

BECAUSE YOU HAVE PRAYED TO ME...

2 Kings 18:1-37; 19:1-37

These two chapters of 2 Kings are filled with amazing actions by God and by His people and their king, Hezekiah. The way that Sennacherib, King of Assyria and Rabshakeh his chief officer flaunt their arrogance and 'bravado' give us insight on how to deal the enemy in our day. If these things weren't enough, we also find a profound 'prayer weapon' in these verses that everyone can use and benefit from.

- ***Hezekiah becomes king of Judah.***
 - ***He is 25 years old and he will reign for 29 years.***
 - ***He does right in God's sight.***
 - ***He broke down 'high places', tore down 'sacred pillars', destroyed the Asherah and tore up the Nehushtan, the bronze serpent Moses made and the people of Israel turned it into an idol and burnt incense to it.***
 - ***He trusted in the Lord, obeyed Him, and followed His commandments.***
 - ***God was with Him and helped him in battle.***
 - ***He rebelled against Assyria and did not serve their king.***
 - ***Israel was taken into exile by the Assyrians because they failed to listen to the Lord, listen to the covenant as Moses instructed and act on it.***
 - ***Judah was still in their own land but now the Assyrians are coming after Judah.***

¹³ Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them. ¹⁴ Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong. Withdraw from me; whatever you impose on me I will bear." So the king of Assyria required of Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. ¹⁵ Hezekiah gave him all the silver which was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasuries of

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the king's house. ¹⁶ At that time Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the doorposts which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria. ¹⁷ Then the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rab-saris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a large army to Jerusalem. So they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they went up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway of the fuller's field. ¹⁸ When they called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, came out to them. 2 Kings 18:13-18 NASB

- ***Hezekiah tries to 'buy' their way out of a war (it doesn't work!).***
 - ***Eleven tons of silver.***
 - ***One ton of gold.***
 - ***The Assyrian army wanted more!***
- ***Hezekiah is in desperate trouble now.***

¹⁹ Then Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, "What is this confidence that you have? ²⁰ You say (but they are only empty words), 'I have counsel and strength for the war.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me? ²¹ Now behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on Egypt; on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. ²² But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'? ²³ Now therefore, come, make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. ²⁴ How then can you repulse one official of the least of my master's servants, and rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? ²⁵ Have I now come up without

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the LORD's approval against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.' 2 Kings 18:19-25 NASB

- ***Rabshakeh taunts and shames Hezekiah.***
 - ***Note: in v19, he calls out Hezekiah by his name, not his title, but he refers to his king as 'the great king of Assyria.'***
- ***He chides Hezekiah with having Egypt as his military ally.***
- ***He chides the people in Judah for believing and trusting in Hezekiah and challenges them to 'line up' with Sennacherib and join up with him.***
- ***He claims that God sent him to Judah (v25) to destroy them.***

²⁶ Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna and Joah, said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak with us in Judean in the hearing of the people who are on the wall." ²⁷ But Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

²⁸ Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean, saying, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. ²⁹ Thus says the king, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from my hand; ³⁰ nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." ³¹ Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria, "Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern, ³² until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live and not die." But do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." ³³ Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ³⁴ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria from my

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hand? ³⁵ Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?" ³⁶ But the people were silent and answered him not a word, for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him." ³⁷ Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of Rabshakeh. 2 Kings 18:26-37 NASB

- **Hezekiah's leaders try to get Rabshakeh to speak Aramaic so that the people would not be able to understand him...this just makes his message louder and more intense.**
 - **"Don't let Hezekiah deceive you." (v29)**
 - **"Don't let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord." (v30)**
- **Rabshakeh is playing 'Let's make a deal' with the people of Judah.**
- **He tells them that every army of every country and their gods were no match for the king and his armies.**
- **Hezekiah's staff tear their clothes and report to Hezekiah.**

And when King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and entered the house of the LORD. ² Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. ³ They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and rejection; for children have come to birth and there is no strength to deliver. ⁴ Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.'" ⁵ So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. ⁶ Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD, "Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷ Behold, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own land. And I will make him fall by the sword in his own land." Sennacherib Defies God

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⁸ Then Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. ⁹ When he heard them say concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, "Behold, he has come out to fight against you," he sent messengers again to Hezekiah saying, ¹⁰ "Thus you shall say to Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you saying, "Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." ¹¹ Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, destroying them completely. So will you be spared? ¹² Did the gods of those nations which my fathers destroyed deliver them, even Gozan and Haran and Rezech and the sons of Eden who were in Telassar? ¹³ Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, and of Hena and Ivvah?' 2 Kings 19:1-13 NASB

- ***Hezekiah's men go to the prophet and Hezekiah goes into the temple.***
- ***Isaiah tells them that the Lord will deal with Rabshakeh and Sennacherib will not be able to follow through on their words and he tells Hezekiah not to be afraid.***
- ***Rabshakeh sends a fresh batch of 'terrorist letters' to Hezekiah.***

¹⁴ Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. ¹⁵ Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁶ Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. ¹⁷ Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands ¹⁸ and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. ¹⁹ Now, O LORD our God, I pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O LORD, are God."

God's Answer through Isaiah

²⁰ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of

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Assyria, I have heard you.' ²¹ This is the word that the LORD has spoken against him:

'She has despised you and mocked you, the virgin daughter of Zion; She has shaken her head behind you; the daughter of Jerusalem! 2 Kings 19:14-20 NASB

- ***Hezekiah spreads out the threatening letter from Rabshakeh before the Lord and prays.***
 - ***He proclaims God as God and asks for His delivering power.***
 - ***Isaiah informs Hezekiah that God has all this under control. (v20)***
 - ***We will come back and 'exercise'. (v20)***
 - ***God forecasts Sennacherib and Assyria's demise. (v21-34)***
 - ***"I will defend this city to save it for My own sake..." (v34)***

³⁵ Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead. ³⁶ So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home, and lived at Nineveh. ³⁷ It came about as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place. 2 Kings 19:35-37 NASB

- ***The Angel of the Lord eliminates 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night.***
 - ***This sends Sennacherib back home.***
 - ***He was worshipping his false god and two men come and take his life, thus ending anymore threats or blasphemous taunts towards Hezekiah and Judah.***
 - ***Note: This takes place 20 years after the initial threats given to Hezekiah.***

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Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you.' 2 Kings 19:20 NASB

Look what the Bible says delivered the people of God.

"Because you have prayed to Me about _____, I have heard you."

This tremendous act of God came simply because Hezekiah prayed...you can do the same...fill in the blank and pray about your 'issue' until you know you have been heard.