

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

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

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

**2Kings 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.

This is another one of those unfortunate chapter breaks; the narrative continues from the previous chapter.

When Hezekiah heard what Rabshakeh had said, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and immediately went to the temple. He sent Eliakim, Shebna and the elders of the priests—all clothed in sackcloth—to deliver a message to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. Yes, this is the same Isaiah that is recorded in scripture.

The message basically said: Today is a day of anguish, chastisement and scorn (all from the Hebrew). It can be compared to a mother trying to give birth, but is too weak to do so. Maybe the LORD your God has heard how the king of Assyria blasphemed him in the message delivered by Rabshakeh and will prove him wrong. Please pray for those of us who are left.

That the king described the day as one of rebuke or chastisement is an admission of Judah's sin before the LORD—and maybe even of his own sin in not turning first to the LORD before seeking the support of Egypt.

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

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

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

After the king's delegation had delivered the king's message to Isaiah, he sent the following response (my paraphrase): The LORD says not to be afraid because of the words of the king of Assyria whereby he showed such disrespect for me. I will send a rumor to him that will make him have to return home. He will die by the sword in his own land.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meanwhile, Rabshakeh had gone back to report to the king of Assyria. He had heard that the king had left Lachish and was doing battle against Libnah. Sennacherib also got word that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was one his way to attack him. In light of that news, he sent another message back to Hezekiah.

That message (in letter form) basically said: Don't let the LORD your God that you trust deceive you and make you think that Jerusalem will escape from me. You have heard how I have utterly destroyed other lands. Do you really think you will be the only one to escape? Have the gods of these other nations been able to rescue them from my fathers and me? Consider Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, the children of Eden in Thelasar. What about the kings of Hamath, of Arpad, of Sepharvaim, of Hena and of Ivah?

**2Kings 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.

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

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

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

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

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

When Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it, he immediately went to the temple and spread it out before the LORD. Then he prayed a prayer that basically said: O LORD God of Israel, You who dwell between the cherubims (a reference to the ark of the covenant in the temple), I know that You alone are God and are sovereign over ALL the kingdoms on earth

because You are the Creator. LORD, please listen to me; please look at what Sennacherib wrote in this letter and see how he blasphemed You yet again. However, he is telling the truth, LORD. The kings of Assyria have destroyed many nations and their lands. They have burned the idols of their gods. I know that those idols were only objects made by man and were not really gods; that's why they could destroy them. Please, O LORD "our" God, I beg you to rescue us from this king so that all the kingdoms on earth will KNOW that You are the LORD God, the only true God.

The NIV Commentary made an important observation: "True believers are concerned in every situation that the character and reputation of God not be brought into disrepute; rather, they long that God be glorified for who he is as well as for what he has done."

**2Kings 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.**

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

**2Kings 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.***

The LORD evidently immediately sent an answer to the prophet Isaiah to deliver to Hezekiah. The message basically said: I have heard your prayer. This is what I have declared against Sennacherib. The virgin daughter of Zion, (a reference to Jerusalem) is in no way threatened by you. She mocks you. Do you realize Whom you have insulted and blasphemed? Do you realize Whom you have so loudly and arrogantly mocked? He is the Holy One of Israel.

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

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

The LORD's message continues: Through your messengers you have blasphemed Me and exalted yourself. You have bragged that with your many chariots you have gone up Lebanon's highest mountains and cut down its tallest and best cedar and fir trees. You brag that you have conquered it all, even the forest of Carmel. You brag that you have dug wells and drunk the water of foreign lands and even caused the rivers of the strongest cities to dry up so that I (and my troops implied) could get to them on dry ground.

In other words, Sennacherib thought he was invincible.

Note: Several translations based on other manuscripts equate “besieged places” with Egypt.

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

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

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

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

The LORD’s message continues: Haven’t you heard that I planned long ago for what you are doing. It was my plan for you to become such a mighty conqueror; you are just an instrument in my hand. It was because it was My will that you were able to destroy so many strongly fortified cities. They fell before you like grass under your feet. BUT—I know where you are at all times; I know how you blaspheme and disrespect me. Because I have heard you treat me with such dishonor, I am going to put a hook in your nose and a bridle in your lips that will make you have to return home.

Guzik provides this historical note: “This was an especially dramatic statement, because this is exactly how the Assyrians cruelly marched those whom they forced to relocate out of their conquered lands. They lined up the captives, and drove a large fishhook through the lip or the nose of each captive, strung them all together and marched them. God said, I’m going to do the same thing to you.”

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

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

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

**2Kings 19:32** Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

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

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

At this point, the LORD’s message is addressed to Hezekiah. It basically says: This is a sign that I will protect you. The rest of this year and the next you will eat what grows by itself in the land. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year you will plant and reap and

plant vineyards and eat of their fruit. The remaining remnant of Judah will once again take root in the land and grow. From those in Jerusalem, a remnant will go out and once again populate the land. I, the LORD of hosts, will do this.

Regarding the king of Assyria, he will not come into Jerusalem or be allowed to attack it in any way. He won't even be allowed to establish a siege. He will go back home the way he came and will not be allowed to enter Jerusalem. I, the LORD God of Israel will save it for My sake and for My servant David's sake.

Guzik offers this historical note from his study: "After this retreat from Judah, Sennacherib commissioned a record, which is preserved in the spectacular Annals of Sennacherib (the Taylor Prism), which can be seen in the British Museum. It shows how full of pride Sennacherib's heart still was, even if he could not even claim he conquered Jerusalem." It reads as follows: "I attacked Hezekiah of Judah who had not subjected himself to me, and took forty-six fortresses, forts and small cities. I carried away captive 200,150 people, big and small, both male and female, a multitude of horses, young bulls, asses, camels, and oxen. Hezekiah himself I locked up in Jerusalem like a bird in its cage. I put up banks against the city. I separated his cities whose inhabitants I had taken prisoners from his realm and gave them to Mitiniti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Zilbel, king of Gaza and thus diminished his country. And I added another tax to the one imposed on him earlier." (Cited in Bultema, commentary on Isaiah)

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

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

**2Kings 19:37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.**

That very night, the angel of the LORD killed 185,000 of the troops of Assyria. When the Sennacherib and the surviving troops got up the next day, they saw that dead corpses were all around them. Sennacherib immediately returned home to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria.

Principle: Even when circumstances show one's situation to be hopeless, the LORD can work a miracle and provide for the deliverance of His people.

One day, when Sennacherib was worshipping in the house of his god Nisroch, his two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, killed him with a sword—just as the LORD had foretold. They then ran away to Armenia, and his son Esarhaddon became king of Assyria.

So, why would the sons want to kill their father? JFB states this possibility, "...it is said, he intended to sacrifice [them] to pacify the gods and dispose them to grant him a return of prosperity."

Historical records note that it was 20 years later that Sennacherib's sons murdered him. This quote is from biblehub.com: "Though Sennacherib survived this disaster some twenty years, he never again renewed his attempt against Jerusalem. He was murdered by two of his own sons (Adrammelech and Sharezer), and was succeeded by another son, Esarhaddon (B.C. 681), after a reign of twenty-four years."