

Victory Under Siege



CHRISTIAN FAMILY
FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Victory Under Siege

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Introduction

Whether or not we find ourselves in the same physical circumstances as Hezekiah (besieged, outnumbered and surrounded by an enemy who threatens one's very life), we often feel surrounded, outnumbered and under siege by the god of this world and the systems of the world which he promotes. Assaulted by unruly thoughts, our minds often reel from the turmoil. We may find ourselves brought to our knees, crying for help, and unsure of the truth we once believed.

When crises occur, it's the habit patterns of trust and faithfulness we have established that will see us through. God sends His Word to heal and deliver us from all possible destructions. It comes in scriptures we have hidden in our hearts and revelation that brings those scriptures alive to meet our most immediate and pressing needs.

It's the trust and confidence we have developed over time with God that rocks the cradle of our minds and soothes the troubled seas of our souls. The actions that Hezekiah took when besieged by Sennacherib are a scriptural example to follow to find victory under siege.

Most of us are aware that view-points on a given situation often vary with each observer. The eye of each beholder sees and then interprets an event according to values, preconceived ideas, and previous experiences. Therefore each person's point of view differs at least somewhat from another person's. The Bible shows us that this is not only true of mankind. God has His own point of view on what's going on. His viewpoint, however, is omniscient. Man's is not. It is interesting to note how man construes a situation and then compare it to how God sees the same situation.

More than half of I and II Chronicles have parallels in I and II Samuel and I and II Kings. When studying these Old Testament books one occasionally finds what seems to be contradictory accounts of the same man or incident. Careful research of these comparable records soon discloses a shift of viewpoint from one account to its counterpart in another Old Testament book. The books of Samuel and Kings are written from a human viewpoint, man's point of view. The books of Chronicles, on the other hand, are written from God's point of view, from an understanding of spiritual power or forces working behind the scenes. Man's point of view will simplify life to apparent, overt actions; but God, understanding the spiritual forces at work in the world, goes beneath the surface and points out the spiritual aspects which bring about man's destiny.¹

That's what we will be investigating in this *Study in Scriptural Integrity* entitled "Victory Under Siege." We learned in Part II of *Living in God's Power*, "How the Bible Interprets Itself," that one of the ways God's Word interprets itself in the verse right where it is written is through narrative development.

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We learned that different passages of Scripture on an identical incident must augment each other. Each passage of Scripture relating to the same incident may not give the same details, but the Scriptures must complement and agree with each other or we do not have the true Word of God. If there are truly identical incidents recorded in Scripture, the details of one Scripture would add to the other, but it would never contradict that which the other states or the situations would not be identical. If the situations are identical, that which is set forth in one Scripture cannot contradict that which is set forth in the other. In the accounts of the siege of Jerusalem by Sennecherib in the time of Hezekiah the details vary greatly and highlight the differences between the viewpoints from which they are written.

Perhaps this distinction in viewpoints can be at least partially attributed to their place in the canon of the Old Testament. I and II Samuel and I and II Kings are in the section of the Old Testament that Jesus describes as the prophets, the *Nevi'im*. I and II Chronicles are in the section of the Old Testament called the Psalms or the writings, the *Kethuvim*. Chronicles is the last book in the Old Testament canon and is part of the *Kethuvim* or what has also been colloquially called the wisdom literature.

It's important to remember in working the Word that the order of the books of the Old Testament in our English versions is not correct, according to the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures. Our Bible is put together following the Septuagint, where there is law, history, poetry, major prophets, and minor prophets. The Tanakh, the Jewish Bible (our Old Testament) is composed of the *Torah*, the Law, the *Nevi'im*, the Prophets, and the *Kethuvim*, the rest of the Writings. When Jesus Christ divided the Word at the end of Luke, he talked about all things that were written of him in the Law, in the Prophets, and the Psalms (which, as the first book in the *Kethuvim*, is put to represent the rest of the writings.) These are the three divisions of the Old Testament.

This understanding will clarify many things. One of the most obvious things is found in Matthew 23:35. When alluding to all the prophets that Israel killed, Jesus said:

Matthew 23:31, 34, and 35:

Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

³⁴ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

³⁵ That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

In this example Jesus gives the first and last of the martyred prophets mentioned in the Old Testament.² Abel was the first of the martyrs as we learned from Genesis 4:8, the first book of the Bible. Zacharias was the last of martyrs noted in the Old Testament. That account was in the last book of the Bible, II Chronicles 24:20-22. Jesus mentioned the first and the last of the

martyred prophets to represent all the prophets. When we understand the Hebrew cannon, we understand Jesus' example.

This book of Chronicles that we're going to get into is not part of the law, and it's not part of the prophets; it's in the rest of the writings. It is not necessarily a historical book; God didn't divide His Word into history. One of the unique things about Chronicles is that the first nine chapters of Chronicles are a genealogy, or a list of who had which child. Genealogies were very important to God, and this should speak loudly to us because Chronicles is a book about family. Family *matters*, and God is concerned with individuals.

Examples of the different viewpoints:

Although this study is specifically concerned with the siege of Jerusalem fomented by Sennecherib, I felt a few examples to show the difference in viewpoints would be appropriate before we start.

The numbering of Israel: The Books of Samuel are written from man's point of view, revealing man's limited awareness of the devil-spirit realm. In II Samuel we find the idiom of permission used in speaking of the numbering of Israel.

II Samuel 24:1:

And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he [the Lord] moved David [This is the idiom of permission which means: permitted David to be moved] against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

However, Chronicles, written from God's point of view and with the proper understanding of the spiritual forces at work in the world, states the literal truth.

I Chronicles 21:1 and 2:

And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

There is no contradiction here. Understanding the idiom of permission dissolves the apparent contradiction. Following the direction of Exodus 23:13 (written from man's point of view) the account in Samuel doesn't mention the true spiritual forces that incited the action. However the account in Chronicles, written from God's point of view is clear in pointing out the literal truth.

The Death of Saul: At the end of his life, Saul battled the Philistines.

I Samuel 31:1-6:

Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.

² And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.

³ And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

⁴ Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through

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therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

⁵ And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

⁶ So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together.

The record in Samuel makes Saul's death seem like an act of stress brought on by the defeat of battle. However, Chronicles shows the spiritual forces which brought on Saul's ungodly end.

I Chronicles 10:13 and 14:

So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, *even* against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking *counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;*

¹⁴ And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him [allowed him to be slain], and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

From the record in Samuel we learned that the Philistines shot Saul with an arrow, and then Saul impaled himself on his own sword. According to Chronicles, the Lord slew him. How does one harmonize these apparent discrepancies? Remember, the record in Samuel is from man's point of view: God looked beyond the arrow and the sword. From God's point of view, Saul died because of his transgressions which included his visit to the witch of Endor to gain information.

Saul disobeyed God's law, and because of his own disobedience was killed. God didn't literally take Saul's life. I Chronicles 10:14 doesn't mean that. There is a spiritual law founded by God. Picture the law as a cement wall. When a person runs into it, he hurts himself. Saul knew that God's number one law said man should not pay tribute to idols or other gods: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Later on Jesus Christ set forth the commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind."³ God will bear many acts of unrighteousness from His people, but He will not tolerate the worshipping of other gods.

Saul knew God's commandment, but nevertheless he willfully broke it. Saul, disobeying the true God, began playing with spiritualistic power by having the woman of Endor try to conjure up the dead, specifically, Samuel. By this act, Saul rushed head-first against the immovable wall of the law, and thus brought destruction to himself. From the senses' vantage point, Saul died because of battle wounds and self-inflicted impaling. From the spiritual point of view Saul died because he disobeyed the most important law of God. His rejection of God removed God's hand of protection from him and calamity resulted.

Jehoshaphat's Commercial Pact: Jehoshaphat king of Judah made a commercial pact with an unbelieving king which failed. The account in Kings tells us what happened, but the one in Chronicles tells us why it failed.

I Kings 22:48:

Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Eziongeber.

The record of this commercial fiasco is simply stated, “the ships were broken at Eziongeber.”

II Chronicles 20:35-37:

And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly:

³⁶ And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Eziongeber.

³⁷ Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

Jehoshaphat anticipated the gain to be derived from trade with Tarshish, a very rich city. But from God's point of view, the plan was not sound because it required an alliance with Ahaziah, an ungodly king. The record in Chronicles tells us why: “because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works.” This is the idiom of permission again. The disaster was not just a natural disaster as Kings suggests there were spiritual causes behind it. But apparently Jehoshaphat learned his lesson, because when Ahaziah wants to try it again Jehoshaphat declines.⁴

I Kings 22:49:

Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.

From these few brief examples we should see how the different viewpoints are presented in God's Word. The account I want to investigate at length is the siege of Jerusalem undertaken by Sennacherib during Hezekiah's reign. A cursory perusal of the accounts shows a distinct difference in their emphases. The account in Kings emphasizes the siege and the account in Chronicles emphasizes the first 14 years of Hezekiah's reign. The chart below shows the amount of time and space each book gives to each period of time.

Sennacherib's Siege of Jerusalem in the Time of Hezekiah

Account	1st 14 years	The Siege ⁵	Viewpoint
II Kings	18:1-12 (12 verses)	18:13-19:37 (62 verses)	Man's
II Chronicles	29:1-31:21 (84 vss)	32:1-23 (23 verses)	God's

From simply observing the number of verses included, it's clear to see that man's point of view emphasizes the siege, and God's point of view emphasizes the first 14 years. People do not always see the importance of building a solid foundation for life. The account of the siege of Sennacherib shows that even though man's perspective records the dramatic details of the confrontation and all the intrigue surrounding them, God clearly documents that it was the solid foundation that Hezekiah set for the kingdom that paved the way for God to move in a mighty way for His people.

All God's Word is God-breathed and profitable. Both viewpoints, God's and man's, are important. It is just very interesting to note and realize that God had both recorded so we could learn from each. Obviously as we live, the details of the things we go through or endure are important. The account in Kings makes these very clear showing the drama and intrigue in great detail. However the account in Chronicles shows how the preparation that Hezekiah took long before the event provided the solid foundation for the mighty deliverance that followed.

The name Hezekiah means "*Jah* is strength." "*Jah*" is a poetic form of "Jehovah"; it's a contraction used primarily in the books of poetry. Hezekiah's name foretold how *Jah* would strengthen him for the tasks ahead of him. Of course God can do the same for us regardless of what our name is.

Hezekiah was one of the kings of Judah, and he was in the believers' line.⁶ Hezekiah's life is covered in depth in Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah. The account of siege of Jerusalem undertaken by Sennecherib during Hezekiah's reign is recorded in each of them. Quite early in the account we will be reading, God evaluates Hezekiah. We find it in II Kings 18:5 & 6.

II Kings 18:5 and 6:

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.

The Book of Jeremiah also has some pertinent revelation concerning Hezekiah. The prophet Micah warned Hezekiah's generation that if they did not repent, judgment would fall. Jeremiah records it in chapter 26.

Jeremiah 26:18 and 19:

Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Zion shall be plowed *like* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

¹⁹ Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

Hezekiah's response was not the same as those of whom we read in Matthew 23 previously. He did not kill the prophet in an attempt to rescind and avoid the prophecy he spoke. Instead, Hezekiah feared the Lord and sought His favor, and the Lord relented! Hezekiah admitted and repented of the evil, and God did not send judgment; instead He sent one of the greatest revivals in the history of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Hezekiah returned God's people to worship and serve the One True God.

Some of you may remember the discussion of the believer's vital signs from the *Study in Victorious Christian Living*, "Ready & Willing" and Part III of *Living in God's Power*. Some of the natural vital signs are pulse rate, blood pressure, body temperature, and rate of respiration. When you get to the hospital, they want to know how you are doing so they check these. Vital signs tell how one is doing. The vital signs of a fellowship of believers are, as activities: worship (prayer and praise), doing the Word, giving, witnessing, and fellowshiping. These will all come up as we get into this account. We will see the importance of preparation and getting rid of fear. We will see the preparation from God's point of view, and the deliverance from fear from man's point of view.

When Hezekiah became king he inherited a kingdom in disarray. Assyrian dominance and tribute had been imposed upon it, and it was in constant peril and suspense of greater encroachments from them. With this background we will get into the accounts in Kings and Chronicles in our next session.

Chapter 1: The First 14 Years in Kings

God bless you and welcome to this *Study in Scriptural Integrity* entitled, “*Victory Under Siege.*” We will be studying the siege of Sennacherib during the reign of Hezekiah. We will see that even when God’s people are besieged, outnumbered and surrounded, even when it seems that deliverance is impossible and there is no way out of the trouble, God can make a way where there is no apparent way. He can reverse any situation. He can deliver to the uttermost, and there is nothing too hard for Him.

We will be looking at two viewpoints. From God’s viewpoint we will see that man’s faithfulness to God’s Word appropriates deliverance. He points out the reasons behind the actions that make all the difference. From man’s point of view we will see that not accepting what the world says or what the current events or situation are promoting and relying exclusively on God is the only way to make it through impossible situations. We will see the conflict and details of what’s going on. We will be looking at the siege from the books of Kings and Chronicles and comparing and contrasting the accounts.

Let’s go to second Kings, chapter 18, and we’ll begin when Hezekiah becomes king.

II Kings 18:1-3:

Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

² Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Abi, the daughter of Zachariah.

³ And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

The phrase, “according to all that David his father did” occurs only twice. Here and in II Chronicles 29:2, the parallel account in Chronicles that we will be reading later. David was the primary Old Testament example of a shepherd/king. He was the standard to which others were compared for good. When they wanted to talk about a prophet or the Law, the standard was Moses. When they wanted to talk about a king who lived for God, who loved God with all his heart, then David is usually the example that is used.

Hezekiah is known for his reforms, and the revival that took place during his reign. The account in II Kings summarizes it in three and a half verses.

II Kings 18:4a:

He removed the high places...

What were these “high places?” The high places were places of worship, the idolatrous worship of other gods. They received their name from their association with the elevation on

which they were found. The high places were generally on the top of the hills. That's where the pagan temples were found.

II Kings 18:4:

He removed the high places and brake the images [Images were strickly forbidden according to Exodus 20:4.], 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.

If you remember, from the Old Testament, from the Book of the Law in Numbers 21, there was a severe attack of serpents upon the children of Israel. The serpents bit the Israelites, and the Israelites died. God's instruction to Moses was for Moses to make a brazen serpent and put it on a stake, so that anybody who looked to the serpent would be delivered. It worked, and people were healed.

This carries over into our medical field. When I was in the service, I was in the medical corps, and I wore a caduceus on each of my lapels. That was (in the Unites States Army, at least) the sign of the medical corps, representing healing. They had two snakes entwined around a pole. I know that in ancient mythology it was a winged staff with two serpents twined around it, carried by Hermes. However, I always preferred to use the Biblical origin.

This is a great account. When you read Numbers 21, and see the deliverance provided by the brazen serpent, it's important to realize that it was prophetic of what Jesus Christ would do. This is clarified for us in the New Testament, in the Book of John. John 3:14 says that just as Moses lifted up the serpent, so the Son of man is going to be lifted up. When we look to Jesus, we have the same healing. This brazen serpent prophesied or pointed to the great healing Jesus would also supply for God's people. What a wonderful way to provide deliverance to God's people using the brazen serpent. What a wonderful godly symbol it was.

I am sure I would have kept it too; wouldn't that be a great thing to have around? I am sure I would have kept it, and displayed it proudly. However, this record of the brazen serpent in II Kings was many, many years after Moses and long after the attack of the serpents. The people were now worshipping this piece of brass, this serpent... worshipping the creation, the thing that was made, and not the Creator, the One who supplied it. God is the One who told Moses what to do. God made healing possible through the Word he gave to Moses instructing him to make the brazen serpent. He is the One who deserved the worship. Now they were worshiping the thing that represented the deliverance, the creation instead of the creator. Anyhow, Hezekiah said: "Get rid of it; it is just a piece of brass." A piece of brass, that is what "Nehushtan" means. Can you imagine the intrigue and drama that would have surrounded this decision?

Revival happens when God's Word becomes living and real in the hearts and lives of people. Revival often requires us to challenge current practices. A return to God's Word is necessary. God gave us His Word so we could know His will. Unless His Word becomes the bedrock of our

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lives we will always flounder and miss the mark. Someone has to take the lead, and Hezekiah was the man.

II Kings 18:5-7a:

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.

⁶For he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

⁷And the LORD was with him; *and* he prospered whithersoever he went forth...⁷

Those three and a half verses summarize Hezekiah's religious reforms and how he brought God's people back to worshipping the One True God after having gone to idols under the reign of his father Ahaz. The next verse and a half explain what Hezekiah did politically and how God prospered him.

II Kings 18:7b and 8:

... and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

⁸He smote the Philistines, *even* unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

What a summary of Hezekiah's life. The account in II Kings handles it all in five verses. That's a pretty big opinion of a pretty big man. Hezekiah was obviously a man of action, and God prospered what he did,

II Kings 18:9 and 10:

And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which *was* the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

¹⁰And at the end of three years they took it: *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, *that is* the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.

That was their brothers up north, the northern ten tribes. The King of Assyria conquered them. Look what Kings described as the reason for what happened to them.

II Kings 18:11-13:

And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:

¹²**Because** they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.

¹³Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah...

It says this happened to Israel "because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would

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The First 14 years in Kings

not hear *them*, nor do *them*.” It will be important to remember this when we get to the account in Chronicles where Hezekiah demands that Judah return to the Lord so the same does not happen to them.

That takes us to verse thirteen, the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah when the siege of Sennacherib begins. So, the first twelve verses of II Kings 18 handle the first fourteen years of Hezekiah’s life (from man’s point of view). He got rid of Nehushtan. He got rid of the high places and groves. He brought Israel back to God’s Word and the worship of Jehovah, and during that time, the other part of God’s people, the northern tribes, went into captivity. This is a great, short summary.

This is a good time to remind you that Kings and Chronicles are both God’s Word. It is not that one is natural and the other divine or that one is more important than the other. Whether it’s from man’s point of view or from God’s point of view, it is all the Word of God. And II Timothy 3:16 says all Scripture is inspired of God and profitable. It is all important. Just recognize that from Kings, containing man’s point of view, there is a different emphasis. The emphasis is on everything that is going on: the drama, the intrigue, the fight, the battle, the results, the change and not the reasons for the change. The first 14 years are presented in just 12 verses.

Chapter 2: The First 14 Years in Chronicles

Now, we are going to see that same account from God's point of view. The emphasis is on what Hezekiah did to bring God's people back to God's Word. We read that the judgment of God came upon Israel because they forsook the commandments of God. We will see here in Chronicles that Hezekiah would not let Judah succumb for the same reason.

We just read in II Kings 19:12 why Israel went into captivity: "Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*." So let us go from here to the Book of II Chronicles chapter 29 and see what allowed God to bring deliverance to Judah that He was unable to do for their brethren in the northern kingdom.

II Chronicles 29:1 and 2:

Hezekiah began to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.

² And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

Again, there is that prime example. Now, look at all the detail that we have. We are going to look at 84 verses and see some of this great detail. It says:

II Chronicles 29:3:

He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them.

Why did he have to open the doors of the house of the Lord? Because they had been shut up.

II Chronicles 28:24 and 25a:

And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

²⁵ And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods....

Ahaz set up idol worship again in every corner of Jerusalem and in every city around the countryside. Up on the high places, on every mountain, they were looking to these idols. He shut the House of the Lord. He denied people access to the Temple and he said, "We will do this my way."

II Chronicles 29:3:

... in the first year, in the first month..."

It says that the first thing that Hezekiah does is that he opens the doors, and he fixes them. "We are going back to the worship of God, the right way." and this is when he brought in the

priests and the Levites. These were the spiritual leadership. These were the ones responsible to teach the people the Word of God. Hezekiah was a great man, yet he did not learn it from his father. His father was Ahaz. His father did not have it right; he did not do it right. But Hezekiah wanted to do it right. His mother is mentioned. His mother did a great deal to make sure he did things the correct way. She is honored here and mentioned for teaching him. He becomes king, and the first thing that he does is he opens the House of the Lord. What a heart this guy had for God! Then he gets his spiritual leaders together, the priests and the Levites.

II Chronicles 29:4 and 5a:

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...

Now all the priests were Levites, but not all the Levites were priests. All the house of Levi were Levites. They all served in the temple area, out of that house. It was those of the house of Aaron who were the priests. So when he says “Hear me, ye Levites” he is talking to all of them, because the priests were Levites too.

II Chronicles 29:5b and 6:

... sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy *place*.

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.

Again, this is that figure of speech *polysyndeton*: look at all the “ands.” He is noting each thing they did.

II Chronicles 29:7:

Also (this should be the word “and,” 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.

They closed it up; they closed up shop. They stopped worshiping Jehovah, and Hezekiah said: “This is not right.” And he said: “Look, you guys are supposed to be in charge of this. You are the ones that are supposed to be doing this.” Therefore he tells them:

II Chronicles 29:8:

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.

How did Hezekiah know this? The prophet Micah told him and all Judah, and Jeremiah 26:18 & 19 records it. But contrary to how the northern tribes responded to the Word of the Lord, Hezekiah and Judah are going to repent. But we’ll get to that later.

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The Tanakh has an interesting note on this word “hissing.” In the Eastern culture hissing was something people would do at the sight of ruin to prevent the same thing from happening to them. If someone saw something that they didn’t want to happen to them, they would hiss. The Tanakh gave as a footnote Jeremiah 18:16. It was also linked to Lamentations 2:15 and Job 27:23. “Hissing” and “wagging or shaking the head” were both cultural customs designed to avert calamity. Being an object of hissing, as spoken of in verse eight, indicates extreme trouble, misery or disaster.

Hezekiah admitted the previous national sin and its effect upon the nation. He said, “Our fathers made mistakes, but we are going to start doing it right. We are going to start doing it right, right now.” They were aware of the wrong doing; they “saw it” with their eyes. They also understood that there were consequences because of it.

II Chronicles 29:9 and 10:

For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives *are* in captivity for this.

¹⁰ 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.

He had it in his heart. That was the energizing of his ministry. God was working within him, burning in his heart. “We are coming back to God. We are coming back. We are going to do this thing right. God is worthy of our worship. He is worthy of our praise. He is worthy of our lives, our commitment. So we are getting back to it.” He gets everybody together and he says:

II Chronicles 29:11a:

My sons, be not now negligent...

“Negligent” is the same word that is translated “deceived.” “Do not be deceived. Do not be negligent. Don’t be deceived, and therefore not take action. What we do is important. It’s important to not be deceived into thinking that what we do in life doesn’t matter. It matters to God; it matters to our families; it matters to our country. Do not be comfortable and secure in your ignorance.” He is going to teach them something here and challenge them.

II Chronicles 29:11b:

... for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.

Hezekiah was king and took the responsibility, but he couldn’t do it alone. He needed help and he went where he should have been able to expect it. God had chosen the House of Levi and it’s time they rose to the challenge. We read in verse 10 that Hezekiah had it in his heart. Now, he has to transfer it to their hearts. God gave him the vision, and now he needs to share it with his spiritual leadership.

He says, “Look, you have been called to lead. You have been called to do it, so, let’s get with it. Let’s get into it. Let’s go for it; you are Levites, you are priests, so let’s go for it. God gave

you this responsibility, now rise up.” That was their inheritance of the Lord, and Hezekiah is demanding that they get back to it. They respond well to his exhortation.

II Chronicles 29:12-14:

Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites: and of the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites; Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:

¹³ And of the sons of Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:

¹⁴ And of the sons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.

Now remember this is from God’s point of view. He names these individuals; He recognizes them; He holds each of them dear and important; they are all cherished and noted. None of those people are mentioned in Kings. Here, God is giving them credit. These guys are the people that started this moving. These are the ones who responded to Hezekiah’s beseeching. He said: “Look, you are the priests. You are the Levites. We are going to get it back here....” and these men respond.

These were the servant-leaders, and it takes leadership to get things moving. It takes somebody leading the way. It takes somebody stepping up and saying: “Hey, I’ve done it, you can do it too. Come on and give it a try. See, it isn’t hard.” And then you just go for it. These men did it; these were the ones, and God knows their names. Our names are all written in the Book of Life. God cares about us individually. He remembers what we do. He remembers all that we do, and we’re going to get rewards for it all. So these men gathered their brethren...

II Chronicles 29:15:

And they gathered their brethren and sanctified themselves, and came, **according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the LORD**, to cleanse the house of the LORD.

First of all, they had to cleanse themselves; they got their “act” together. You know, they got their hearts right. They prayed. They ceremonially did what they were supposed to do because they hadn’t been doing what they should have been doing either, had they? They had quit. They had gone and found other employment. They had been working doing whatever. But he said, “Come on back.”; so they do. They cleanse themselves and come to work, but note how they did it. It says, “according to the commandment of the king, by the Words of the Lord.” It’s the king’s commandments, but the words are the Lord’s. They are coming back to God’s Word. The king is requiring them to do The Word, and they are coming back. “We are going to do it.” After they sanctified themselves, they came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD. As we read through here note all the synonymous words for “sanctify” and “cleanse.”

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That phrase “according to” refers to a standard, and it occurs nine times in this account in Chronicles,⁸ and we will mention each one as it comes up. It points out the standard by which they perform their activities. They need to make some changes. They need to come back to the Word and the true worship of Jehovah. They need to reestablish proper habit patterns that would provide for their success. Associated with the repetition of “according to” is the frequent use of “command” and “commandment.” Those in authority used their authority to direct the people back to the Word of God. We will see this throughout the account.

II Chronicles 29:16:

And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse *it*, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took *it*, to carry *it* out abroad into the brook Kidron.

The priests were allowed to work inside. They took the junk out of the Temple itself, the inner sanctuary, and then the Levites took it to the dump. The dump, the *gehenna* was by the brook Kidron that is the dump outside the city, where they had a fire going (and the fire never ceased.) They just burned it all. But here they are, they go to work. They are working together. Everybody is working together. They are coming back together, and they are doing it together. They are encouraging one another, and the leadership is getting involved. They are doing what they are supposed to do. And now it says in verse 17:

II Chronicles 29:17a:

Now they began on the first *day* of the first month...

So we read in verse three, that in the first year in the first month he started it. Now this further clarification is: “on the first day of the first month.” He did not waste any time, did he? He got on it. As soon as he became king, he got on it. He was getting things in order. He was doing things right.

He must have been prepared for this. He must have been waiting for the opportunity. He must have already thought it through because as soon as he became king he initiated the plan.

The first thing he does is he gets his spiritual leadership together. He said, “You know what you are supposed to do; you are supposed to be in charge, you are supposed to be teaching the people. You are supposed to be doing this right. Do you want to do it?” They respond, “Yes we want to do it.” So they get together. They get in there, and they get themselves in order, and they go to the House of the Lord, and on the first day they begin the work... the first day of the first month.

II Chronicles 29:17b:

... to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD...

It took them eight days to get the inside done. Then there was the rest of it to do.

II Chronicles 29:17c:

... so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.

It took them eight more days to do the rest of the Temple. The Temple had a big wall around the outside, and there was the inner sanctuary with the Holy of Holies, and the Holy place. So it took them eight days to do that little part. Then it took them eight more days to finish the whole job; but they cleaned it up. They had put their heart into it and cleaned the place up. It took them sixteen days to get the Temple clean.

II Chronicles 29:18a:

Then they went in to Hezekiah the king...

They reported back. They said, "King, you asked us to get it together, and it's together."

II Chronicles 29:18b:

...and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof.

"Man, we have got it ready to go. It is clean. It is spotless. It is worthy of the Lord. We are ready to roll here."

II Chronicles 29:19:

Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared [*kun*] and sanctified, and, behold, they *are* before the altar of the LORD.

"We set them up. It is ready to go, king; we are ready to go." That word "prepared" in verse 19 is the Hebrew word *kun*. This word will come up six times in these 84 verses in Chronicles.⁹ It means "prepared." It is also translated "fixed" or "established." Biblically, when they fixed it, it meant that they got it ready, it was prepared for service. We find *kun* here associated with "sanctified." "Sanctify" and synonymous words like "cleanse" and "consecrate" show what kind of preparation was taken.

However, *kun* is not only used of physical items; it is also used of the "heart." The heart is also prepared and we will see that come up in this section also. The Psalmist says. "My heart is fixed. I will arise and sing praise and glorify God." (Psalm 57:7) He declared that his heart was fixed; he had it prepared. He had taken the work unto himself. "My heart is fixed." He had prepared his heart to do this, and then he did it. We will see this preparation with the hearts of the people as well as with the physical items.

That is what has happened. They prepared and sanctified the vessels as well as themselves, and they were before the altar of the LORD, ready to go." So when, they report back and they say, "We did what you asked us to do." They were referring to the temple vessels, but we will see later that it went far beyond just the physical items. This idea of preparation is an important part

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of the Chronicles account, and it is associated with cleansing and reestablishing the vital signs that we will mention later.

II Chronicles 29:20:

Then Hezekiah the king rose early (this is probably the very next morning), and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

Now he doesn't just deal with the spiritual leadership, he gathers the rest of the rulers; the heads of the families of the other tribes. Then they all go up to the House of the Lord.

II Chronicles 29:21:

And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD.

Now we have to remember that this is the *Old Testament*. It is all **for** our learning. We do not have to offer all of these offerings anymore because Jesus Christ was **the** offering. When he gave his life, *that* covered it all; that covered all the offerings for all of time. If you go back and read about sin offerings and all the other different offerings (like the wave offerings, the approach offerings and all the rest), you'll see that they were pointing forward to what Jesus would do. They were prophetic. They looked toward what Jesus Christ would do, and when you look at their meanings, Jesus Christ and his offering of himself took care of all those things. But he had not come yet, and this was part of the Law, and they still had to do it. So, they bring all of these animals in...

II Chronicles 29:22 and 23a:

So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

²³ And they brought forth the he goats *for* the sin offering...

Look at all the detail that God is putting in here regarding what they did, and how they worked. If you go back and read Leviticus you'll see that this was what the priests were supposed to do. They were supposed to take the blood and do that.

II Chronicles 29:23b:

And they brought forth the he goats *for* the sin offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them:

That means they slew them. They butchered them.

II Chronicles 29:24:

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.

He said: “We are going to do it for everybody. I am covering everybody. I’m not just taking care of myself.” Everybody was supposed to bring their own offering, but Hezekiah made sure that all the people were covered.

II Chronicles 29:25:

And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, **according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: [Why?]** for *so was* the commandment of the LORD by his prophets.

He set them up like they were supposed to be. He is going back to The Word. “We are going to sing songs like we are supposed to sing. We are going to get back and do The Word again. We are going to sing this Word. We are going to do this Word. We are coming back to the **Word.**”

II Chronicles 29:26-29:

And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

²⁷ And Hezekiah commanded [The leadership were willing to lead again.] to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began *also* with the trumpets, and with the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel.

²⁸ And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and all this continued* until the burnt offering was finished.

²⁹ And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped.

Again, they are coming back and worshiping the true God. That’s the first of the vital signs we see being re-established. They are doing it according to The Word. They are coming back to The Word. “How does The Word tell us to do this? This is how it tells us to do it.” And they came back. “We are doing what The Word says. Let’s get the offerings, let’s get the songs out, let’s do it right.” And when they did it, then they would just reverence God. They bowed down and worshiped Him, saying, “God, it is so nice to do it the right way. It is so nice to have your heart and your blessing and we want to do it Your way, the right way. We want to walk before you.” Their hearts were so wonderful, so pure, and they were doing it right again.

II Chronicles 29:30:

Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. [These were the Psalms, the Word of God] And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

That’s the next vital sign we see being re-established. They came back to The Word. They used the Word in their worship, like they were supposed to. They were doing The Word and when they started doing The Word again there was great thrill, and great excitement, and great

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joy. Oh man! This is so terrific! Then Hezekiah answered and said, “So we have the worship going, we have The Word going; the next vital sign is giving. So that is coming up next.

II Chronicles 29:31:

Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings.

Now remember, 18 days before this, it was not open for business. It was boarded up, it was closed; there was nobody in the Temple. Then they cleaned it out, they reopened the doors, and they said: “Come on in for worship.” First of all he gets the leadership there and makes sure that they are all present, and that they are doing it, and then he invites the rest of the people in. “Come on in,” and they come in, and they bring in abundance.

II Chronicles 29:32-34a:

And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten [70] bullocks, an hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs: all these *were* for a burnt offering to the LORD.

³³ And the consecrated things *were* six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.

³⁴ But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings...

They could not even handle the work! The people were giving so much that they could not get it all done. They needed help.

II Chronicles 29:34b:

... wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the *other* priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites *were* more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

The priests had already left town; they had to go find employment someplace. So they are still coming back to town. They did not jump on the opportunity like the Levites did. The Levites immediately began to sanctify themselves. It took the priests a little longer to get it together. So in the interim, the Levites stepped in and helped out.

II Chronicles 29:35:

And also the burnt offerings *were* in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for *every* burnt offering. So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order [*kun*].

The word “order” is our Hebrew word *kun*. It was prepared. They did it right. That is important in preparation. You get it in order. You get things right. You establish godly habit patterns. You establish your heart before God. You come back to God and you say, “I want to do it *your* way. I am tired of doing it my way. I am tired of doing what somebody else tells me to do,” like Ahaz. He did not even give them the option to do it right, to worship in the Temple

like they should have. He closed the House of the Lord. He set up idols all over Jerusalem, in all the high places and said, “That is where you’re going to go to worship.” But here it was set in order again.

II Chronicles 29:36:

And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people (with him), that God had prepared [*kun*] the people: for the thing was *done* suddenly.

Suddenly; they just all jumped on it. Here we are within the first couple months of his reign, and everybody is getting with it. Now that is a turnaround. That is a whole nation coming back. That is a whole nation deciding: “We are going to do the right thing again.” Furthermore, it says that they rejoiced because they saw God working in people’s hearts. God had prepared the people, and the thing was done suddenly.

Things don’t always happen that quickly, but they did in this instance. When God is involved and God’s people respond with readiness of mind and heart things can happen suddenly. There wasn’t a lot of time wasted; the people moved quickly.

There’s the giving aspect of it. People started giving so much they could not take care of it all, and they had to work overtime and include more people to get the work done. Then, in chapter 30 we are going to see that Hezekiah is not satisfied with just taking care of Judah. He wants *all* of God’s people coming back. That is going to take witnessing. It is going to take doing something. I know we are reading a lot of verses here, and I know there are a lot of unusual names here that are hard to pronounce, and we are going through a lot of detail, but the point I wanted you to see is that, this kind of detail is important to God. He knows people’s names. He knows what they do, and when the Word says, or the Law says, this, this, this, this, and do this, that is what they did. When we allow The Word to order our steps... when we allow The Word to show us where to go and what to do, we have this kind of success. We have people changing overnight. We have the kind of dramatic transformation of life that we see here. Man, it just happens! The Word can change things and change things right now!

God’s in the business of changing lives. People can make radical changes. God can work within His people to will and to do of His good pleasure. Our freewill is all that stands between us and what God wants for us. We are never more than a decision away from enjoying God’s goodness and the sweetness of life He wants for His people.

II Chronicles 30:1a:

And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah...

Hezekiah is the king of Judah. He was not the king of Israel. It said at the beginning of the record that Hoshea was the king of Israel. What happened to Israel? They were overrun by Assyria, who wiped them out, but Hezekiah said, “I do not care. I am not the King of Israel but they are still my brothers. They are still my family. They still *should be* worshiping the Lord

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God, let's give them a chance." So he sends to all of Judah, his kingdom, and he sends to all of Israel too.

This is about the closest you get to a witnessing scenario in the Old Testament. The point I want you to see is that he went beyond his own borders. He knew the devastation the northern kingdom had just lived through, and he is reaching out to help. We read early in the last session from II Kings 18:12 that the reason Israel fell before her enemies was "because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*."

II Chronicles 30:1b:

... 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.

"We're going to do the Passover!" They had not done it in years. They may have even forgotten what it was. But he wanted them to come and do the Passover. So he went out and gave everybody an invitation. They got an invitation to come to the House of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover.

II Chronicles 30:2 and 3:

For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. [They decided this together.]

³ For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

They were supposed to do the Passover in the first month, but the law made provision if you could not do in the first month, you could do it in the second month. So that is what they did. They got together. "We cannot get it together here, it is happening too quickly. We'll do it in the second month and since we are putting it off a little bit why don't we invite the rest of the folks in?" So, they got the word out. They spoke to Israel; they got the word out. They talked to their brethren, and they talked to anybody that they knew. They just went through the land: all Judah and Israel.

II Chronicles 30:4:

And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.

It pleased the king and all the congregation. The same thing happened in verse 36 of the last chapter. Hezekiah and all the people were of one heart; the leadership and the people were together. That's really the way life ought to be. They were all together on the Word. With that kind of likemindedness things move in a godly manner.

II Chronicles 30:5:

So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba [way down south] even to Dan [way up north], that they should come to keep the

passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done *it* of a long *time in such sort* as it was written.

Look at that phrase: "...for they had not done *it* of a long *time in such sort* as it was written." Although it doesn't use the phrase "according to," it clearly describes the standard, the standard of "*It is written.*" They hadn't done it in years... They had one of the greatest feasts, one of the greatest memorials that recognized their deliverance from Egypt, and the wholeness, and the healing that went with it, and they had not done it in a long time. Not like *this*, not like **it was written**. They are getting back to "It is written." They are getting back to The Word. "We are doing it right again." So they got on their horses and went about the countryside...

II Chronicles 30:6 and 7:

So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, "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 [That would be a cause for hissing.], as ye see.

"As ye see"; all they had to do is look around and they would see that people weren't happy. They would look around, and see that people weren't blessed. People were not taken care of, so he said, "Now change it; come on back." Remember Israel went into captivity because they didn't obey. Hezekiah is giving them another opportunity to do so.

II Chronicles 30:8:

Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers *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.

Take some action, and for them, that was the action. Now this is the benefit. Dale Carnegie used to teach us to motivate people with an action/benefit. You give the people the action to do, and then you tell them the benefit. He gave them the action. Now here is the benefit."

II Chronicles 30:9a:

For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* compassion before them that lead them captive...

"Just come back to God, and even if you are in captivity, you are going to find compassion." Your captors will treat you better.

II Chronicles 30:9b:

... 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."

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God has never forsaken his people and never denied or refused them when they come back to him.

II Chronicles 30:10:

So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

Did everybody respond favorably? No; but they made it available. It did not stop them. When they got mocked in this city, they went on to the next city anyhow. It did not stop them; they let them laugh. They just **did** it.

II Chronicles 30:11:

Nevertheless divers [some] of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

Isn't that what happens when we speak the word. The first century believers got the same reaction when they witness about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Acts 17:32-34:

And when they [the Athenians] heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this *matter*.

³³ So Paul departed from among them.

³⁴ Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which *was* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Some will mock; some will put you off saying, "Let's talk more about it later." But some will believe and cleave to you. That is why we do it; we don't get everybody to respond, but we get *some*. Well that's what happened in Hezekiah's day, too.

They sent out to the whole countryside; they told everybody in the whole countryside, and they got mocked. They were made fun of; they were laughed at. But there were some that wanted it; there were some that humbled themselves and they came to Jerusalem.

II Chronicles 30:12:

Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the **commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the LORD.**

There's that phrase again, "**commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the LORD.**" The kings and the princes decided to do The Word, and they command the people to do it also. Then God gives them one heart. That is what we see in our fellowships around the world, people with one heart wanting to *do it*. People are saying, "I'm coming back and I'm doing it your way, God, I'm finding out what it is that your Word says, and I am doing it." And they do it together and God gives them the heart to do that.

II Chronicles 30:13-16:

And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in

the second month, a very great congregation.

¹⁴ And they arose and took away the altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast *them* into the brook Kidron.

¹⁵ Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month [that is the day they were suppose to do it, and they did it]: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD.

¹⁶ And they stood in their place after their manner, **according to the law of Moses the man of God**: the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites.

They did it like they were supposed to, “according to the law of Moses the man of God.” They went back to the Law, and they found out how they were supposed to do it, and they did it, and they were ashamed that they hadn’t done it before. They had blown it for so long, but it didn’t matter, because now they were doing it right, and that is all that God cared about.

II Chronicles 30:17:

For *there were* many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one *that was* not clean, to sanctify *them* unto the LORD.

Every head of every household was supposed to butcher the Passover lamb for his family. It was the man’s responsibility to do that for his family. Now it just said that some of them were not sanctified, some of them were not clean, some of them had not gotten it together so that they could do it properly. So the Levites did it for them; they *covered* for one another. Don’t we do that in our own fellowships? Somebody has not got it together, so somebody else steps in and covers. We just do that; we help each other out.

II Chronicles 30:18a:

For a multitude of the people, *even* many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written...

They were trying to do it the way the Word said; they were trying to do it *as it was written*. But some of them could not do everything, so they did the best that they could.

II Chronicles 30:18b:

But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying...

Look at this beautiful prayer. He didn’t pray for hours; he did not fast and pray for hours, he just says:

II Chronicles 30:18c, 19:

...The good LORD pardon every one

Studies in Scriptural Integrity

¹⁹ *That* prepareth [*kun*] his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though *he be* not *cleansed* according to the purification of the sanctuary.

There's our word *kun* again. Are you seeing how God values preparation? These folks prepared their hearts the best they could and although they did not get all the details of the purification right, they tried their best. They did their best to come back and do it right. They were not able to do every jot and tittle of it, like they would have liked to, but they really had a heart to do their best. So Hezekiah asked God to just bless them anyhow. Look what happened.

II Chronicles 30:20:

And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

The LORD hearkened to Hezekiah and healed the people. That is what the Passover was for, that they would realize that they had forgiveness of sin, and healing of their diseases, and every year when they took the Passover, if they were sick, they ought to have gotten healed. And that is what happened here. Hezekiah asked God for an exception. "God, we are doing the best that we can. You take care of the rest." And, God hearkened to His Word and did it; He healed the people, and when they ate that lamb, they got the healing that they needed.

This gets to the fifth vital sign, the fellowship aspect:

II Chronicles 30:21a:

And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness...

Now, how would that be for a celebration? That is how it was supposed to be. Passover was a seven-day feast. They did it "with great gladness." They were so blessed; they were doing it right; they got the healing. They did the Word, and they received the benefit. They got the result God promised.

II Chronicles 30:21b:

... and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, *singing* with loud instruments unto the LORD.

They just had a party time, rejoicing, and singing praises to God. Verse 21 notes that the fellowship celebration was "day by day." When the Book of Acts talks about it, it uses "daily." They did it day by day; we do it daily. Then we know habit patterns are established properly. It isn't done according to convenience, but rather according to a disciplined lifestyle proceeding from the heart. We do the Word that's in our heart.

II Chronicles 30:22a:

And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites...

That word "comfortably" means that he spoke to their heart; he got to their heart. He spoke tenderly. He spoke from his heart, and it reached their hearts.

II Chronicles 30:22:

And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

He got to their hearts saying: “Man, you’ve got to teach the people. You have got to get out there and teach them. That is your responsibility. Get in there, and get there with them; get out amongst the people and teach; teach them...” and that is what they did. They were supposed to be teaching priests, that was their function (Ezra 7:10).

II Chronicles 30:23a:

And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days...

“Seven days is not enough. We are going to take another seven days! We are going to take 14 days, we are going to extend this party a little bit. We have not done it like this in years.” They hadn’t had the blessing of God, and each other’s fellowship like this for years. So they said: “Okay, let’s put it to vote. Does anyone want to do it for another week? Every one said, “Okay, we will do another week.” So they took another week.

II Chronicles 30:23b and 24:

... and they kept *other* seven days with gladness.

²⁴ For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

Look at his heart! “Do you want to party? I will take care of it. Do you need something to eat for seven days? Well, here are a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep.” And the princes gave too, not just Hezekiah. The princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and *ten* thousand sheep, and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

II Chronicles 30:25:

And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.

Look at how he mentions all of the groups again. He goes back through and puts them all together, and they all rejoice.

II Chronicles 30:26:

So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel *there was* not the like in Jerusalem.

It had been a long time since they fellowshiped like this, but they did it and there it was.

Studies in Scriptural Integrity

II Chronicles 30:27:

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.

Well, look at that wonderful occasion. They decided they were going to do what the Word says, and the Word says they ought to have a Passover. They knew they could not do it entirely properly, but God made a provision. “If we can’t do it the first month, then we will do it the second month,” and Hezekiah gets the word out. He gets all of the people together. Hezekiah saw and interceded for the people saying, “God bless, we are doing the best that we can. God, bless your people”; and so He did. And when they took the Passover, they were *healed*. They were *delivered*. They realized that their sins were forgiven. They realized that God was with them, *empowering* them, *taking care of them again*.

What a wonderful day that is in anyone’s life when they realize that before God, they are okay. Before God things are fine. God *loves* us. God cares about us, and He is blessing us. We get the evidence in our lives and in our walk... When we get it; you can testify to it. When we make it through the test we have a testimony. So give it!

What are they going to do for seven more days but give testimonies? “I got healed of this; I got healed of that” and everybody gives a testimony of what God has done. Isn’t it great to be together? I haven’t seen you in forty years. Where have you been? I have been up in Zebulun. I used to come here with my great-grandfather.

They spent their time together, and they were just so excited about doing The Word again. They did it together, and they encouraged each other, and they came together, and, man, that is when God is just so tickled! It says here, their prayer came up to his Holy dwelling place, even unto heaven. God just rejoiced to see his people so happy. He was so *thrilled* that His people were together again. They came back to worship Him. They came back to do The Word. They gave. They sent out posts. They witnessed and then they fellowshiped together. This was a place where their vital signs were together again. They were a healthy group of believers because they were doing it together. If one family didn’t have it together, remember, somebody stepped in and helped them. If they were not sanctified to do it, then somebody stepped up and helped them, and that was how they worked together.

II Chronicles 31:1a:

Now when all this was finished...

The two week celebration, not just the week long Passover; they kept another week, and they had a great time together.

II Chronicles 31:1:

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.

The people did it. Remember in I Kings, when we read it, it says that Hezekiah did it. It was during his reign, he may have instigated it and been responsible for it, but he did not carry out the actual doing of it. It was that the people who were so blessed after that time together that they went back and they said, “We are cleaning things up.” “We are getting rid of all these idols, all these groves; the Lord God is the only one.” They went back and got rid of all this stuff, and then they went home. But again, from God’s perspective, it was the actual people involved in doing it (all the people of the land), that went out. All the people that were there that went out, and had their lives changed, were the ones who actually did it.

II Chronicles 31:2 and 3:

And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites after their courses, [again this is all set up in the Old Testament] 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.

³ *He appointed* also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, *to wit*, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as *it is* written in the law of the LORD.

He went and did it just like it said to do it.

II Chronicles 30:4:

Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD.

He said, “Okay, bring the tithe back; that is what the Levites are supposed to live off of.” That was the inheritance of the Levites. All of the other 11 tribes had land and Joseph had a double portion for Ephraim and Manasseh. That was their inheritance; they had their portion, their acres, their part of the country. But the Levites portion was the tithe. So, he said, “Okay, bring their portion back in, and make sure you give, so that they might be encouraged in the Law of the Lord.”

Remember, his father Ahab had them shut the door of the house of the Lord. They had to go out and do something else; it wasn’t done that way anymore. But he wanted them to be encouraged, so that they can bring in the tithe, and they can live off of it, and they can be encouraged. They wouldn’t have to go find work in other places. They could do what God called them to do; the work of the ministry; they could be full-time ministers. You give so that you can have full-time ministers taking care of you, like that. That’s what they did here that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord.

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Remember it said, “And as soon as...” They didn’t have to beg them or convince them. They didn’t have to twist their arm or crack the whip. As soon as he said: “Look, bring the tithe.” they did. The priests and Levites are supposed to be full-time ministers; take care of them.

II Chronicles 31:5 and 6:

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.

Heaps! A little pile is not a heap. A heap is a big pile. They brought them by heaps.

II Chronicles 31:7:

In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished *them* in the seventh month.

They couldn’t even get around to getting it all done.

II Chronicles 31:8:

And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD, and his people Israel.

They came by; they are staying on top of it. They were checking it out, just to make sure it was done and done right.

II Chronicles 31:9 and 10a:

Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.

¹⁰ And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty...

Do you think that they were encouraged in the work of the Lord? That is what they were supposed to do. Remember verse four? “Bring it in so that they can be encouraged; so that their need can be met, and they can meet the needs of the people.” That is what happened. They brought the offering in.

II Chronicles 31:10b:

... for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left *is* this great store.

The Lord has blessed who? His people; they are the ones who gave. He knew that God was blessing His people, and they gave. That is always the heart of the ministers, (the full time ministers) that God’s people will be blessed by giving. “And that which is left is this great store.” Look at all that was left over. They didn’t use more than they needed; they laid it up in store.

II Chronicles 31:11:

Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare [*kun*] chambers in the house of the LORD; and they prepared [*kun*] *them*,

There is the word *kun* again; they had to prepare for the increase. God is bringing it in, and in abundance, so they had to be prepared. It is the same way in our fellowships; we prepare for the increase of people by bringing up other leaders. Then you have more people going full time, more people serving. More people as soon as the fellowship is ready. They made preparations here.

II Chronicles 31:12:

And brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated *things* faithfully: over which Cononiah the Levite *was* ruler, and Shimei his brother *was* the next.

Again look at all these people's names! It was their responsibility. God knows them by name. They were faithful and they are getting recognized.

II Chronicles 31:13:

And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, *were* overseers under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God.

Cononiah was over it all, and he set up other overseers. Then they had other people they were working with, too, who were overseeing.

II Chronicles 31:14 and 15:

And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the east, *was* over the freewill offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the LORD, and the most holy things.

¹⁵ And next him *were* Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the cities of the priests, in *their* set office, to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small:

They set it up so that everybody's need was met. Everyone was taken care of, and everyone was blessed.

II Chronicles 31:16 and 17:

Beside their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, *even* unto every one that entereth into the house of the LORD, his daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses;

¹⁷ Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges by their courses;

This is only talking about the people who were supposed to live off of the tithe. That was to be their job; that was how they were to minister, and then they set it up that way, and they made sure that everybody had what they needed.

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II Chronicles 31:18 and 19:

And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness:

¹⁹ Also of the sons of Aaron the priests, *which were* in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.

They took note of everybody, and made sure that everybody had what they needed. Then these next two verses are a summation. It is a figure of speech called *Symperasma*, and here God summarizes the first 14 years of Hezekiah's reign. Remember, in Kings it only had 12 verses. It just handled it briefly; it covered it. Here it took 84 verses to go through it all; to say everything that went on during this time. And again, God puts all of this detail in, because the preparation was important. They came back to the Word and did things God's way and were blessed.

From God's perspective, it is the reform and the revival, what went on in the preparation that made future results available. It is because of the heart, and the setting up the foundation, and doing things properly, and making sure it was done right. Then when the adversary came and attacked, God was able to deliver.

II Chronicles 31:20 and 21:

And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought *that which was* good and right and truth before the LORD his God.

²¹ 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.

That is the key, folks; the key to all of our lives: If we do it with all of our heart, God will prosper us. No half stepping, no holding back, no fear and wondering. We just do it with all of our heart; ALL of our heart. When we act that way, just like Hezekiah did, we are going to prosper. That is one of the greatest keys of prosperity that I know; that we live for God with all of our heart.

II Chronicles 32:1a:

After these things, and the establishment thereof...

"After these things, and the establishment thereof..." Again from God's point of view, what Hezekiah has done here in turning the nation around and bringing everybody back is what makes available what is going to happen next. But we will wait until our next session before getting into it. God bless.

Chapter 3: The Siege in Chronicles

In the last two sessions we looked at the first 14 years of Hezekiah's reign. We saw how he prepared the people and they returned to worship the One True God. Let's review by going back and reading the summary at the end of chapter 31.

II Chronicles 31:20 and 21:

And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought *that which was* good and right and truth before the LORD his God.

²¹ 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.

That is the summary of the first 14 years. God specifies that everything that went on during these first 14 years established important habit patterns for God's people. This wasn't just a one time activity; living "it is written" became an established way of life.

Now as we begin the section on the siege we read....

II Chronicles 32:1a:

After these things, [What we read the last two sessions in chapters 29-31.] and the establishment thereof....

"After these things, and the establishment thereof..." Their faithfulness to come back and do it right is important. They established their hearts on the truth. The establishment of correct habit patterns of the believers' vital signs was significant. Again from God's point of view, what Hezekiah has done here in turning the nation around and bringing everybody back is what makes available what is going to happen when the siege begins.

II Chronicles 32:1b-3:

...Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.

² And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come [he was on his way], 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.

He said: "Now we've got a lot of springs coming up, a lot of water around the city, now we have to stop them; because when they get here, they don't need to have that water." So he is making preparation. Again, you just see that preparation is so important here.

II Chronicles 32:4:

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?"

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The Israelites knew where it was, and they could dig it out later. They said “Well, if he is going to come, he’s going to go thirsty around here, or he is going to have to bring his water from a long distance.” They are preparing, and they are thinking, and God is working with them.

II Chronicles 32:5:

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 [strengthened] Millo *in* the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

They are preparing for war. They fixed the city; they shored the wall up; they made the fortifications, and made sure it was strong. This is more preparation.

II Chronicles 32:6:

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,

Remember that happened earlier in the account. It means he spoke to their heart. He spoke from his heart, and he reached their heart. He comforted them with words, with words of encouragement from God’s Word. We did not see this in Kings. From God’s point of view it’s the ministering of the Word of God that makes the difference. Look what he says:

II Chronicles 32:7:

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:

It sounds like when Elijah was confronted by the Syrian king’s army.¹⁰ Now, Hezekiah is dealing with the Assyrian army. When the Syrian King came to get Elisha in Dothan, they surrounded the city. Elisha and his servant were outside, and his servant freaks out and says, “Oh no, we are surrounded. What are we going to do?” So Elisha says, “Okay Lord, open his eyes.” So, God opened the servant’s eyes, and he saw horses and chariots of fire around Elisha, taking care of him. That is why Elisha said, “there be more with us, than be with him.” Again, when God is on your side you do not have to worry. That is what Hezekiah is saying: “Do not be afraid of all this multitude that is with him, because there be more with us than with him.”

II Chronicles 32:8:

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.

They rested themselves, they stayed. He was a stronghold for his people in time of trouble. He did not budge. He did not waver. He did not quake with fear. He knew what to do; he acted decisively; he prepared with strength. Then he spoke God’s Word to the people: “Do not be afraid. God is on our side. God is going to take care of us.” Hezekiah knew it, and he meant it. God’s Word is what made the difference.

Victory Under Siege

The Siege in Chronicles

Hezekiah told the people that God was on their side to fight for them. That's what the law said in at least four places.

Exodus 14:14:

The LORD shall fight for you....

Deuteronomy 1:30a:

The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you....

Deuteronomy 3:22:

Ye shall not fear them: for the LORD your God he shall fight for you.

Deuteronomy 20:4:

For the LORD your God *is* he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

He comforted them by speaking God's Word to them.

The first eight verses of chapter 32 still deal with the preparation that Hezekiah made before the siege. However in verse nine the details of the siege begin. God handles the siege in just fifteen verses.

II Chronicles 32:9:

After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he *himself laid siege* against Lachish, and all his power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that *were* at Jerusalem, saying,

Sennacherib didn't actually get to Jerusalem yet. He remained at Lachish about 30 miles SW of Jerusalem. Instead he sent his servants on ahead to speak for him and intimidate the people. Following is the message they deliver for him.

II Chronicles 32:10 and 11:

Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, '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?

Hezekiah was saying what the Word said. What better reason could they have for trusting him? They trusted Hezekiah because he spoke the words of the Lord.

II Chronicles 32:10-12a:

Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars...

Hezekiah did not take away Jehovah's altars and high places. He removed the fake ones, the ones dedicated to false gods, like Baal. It was all the idols that were removed. The enemy didn't have any idea of what he was talking about. He never does. He just speaks lies, and it seems like the bigger the lie the better.

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II Chronicles 32:12b-14:

... 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?

“None of the other gods of their nations delivered them. Do you think your God is going to be any different?” That is what he is saying. He didn't think so. But they did.

II Chronicles 32:15a:

Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him....

Hezekiah did not deceive them. He spoke the Word of God to them. He comforted them with the truth. He gave them God's Word; he provided the only thing that they could rest on, rely upon, believe in – God's Word.

II Chronicles 32:15 and 16:

... 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?”

¹⁶ And his servants spake yet *more* against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah.

Again, that is God's perspective; if you speak against his servants you speak against God.

II Chronicles 32:17 and 18a:

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.

They spoke to the people to make them afraid, and they know that if they made them afraid, they would get in. That's what the adversary still does; he tries to instill fear. “Well, you can't do that.” “That will never work.” “That has never happened before.” He just tries to make us afraid. “You can't do it.” Well, again, this is God's perspective. He tells us what they were after. They were trying to make them afraid with all their speaking.

II Chronicles 32:19 and 20:

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.

²⁰ And for this *cause* Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.

They went to God about it. It is real simple here, from God's point of view. It doesn't have all the details that we will find in Kings later. What Hezekiah and Isaiah do is handled in one verse in Chronicles.

II Chronicles 32:21:

And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.

The angel came and destroyed all of his mighty men, and sent him home in shame. Then when he gets home, his own kids killed him.

II Chronicles 32:22:

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.

“Guided” is the same Hebrew word used in Psalm 23:2b and 3a where it is translated “leadth.”

Psalms 23:2b and 3a:

... He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul:

³ He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

That is how God did it. He tenderly walked them through the difficulties. He is the Shepherd Who takes care of His flock.

II Chronicles 32:23 and 24a:

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.

²⁴ In those days Hezekiah was sick...

That begins part three which we will not get to. But there it is in 23 verses. If we take out the first eight verses that deal with what Hezekiah did in preparation before the siege it was handled in just 15 verses. Again, it sums it up. What happened? The Assyrians came and spoke evil. Hezekiah and Isaiah prayed and cried to God. God says “You can't speak that way about Me.” and then He sent the angel and wrought the deliverance.

Chapter 4: The Siege in Kings

Now let's go back to II Kings, chapter 18, and we will read the story from man's point of view. We will see the people working together. We will see that there is a lot of intrigue and drama. We will see how the adversary worked the people over; how he tried to instill fear.

II Kings 18:13,14a:

Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

¹⁴ And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, "I have offended; return from me...."

"Did I offend you? Did I do something wrong? Why don't you go on back home?"

II Kings 18:14b:

... that which thou putttest on me will I bear...

I'll keep paying the tribute, how much do you want. He tried to buy him off. If I will give you the money will you return home and leave us alone.

II Kings 18:14b-16:

And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

This is a five senses solution that is not even mentioned in Chronicles. This wasn't even worth mentioning from God's point of view. He would rather forget about this. It had worked before, back in II Kings 12:18, and back in II Kings 16:8 and 9, but it wasn't going to work here.

II Kings 18:17-20a:

And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field.

¹⁸ And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

¹⁹ And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

²⁰ Thou sayest, (but *they are but* vain words,)...

“They are not going to do you any good. I know what you are saying, but it will not do you any good.” The devil will always promote that. That it is vain to do God’s Word. That it will not do what God says it will. That God’s promises are empty, vain and worthless.

II Kings 18:20b-22a:

I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

²¹ Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, *even* upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

²² 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?

They did not know what they were talking about. It was all the idols that Hezekiah and the people took down.

II Kings 18:23a:

Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria...

He wants some hostages. “Give me slaves; give me some people.” He is trying to buy his way in. He is trying to convince them to give him some people. “Give me your best, give me some hostages.”

II Kings 18:23b:

... and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

What belittling sarcasm. I will give you some horses, but it will do you little good since you will not be able to put riders on them.

II Kings 18:24:

How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

“Do not rely on Egypt.” Of course they *weren't* relying on Egypt, but that is what the Assyrians thought.

II Kings 18:25:

Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

Oh my goodness. What lies! He says, “God is on my side.” “The Lord is the one that told me to come take you.” That is just a lie; that is a lie designed to instill fear. “Do you think God is going to deliver you? God is the one that sent me to do this. God told me to come and destroy

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you.” The people had a choice. They could believe their lies, or they could believe what Hezekiah was telling them.

II Kings 18:26:

Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand *it*: and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

Hezekiah sent these three people out to see what they had to say. The Syrians are speaking to the people in Hebrew. So they said, “Don’t talk Hebrew, the people can understand.” He didn’t want the people to hear all of this junk that they were saying. So he said “Speak Aramaic (which was Syrian, it is the same as Estrangelo Aramaic), we understand that.”

II Kings 18:27:

But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

That’s crass. That’s rude. That’s a bit dramatic wouldn’t you say. In other words, you are going to be in rough shape. But he says “I know, and you know, and we are here to let everybody hear what’s going to happen.” Again, from Chronicles God told us the reason they spoke this way. It was to bring fear, to make them afraid, and to trouble them. So, that is why they did it.

II Kings 18:28:

Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria:

This is a real insult to God. In Psalm 47:2, Jehovah our God is referred to as the great King. They never refer to a man as the great King. Jehovah was the great King. Here, the King of Assyria was referring to himself as the great King.

II Kings 18:29:

Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

Again, they have to attack the leader. Hezekiah was the one that spoke God’s Word to the people. From Chronicles we learned that Hezekiah spoke comfortably to them; he spoke to their heart, and they rested upon his words. Now the enemy says you can’t trust his words. Hezekiah was the one who got them back on the Word, and he spoke God’s Word to his leadership. Hezekiah told them the Word of God was going to bring them through. So they have to attack him, and destroy his credibility. And that is what happened here. “Don’t let him deceive you.”

II Kings 18:30 and 31:

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.

³¹ Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make *an agreement* with

me by a present, and come out to me, and *then* eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

He is trying to incite an insurrection. He is trying to incite a rebellion. “Don’t do what Hezekiah says, come on out.” “Come on, join me.” “Come on out of the city.” “Make an agreement with me.” “Give me some money.” “Buy your way out.” “And you can... look, oh, look! All your food is out here in the fields.” “Look at all the figs out here.” “Look at all the vines.” “Come on out and eat it.” “Surrender to me.”

II Kings 18:32a:

Until I come and take you away...

He was going to go down to Egypt, and get them on the way back. “When I come back I will pick you up.”

II Kings 18:32b:

... to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die:

He has a new plan for the children of Israel. “Give me all of your money, and come be my slaves.” Is that the best they could expect? He gives them two options. Be slaves or die. That’s how the devil works. He limits your options; he presents only the options he wants you to consider. Either would be fine with him, but neither is fine with God. The third option is to believe the Word of God that Hezekiah is speaking to them.

People will sell themselves into slavery because of fear. Any existence is better than no existence, right? Forget what God’s promises are. Remember God told Joshua that if he would be strong and courageous His Word would guarantee his success.

Joshua 1:6-9:

Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

⁷ Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to* the right hand or *to* the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

⁹ Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Hezekiah had returned them to the Word. They had established the worship of the One True God again. They just needed to be courageous and not quit... not sell themselves into slavery... not succumb to fear and end up slaves.

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II Kings 18:32c-34:

... and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

³³ Hath 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 Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

“Samaria, remember weren’t they Jews?” “Didn’t they worship the same God that you did?” It didn’t help them. What makes you any different from them? Well, what made them different? Remember from Chronicles, they returned unto God and made a covenant with Him.

II Chronicles 32:35:

Who *are* they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

“How is that going to happen?” “That is not going to happen.” “He is not any different than any of these other gods.”

II Chronicles 32:36:

But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: [Why?] for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

Man, that’s great! What happened when Eve started answering the serpent? That was the first step down. Don’t consider and don’t respond. The king said, “Don’t you say anything.” They followed his instruction. He had earned their trust. They had just had all of that rejoicing, they were doing the Passover again, and they were excited. They had torn down all of the groves, and the instruction that he gives them, they do. They had reestablished the priesthood and the Levites. How is that for like-mindedness? He asked them to do something, and they all did it!

II Chronicles 32:37:

Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

They were on the wall; they spoke to Rabshakeh. Now they go back to Hezekiah, and tell him what was said.

II Kings 19:1-3a:

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 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.

^{3a} And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah,

Hezekiah sends them to see Isaiah, the man of God. He wanted to know what the Lord had to say so he sends them to Isaiah to find out. This is what Hezekiah tells them to say:

II Kings 19:3:

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 [to be delivered].

“We are just getting everything together. We are just getting our nation back on its feet. And it is like we are going to die in child birth. We haven’t even gotten it started yet and he is trying to wipe us out.”

II Kings 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.

Pray for us. He said: “Isaiah, we are doing the best we can; you pray for us. Maybe God has heard these words and will reprove them.”

II Kings 19:5:

So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

They did what he had asked and delivered the message. Isaiah’s response was full of instruction and encouragement.

II Kings 19:6 and 7:

And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master [Hezekiah], 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.

Isaiah’s response was, “Thus saith the Lord....” That’s what really matters. Remember Psalms 107:20, “He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.” Isaiah delivers the Word that will provide their deliverance. Isaiah sends the word back to Hezekiah. Do not be afraid, I am going to send a blast and he is going to go home and get blasted himself.

II Kings 19:8-10a:

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

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,

^{10a} Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee...

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Again, the same lies. Only now it is not just Hezekiah who is being accused of being deceitful; they accuse God Himself of the same deceit.

II Kings 19:10b and 11:

...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?

The same thing happens today. The devil tells us our God cannot deliver; He cannot supply. The devil tries to instill fear saying: “Everybody is losing their jobs; unemployment is going way up.” “You will never find a job.” Well, I do not care if anybody else in the country has work, we will have work, if we want it. Like the Judeans here, we must not succumb to the fear.

They try to instill fear, saying, “No other gods have been able to deliver; don’t think yours will.” This is the same stuff that they had said before. They just repeat it over and over again, to bring and instill fear.

II Kings 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.

First, he sent word to Isaiah, this second time he gets it, he just goes to the temple himself. He already got the Word from Isaiah. He knows he needs to believe what Isaiah told him. He knows that’s the truth. He knows that’s the Word God sent to deliver him. He knows he needs to rest upon it. He just continues to take believing action. He takes the letter, and he lays it right up there in front of God.

II Kings 19:15-19:

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.

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.

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.

What a prayer! He prays, “Only you are the real God. You are the only one that can do it. None of the other countries were able to do it. You can do it. We can’t do it. We can’t muster an army. We did our best to put up our defenses; we made more darts; we made more spears; we got our shields ready. But there is no way that we can defeat these people.” Hezekiah is saying, “God, you have got to do it.”

II Kings 19:19:

Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, [Why?] that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

The reason all the kingdoms of the earth would know is because God would do it and God's people would testify about it. They would declare to the world the mighty hand of their God to deliver. They would sing the praises of their God to every one.

He went and prayed in the temple. He didn't say save us because we deserve it. He said save us so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only. Hezekiah knew that he worshipped the one and only true God. Hezekiah knew that He had a reputation to live up to. God does things like this, so that people know He's God.

II Kings 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.

Isn't that great? "I heard your prayer." Isaiah wasn't in the Temple; he didn't hear the prayer, but God did. God then tells Isaiah to let Hezekiah know that He heard it. So Hezekiah gets word from Isaiah: "God heard your prayer, and here's His answer." This establishes the deliverance.

II Kings 19:21:

This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee [Sennacherib], *and* laughed thee [Sennacherib] to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

The wagging of the head indicates that Sennacherib would encounter calamity. They are laughing at his words. God has promised to bring them back upon himself. God has reversed the words of Sennacherib which were designed to instill fear.

II Kings 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].

What a wonderful name for the Lord, "the Holy *One* of Israel." Sennacherib had no idea Whom he was speaking against. He was talking about the Lord God Almighty, Who would not let what he said go unanswered.

II Kings 19:23-28:

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.

²⁴ I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all

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the rivers of besieged places.

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.

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.

²⁷ But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

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.

There he goes! Just like a horse led by his bridle. He puts a hook in his nose and turns him around and sends him home.

II Kings 19:29a:

And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year...

This is God's promise to them. This will be the sign. You'll know what happened because you will eat...

II Kings 19:29b:

... 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.

He is promising them that this deliverance is going to last. "In three years you will be planting crops, and you will be doing your own harvest, and you do not have to worry about Sennacherib anymore."

II Kings 19:30:

And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

He said, "You guys are coming back. You are the remnant. You are doing my Word, and you are going to get rooted and grounded."

II Kings 19:31 and 32:

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.

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.

That is how they would overcome the walls. They would just bring dirt, build a bank against a wall, and build it up unto the top of the wall. Then, they would just march over it. He said,

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The Siege in Kings

“You do not have to worry. They are not even going to shoot an arrow at you. They are not going to cast a bank. They are not going to do anything.”

II Kings 19:33-35a:

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.

^{35a} And it came to pass that night...

Amazing... within 24 hours. God can perform His Word and do it right now. He can do it today. He is a very present help in the time of trouble and He can deliver right now.

II Kings 19:35b:

... that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand:

One hundred and eighty-five thousand people were no longer a problem, and the men of Israel did not have to raise one sword. They did not have to do anything, except believe God and take it to Him. Hezekiah took it to God. He took it to Isaiah and said, “What do we do?” Isaiah told him, “Don’t be afraid.” It came again, he took it to the Lord and laid the letter out and said, “Do you hear what he says, Lord? Do you hear what he says about you? Are you going to let him speak this way about you, God?” And then Hezekiah got his answer. Isaiah said, “Oh no, I am not going to let him say that. I am going to take care of you. I am going to defend this city and he is not even going to shoot an arrow at you. You are not even going to have to dodge one bullet.” I tell you, God is able to deliver.

II Kings 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 [the rest of them] arose early in the morning, behold, they [That is the one hundred and eighty-five thousand] *were* all dead corpses.

They got up and said, “They are dead; the rest of the army is dead.” They just had a handful left.

II Kings 19:36a:

So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed...

I guess he would depart. You wake up in the morning and two thirds of your army is wiped out. And he departed:

II Kings 19:36b and 37a:

... 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...

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He is worshipping his god when he gets the axe. He boasted that “no god can deliver you from me”, and “I am the great King. I am the great King Sennacherib.” “No god can save anybody from me...”, and he is in his own temple worshipping his own god...

II Kings 19:37b:

... 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.

He died just like God said; his own kids killed him. But again, that is God’s deliverance. And we see all those verses in Kings describing it, and the Isaiah account is almost identical to II Kings. We could have looked at it there, too. But these enemies come together and they speak words to instill fear, to make us afraid that we cannot do it. Every time they did, Hezekiah went to God with it. He went to Isaiah; he sent word to Isaiah. The next time he went to the Temple, and he laid it out before God. But he took his concerns right to God. And he said, “God, you can do this. Do not let him say these words. Do not let him defile you. You are the living God. You are the only one that can deliver.” Then God sent word back: “I am going to do it.” Then, of course, God did it.

I think it was so neat that God gave the Word first. Remember previously, when we got into that account about Elisha and the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem;¹¹ they were waiting for the Word, and then Elisha got The Word and said, “You know, within 24 hours you are going to have an abundance of food”.¹² And then it came to pass. Again, the Word came first. Isaiah sent word, saying, “This is what is going to happen.” And they had to believe that. They had to claim that. They had to believe for that to happen. And when they got the Word, they believed it, and then it happened just like God said.

The picture He painted was that of putting a hook in his nose, or putting a bridle on, and leading him around like a dumb horse, like a dumb animal. That is what God did. He sent him home, and when he gets home it happens just like God said. So folks, we never have anything to be afraid of. God will always deliver us. The preparation that we make in life, (like Hezekiah did that we read about it in Chronicles, where they reinstated the worship, they did the Word, they gave, they witnessed, they fellowshiped, all that stuff done in preparation), can set the ground work for this. Then when the words of fear came, they weren’t afraid. You would have to be stupid to not be tempted to fear, and they were. Hezekiah knew this. He said, “If You do not do something God, it’s curtains for us. This host is much greater than us. If we have to fight them, you know it does not look good by the five senses.” But, we cannot be deceived by the five senses. We are not deceived by what we see, because we have this Word of God on which we rely.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

We have a Word of God that God speaks to us. It's His truth, and we believe it, and He brings it to pass. When they received that Word from Isaiah, saying how He was going to deliver, and He wasn't going to let anyone talk against Him, and, that he would send them home, and that Sennacherib would die in his own land. They believed it, and God did it. He performed His Word on their behalf. It is this Word that always provides for us. God made it that simple; we just need to believe it. Then we can have this great abundance.

We have it so much better in our day and time. We are born again of incorruptible seed. We have holy spirit to manifest. So much of the work we do in preparation is by reading our Word and manifesting the spirit. Speaking in tongues accomplishes so much. We worship God in spirit and in truth by speaking in tongues. We have constant proof in the senses world of God's presence and power in our lives because we can at any moment speak in tongues and be assured that God is at work in us to will and do of His good pleasure. Hezekiah and his people could not speak in tongues; they did not have that available. We can make perfect prayer; we can praise God with words that He gives us to say to Him. We can say all the wonderful things we want to tell God about how great He is, and about how magnificent He is... Every time we try to do it with our understanding, we fumble over our words, and we do not know quite what to say, as to how to thank Him like we want... But, when we speak in tongues we know we are doing that, because He is giving us the words. He is giving us what to say, so that we can thank Him perfectly, so that we can praise Him perfectly. When we speak those words, we do not know what we are saying, but we know in our hearts that we are giving thanks well. I want to thank God and I do not know how to do it, so I just speak in tongues, I sing in tongues. When I want to pray for you, I speak in tongues. Even though I don't know what's going on in your life, God does, and when I speak in tongues, He gives me the words to say and how to pray for you. It's just so fantastic that we have this available in our administration.

This Word provides everything we need, folks. That is my joy: to always do the best that I can to make it known; to say it and to speak it. If you do, God will back you up. God will never let His Word fall to the ground. God saves for His own sake, because He is God.

When we are under siege, God can change things drastically, immediately. There is no onslaught from our adversaries that can stand before our God. God saves because He is God and He is faithful to His Word. What an example Hezekiah set for us. He led God's people to victory under siege. Let's follow his example and lead God's people to victory today.

We prepare for the crises long before they arrive, building and establishing habit patterns of trust in God and confidence in His Word. Then when crises arise we work together encouraging one another, reminding one another of the truth of God's Word. The Word of God sent to heal and deliver.

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The Word talks about the life of Samuel at the end of I Samuel chapter 3. Samuel was just a young lad when he got started, but he became a great prophet of the Lord. And it says in verse 19 of I Samuel 3:

I Samuel 3:19-21:

And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

²⁰ And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel *was* established *to be* a prophet of the LORD.

²¹ And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

And that is how God will reveal himself to you; by the Word of the Lord. If we keep our heads and hearts in the Book, we will learn about our God. We will know His power to deliver. We will know His power to change things. He is the Lord God who created the heavens and the earth, and there is nothing too hard for Him. So that is the challenge before us; to not let the world pattern our thinking, but to let the Word pattern our thinking. We must establish our thoughts upon His Word. So let's learn the lesson of Hezekiah and take our petitions to the Lord. He's willing to fight our battles, and there's nothing too hard for Him.

Endnotes:

1. Wierwille, Victor Paul, *The Word's Way*, "Viewpoints: God's and Man's" American Christian Press p 109-130.
2. Walvoord, John F. and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, N.T.*, Chariot Victor Publishing, 1983. p. 75.
3. Luke 10:27.
4. Another example of the two viewpoints is found in the account of JEHOSHAPHAT, King of Judah in I Kings 22 and II Chronicles 20. See the *The Word's Way*, "Viewpoints: God's and Man's" for a presentation of the more lengthy account.
5. Isaiah 36:1-37:38 is a third account of the siege which is also a part of the prophets division of the Old Testament. It is very similar to the record in Kings.
6. Matthew 1:9,10
7. Read Deuteronomy 11 sometime and see what God promised to do when His people kept His commandments.
8. II Chronicles 29:2, 15, 25; 30:6, 16, 19; 31:2, 16, 25; 32:25.
9. II Chronicles 29:19, 35, 36; 30:19; 31:11².
10. II Kings 6:8ff.
11. II Kings 6:24ff
12. II Kings 7:1

