

2 Kings 19-20

Good morning and welcome to Calvary Chapel! Would you please turn in your bibles to 2 Kings 19?

Do you remember the dramatic scene from last week's study? The nation of Assyria has conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and scattered the majority of its citizens. Israel as an independent nation is no more.

The violent, merciless and seemingly unstoppable war machine of Assyria is continuing to march southward to now conquer the southern kingdom of Judah. The Assyrians have surrounded Jerusalem where last week we saw they tried to intimidate Judah into surrender.

A shadow of despair has fallen upon Judah. And how does the king respond in this moment of hopelessness? Let's find out

We're going to study chapters 19 and 20, and the title of this morning's message is FACING THE HOPELESS

Let's pray

1 And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. The tearing of clothes and the wearing of sackcloth (a rough, burlap-type material) were expressions of deep mourning. Hezekiah is overcome with sorrow.

But notice what he does next...He goes to the house of the Lord. The house of the Lord is the best place to be.

Have you noticed when the enemy is threatening us, oftentimes the house of the Lord is the last place we feel like going? We have a very real enemy: Satan, who will do everything he can to keep us away from praying, from reading the word, from coming to church. Don't let the enemy intimidate you-remember he's the father of lies!

2 Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. Hezekiah seeks out Isaiah because he wants to hear God's word through the prophet.

3 And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but there is no strength to bring them forth. He's using an allegory to describe a horrible scene-a woman so exhausted by labor that she could not complete her childbirth so it was likely that both mother and child would die.

4-5

4 It may be that the LORD your God will hear all the words of the 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 lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.' 5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah." Hezekiah knew that the nation's only hope was that God would intervene and save the nation.

6-7

6 And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD: "Do not be afraid of the words which you

have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. 7 Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.” ’ ” God assured Hezekiah that He would indeed deal with the Assyrians.

(Is. 37:8–20)

8 Then the Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish. While the Rabshakeh was away, the Assyrians learned that Egyptian troops were advancing from the south, so the Assyrians pull away from Jerusalem to confront this new enemy.

Immediately we see one of God’s promises fulfilled.

I’m sure for Hezekiah and the nation there was great rejoicing. The Assyrians have left Jerusalem and Hezekiah must’ve thought, “Now the king of Assyria will go back to his own land and be killed, just like the LORD promised.”

But do you think the enemy goes down without a fight like that?
9-13

9 And the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, “Look, he has come out to make war with you.” So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10 “Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, “Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” 11 Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them;

and shall you be delivered? 12 Have the gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezep, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?’ ”

The Assyrians weren't surrounding Jerusalem anymore, but that didn't stop them from trying to build fear, discouragement, and despair in Hezekiah. See now they're attacking from a distance through discouragement.

This is another picture of what our enemy, Satan does to us isn't it? Satan is a master of discouragement.

How do we respond as individuals when Satan launches his discouraging tactics against us? Look how Hezekiah responds to the discouragement...

14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. Hezekiah immediately takes this letter into the temple, and unrolls the scroll out before the Lord.

This is how we're to handle our problems-Take it to the Lord! "Lord, here it is! This is what I'm up against!" And then what-look how Hezekiah prays...

15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made

heaven and earth. God is the Creator. He's sovereign over all the kingdoms. No king is greater... no problem bigger... than God.

Have you noticed how our problems and circumstances can cloud our perspective? This is why once we lay out the problem before God, we need to immediately shift our focus off the problem and onto the Lord-remember Who it is that we're praying to!

The prayer continues...

16-19

16 Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste 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. Therefore they destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD God, You alone.” Yes Hezekiah prays to be saved, but why does he want the nation of Judah to be saved? Look at verse 19-it's for the glory of the Lord. Hey when we pray for our desires, we should make sure it's ultimately for the glory of God.

20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.’ The glorious answer which fills the rest of the chapter comes because Hezekiah prayed.

This begs the question-What if Hezekiah hadn't prayed? Based on our text here it shows us that no answer would have come, and Jerusalem would have been conquered right then.

Folks- prayer matters.

James 4:2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet[fn] you do not have because you do not ask.

Now here's God's answer...

21 This is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him:

'The virgin, the daughter of Zion,
Has despised you, laughed you to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
Has shaken her head behind your back!

22 'Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
Against whom have you raised your voice,
And lifted up your eyes on high?

Against the Holy One of Israel. Assyria, do you know Who you're really up against?

23-25

23 By your messengers you have reproached the Lord,
And said: "By the multitude of my chariots
I have come up to the height of the mountains,
To the limits of Lebanon;
I will cut down its tall cedars
And its choice cypress trees;
I will enter the extremity of its borders,
To its fruitful forest.

24 I have dug and drunk strange water,
And with the soles of my feet I have dried up
All the brooks of defense.”

25 ‘Did you not hear long ago
How I made it,
From ancient times that I formed it?
Now I have brought it to pass,
That you should be
For crushing fortified cities into heaps of ruins. Even if the
Assyrians didn’t know it, they owed their success to the Lord. All
along, the Assyrians thought it was because of their mighty power
they had accomplished so much. Here, God made it plain that it
was His power that allowed it because He used Assyria as a tool
of His judgment.

26-27

26 Therefore their inhabitants had little power;
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were as the grass of the field
And the green herb,
As the grass on the housetops
And grain blighted before it is grown.

27 ‘But I know your dwelling place,
Your going out and your coming in,
And your rage against Me. God says ‘Hey- I know where you live!’

28 Because your rage against Me and your tumult
Have come up to My ears,
Therefore I will put My hook in your nose

And My bridle in your lips,
And I will turn you back

By the way which you came. This was a dramatic statement, because this is exactly how the Assyrians cruelly marched those whom they conquered. 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 tells the Assyrians He's going to do the same thing to them.

Remember, at the time Assyria was the world's lone superpower, but God was in control, not King Sennacherib... or for that matter the President, the Premier, etc

Now is a good time to take a couple of moments and talk about our current events....

Matthew 24:6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Now God gives a promise to the nation of Judah...
29-31

29 'This shall be a sign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows of itself,
And in the second year what springs from the same;
Also in the third year sow and reap,
Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. This is all taking place in the year 702 and 701 bc. With the impending invasion crops

couldn't be sown, but there would be enough food during the harvest because God would provide supernaturally.

30 And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah
Shall again take root downward,
And bear fruit upward.

31 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant,
And those who escape from Mount Zion.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts^[fn] will do this.' It won't be
Hezekiah's might that will deliver Judah. God will do the work!
32-34

32 "Therefore thus says 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 build a siege mound against it.

33 By the way that he came,
By the same shall he return;
And he shall not come into this city,'
Says the LORD.

34 'For I will defend this city, to save it
For My own sake and for My servant David's sake.' "God plainly
and clearly drew a line. Although the Assyrian military machine
was poised to lay siege to Jerusalem and ultimately crush them,
they won't. The king of Assyria would not come into this city
because God promised to defend it.

God was doing this for what verse 34 says-His own sake, His own
glory. Too often we think we must defend the glory of the LORD.

But that isn't really the case. God is more than able to defend His own glory.

35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel^[fn] of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. One angel. This verse should change how we view the cross.

When Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane, Peter, bold brash Peter, grabbed his sword, and cut off Malchus' ear.

Matt 26 52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish^[fn] by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? A legion was 6,000. Jesus was talking about at least 72k angels at his disposal.

It was love that carried Jesus to the cross!!!

36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh. When Sennacherib awoke to the news of such a crushing defeat he tucked tail and ran home to Nineveh. He should've been worshipping the one true God, but instead he returned to pay homage to his pagan idols.

Now we fast forward 20 years in the next verse.

37 Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck

him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

The assyrian war machine has been defeated.

Chapter 20 (Isaiah 38:1–8)

Now as we go to chapter 20 we learn of an event that took place during this drama of the Assyrians threatening Jerusalem.

1 In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live.’” God was remarkably kind to Hezekiah, telling him that his death was near. Few people are given the time to set their house in order.

And this should give us pause this morning. What if the Lord came to you and said, “Set your house in order, I’m taking you home.” How would you respond? Are you walking with the Lord in such a way that you would be at peace about meeting God?

We learn later in the Bible that Hezekiah was 39 years old when he learned he would soon die.

2-5

2 Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, saying, 3 “Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly. You can picture the scene

4 And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 “Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: “I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. Again we see that Hezekiah’s prayer was important. By all indications, if Hezekiah hadn’t made his passionate prayer, his life would not have been extended. This is another demonstration of the principle that prayer matters.

6-7

6 And I will add to your days fifteen years. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David.” ’ ”

7 Then Isaiah said, “Take a lump of figs.” So they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. Apparently, God used this medical treatment to bring Hezekiah’s healing. God can, and often does, bring healing through medical treatments.

8-11

8 And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “What is the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD the third day?”

9 Then Isaiah said, “This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing which He has spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?”

10 And Hezekiah answered, “It is an easy thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees; no, but let the shadow go backward ten degrees.”

11 So Isaiah the prophet cried out to the LORD, and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz. When Hezekiah asks for a sign to confirm God's promise, the Lord does the impossible. God turns the shadow on the sundial back 10 degrees - or 45 minutes.

Now we've seen how Hezekiah was a good, godly king. But tragically, as we're about to see, he doesn't finish well. The nation of Judah has resisted the Assyrians, but watch what happens
(Is. 39:1–8)

12 At that time Berodach-Baladan^[fn] the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. Apparently this was a gesture of kindness from the king of Babylon, showing concern to Hezekiah as fellow royalty.

We can imagine how flattering this was for King Hezekiah. After all, Judah was a lowly nation with little power, and Babylon was on their way to becoming a superpower. To receive these letters and gifts and recognition from the king of Babylon must have really made Hezekiah feel like he was special and important, which explains the shocking display of foolishness from Hezekiah in the next verses

13 And Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all^[fn] his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his

dominion that Hezekiah did not show them. Hezekiah did everything he could to impress the babylonian messengers, and showed them the very best riches of the royal household — and he showed them everything

As the coming rebuke from Isaiah will demonstrate, this was nothing but proud foolishness on Hezekiah's part. He was in the dangerous place of wanting to please and impress men, especially ungodly men.

14-18

14 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?"

So Hezekiah said, "They came from a far country, from Babylon." 15 And he said, "What have they seen in your house?" So Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them."

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: 17 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the LORD. 18 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.' "

Hezekiah tried to impress the Babylonians by displaying all his wealth, but all it really did was show them what they could get by conquering Judah.

We'll witness the fall of Judah in a few weeks in chapters 24 and 25.

Now when you read the book of Daniel, you see this fulfilled as well because Daniel was one of the king's descendants taken into the palace of the king of Babylon.

Because of this promise of God through Isaiah, many think that Daniel and his companions were made eunuchs when they were taken to serve in the palace.

This is devastating news! And what is king Hezekiah's response?

19 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD which you have spoken is good!" For he said, "Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?" God announced coming judgment, and all Hezekiah could respond with was relief that it would not happen in his lifetime.

These extra 15 years of life for Hezekiah has allowed this extension on life to change him to be a completely self centered person. All he cared about was that Judah's fall to Babylon wouldn't happen in his lifetime.

This is the tendency we all have to fight, that as we age, we want to become more and more self focused.

20 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah—all his might, and how he made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21 So Hezekiah rested with his fathers. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place. **SHOW PIC** This tunnel was an

amazing engineering feat. He built an aqueduct to insure fresh water inside the city walls even during sieges. It was more than 650 yards long through solid rock, begun on each end and meeting in the middle. It can still be seen today and it empties into the pool of Siloam. **CLOSE PIC**

Jeremiah 32:27 "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"