**

Chapter 18: King Hezekiah’s reforms and his trust in God; Israel carried captive by Assyria;  
Sennacherib came up against Judah; Hezekiah’s payment, and the message from  
Sennacherib by Rabshakeh

Chapter 19: King Hezekiah's prayer and messages to Isaiah; Isaiah's message from God to King Hezekiah; God's mighty deliverance from the Assyrian army; Sennacherib's death (just as God promised)

Chapter 20: Hezekiah's sickness, then extension of 15 years; King Hezekiah showed all of the wealth to the Babylonians, and Isaiah told him God would allow the Babylonians to take all of the wealth, and the sons

### **2 Chronicles 29 – 32 at a Glance:**

Chapter 29: Hezekiah became king; repaired the house of the Lord; reestablished the Levites; cleansed the Temple; restored temple worship; sang praises to God

Chapter 30: Hezekiah called for the people to prepare for the Passover; prayed for God to pardon them & God heard & answered; such joy had not been in Jerusalem since King Solomon

Chapter 31: Destroyed all idol worship; reestablished the courses of the priests and Levites; commanded the people once again to bring their first fruits to the house of the Lord

Chapter 32: Sennacherib, king of Assyria, began attacking in Judah; Hezekiah told the people God was with them & would fight their battles; Sennacherib sent men to besiege Jerusalem with a message of defiance; King Hezekiah's sickness & God's sign (as a test); Hezekiah's failure in that test; Hezekiah's death

**Reinforcement:** What a revival in Judah! We learned about a king who, even though he had a very wicked father, from the beginning of his reign (first month of the first year) sought to restore the relationship of God and His people. By his actions, we understand that Hezekiah knew God's Word and understood what God required to restore that relationship – the relationship between God and His people. When King Hezekiah led the people to do just what God's Word required, God was honored. God was then free to bless His people openly – revealing Himself to not only Judah, but also the nations around. After learning the extent King Hezekiah went in restoring that relationship, we can understand why God said, "5. **He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. 6. For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses**" (2 Kings 18:5-6). Remembering today's key verse, King Hezekiah was a great example of one who was written about that could give us

confidence. Confidence that when God is sought, He will not forget His people – as long as they return with a repentant heart. If God could forgive a people whose king sacrificed his children to an idol (remember King Ahaz), God can forgive anyone who will ask (see Romans 10:8-13: “8. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”).

Today we should have noticed how God blessed when King Hezekiah placed his trust in God. We too, should learn to humble ourselves before God, trusting Him to provide for us and take care of us – no matter what troubles may come. However, unlike King Hezekiah, we should never let our pride take our heart away from God.

**Closing:** It would be good to close with a short prayer reinforcing today’s lesson. Always include any prayer requests you may have. *Today, pray that we will recognize God’s Word was given so we could have confidence that God will hear when called upon – when one comes to Him with a repentant heart. It is then that God is able to reveal Himself mightily.*