

2 Kings 18 Discouragement

Jesus

I. Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, *that* Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. **2** He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Abi the daughter of Zechariah. **3** And **he did what was right** in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.

Story of Hezekiah King of Judah: 2 Kings 18-20 and 2 Chronicles 28-32
Did what was right in the sight of the Lord...as his father David has done!

- **Hezekiah:** heb. "God [YHWH] is my strength"
- Begins reigning in Southern Kingdom of Judah at 25
- **Isaiah Prophet to Kings:** Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and now **Hezekiah**

Hezekiah is a man of action

James 2:20 ...that faith without works is dead? ...**18** But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will **show you my faith by my works.**

- Gets right to business...

4 [Hezekiah] removed the high places and broke the *sacred* pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan.

- **Destroys all** demonic paraphernalia father Ahaz [AKA bonkers] set up
 1. Sacred pillars
 2. Wooden Images
 3. Nehushtan [New info]
- **On way to from Egypt to Promised Land...**
 1. People became discouraged
 2. Complain against God/Moses
 3. Called God's kind provision of Manna/Angel food... **"worthless bread"**

Numbers 21:6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. **7** Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. **8** Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." **9** So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, **when he looked at the bronze**

serpent, he lived.

- People that lived saved staff called it Nehushtan
- Began to worship it. Reason God hid Moses body?

Deuteronomy 4:5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died ...in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. 6 And **He buried him** in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day.

- Hezekiah destroys Moses staff
- NT speaks of Nehushtan...

John 3:14 ...as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

- It is Jesus who saved and is to be worshiped not the staff
- Snake represented Jesus taking our sin...

2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- Lesson? Those who fear the Word of the Lord look up and are healed/saved

Malachi 4:2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With **healing in His wings**

- Sacred Pillars, Wooden Images, Nehushtan smashed into pieces
- **Other reforms of Hezekiah:**

2 Chronicles 29

1. Repaired doors of Temple: Overlaid them with gold
2. Gathered priests and Levites and commanded them...

2 Chronicles 29:5b [Read] ...sanctify yourselves, sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and **carry out the rubbish** from the holy place...[count it all as rubbish] **16** Then the priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temple of the Lord to the court of the house of the Lord. And the Levites took it out and carried it to the Brook Kidron.

3. Restored the Temple and worship of Living God
4. Made stringed instruments for praising God...

2 Chronicles 29:30 [cont.] Moreover King Hezekiah and the leaders commanded the Levites to sing praise to the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped...**35b** So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order. 36 Then Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced that God had prepared the people, since the events took place so suddenly.

5. Also, he warned people of Judah **not to do as Northern Kingdom**
6. Called people to celebrate **Passover**

7. Sends "runners" to call all Israel, Judah and remnant in north

- Ephraim/Manasseh laughed/mockered/would not come
- Later they humble themselves and go to the feast...

2 Chronicles 30:18 For a multitude of the people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the Passover contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "**May the good Lord provide atonement for everyone** 19 who prepares his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he is not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." 20 And the **Lord listened to Hezekiah** and healed the people.

8. Great Celebration of Passover!

2 Chronicles 30:26 [cont.] So there was **great joy in Jerusalem**, for since the time of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. 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, to heaven.

9. **Tithing/giving** reinstated and brought to Temple: Gold, Silver, Animals

2 Chronicles 31:8 And when Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord and His people Israel. 9 Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. 10 And Azariah the chief priest, from 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 plenty left, for the Lord has blessed His people; and what is left is this great abundance."

▪ **Hezekiah's Reforms Summary**

2 Chronicles 31:20 Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was **good and right and true** before the Lord his God. 21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law and in the commandment, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. So he prospered.

- **Grandfather Jotham:** Good godly king; i.e. Man of restoration
- **Father Ahaz:** Evil King. Destroyed good father Jotham built. Replaced with **rubbish**
- **Hezekiah:** Good King follows grandfather Jotham's good example as builder

Did not follow father Ahaz poor example:

Tore it down. Overcame sentimentality to his evil father

Sometimes people have to leave their parents religion. Tear it down!
Read the word of God with as a child with no pre-programmed interpretation

5 [Hezekiah]... **trusted in the Lord God** of Israel, so that after him was **none like him** among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. 6 For he **held fast to the Lord**; he **did not depart** from following Him, but **kept His commandments**, which the Lord had commanded Moses. 7 The **Lord was with him**; he **prospered wherever he went**.

How important is trusting God?

- **Hezekiah demonstrated his trust in God by obeying God...**

1. Held fast to the Lord
2. Did not depart from the Lord
3. Kept His commandment

- **God rewarded Hezekiah's trust in Him...**

1. Lord was with him
2. The Lord prospered him wherever he went!
3. **Lord gave him victory over his enemies...**

7b... [Hezekiah also...] rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. ⁸ He subdued the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.

Hezekiah loved and trusted God and proved it by his obedience to God

Exodus 20:6 [God shows mercy] to those who love [Him] and keep [His] commandments.

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

- **Relationship Trifecta:** Love/Trust/Obedience inseparable

God: "No King sitting of Throne of Judah was like Hezekiah

⁹ Now it came to pass in the **fourth year of King Hezekiah**, which was the seventh year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. ¹⁰ And at the end of three years they took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is, the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. ¹¹ Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away captive to Assyria, and put them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, ¹² because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant and all that Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded; and they would neither hear nor do *them*.

- **Review/Flashback of Chapter 17:** Assyria takes Northern Kingdom

Assyria comes against Hezekiah [to end of Ch. 19]

¹³ And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against **all the fortified cities of Judah and took them.**

- Hezekiah now 37 years old/No Northern Kingdom left
 1. Assyria moves south
 2. **Take all** fortified cities of Judah; i.e. gated cities, thought inaccessible?

¹⁴ Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying,

"I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay." And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. ¹⁵ So Hezekiah gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house. ¹⁶ At that time Hezekiah stripped *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.**

- **What?** I have done wrong/ Ask what you will and I will do it?

Strips gold from Temple doors/pillars which he himself had overlaid
Gives it to the King of Assyria

- **Moment of weakness?**

1. Assyria had already taken Judah's fortified cities
2. Heard stories of what Assyrian did to Israel: Torture/hooks/humiliation

What he built he now begins to be dismantled. One step forward/two steps back. Now what?
All that was accomplished seems to be at risk of being lost

SUMMARY Hezekiah Reigns in Judah: Does what is right and yet the enemy at the door.

II. Sennacherib Boasts Against the Lord

Discouragement: Satan's Greatest Weapon

- Satan will sell the weapons he has if he can only keep on...his best...discouragement

When we've done all we know to do, and the enemy continues to press in...

"One crushing stroke has sometimes laid [us] very low. A brother most relied upon becomes a traitor. Judas lifts up his heel against the one who trusted him, and the [man's] heart for the moment fails him. Strife and division, and slander, and foolish [criticisms] have often laid holy men [and woman] prostrate, and made them go 'as with a sword in their bones.' Hard words wound some delicate minds very [deeply].... By experience the soul is hardened to the rough blows which are inevitable in our warfare; but at first these things utterly stagger us, and send us to our homes wrapped in a horror of great darkness...[Spurgeon]

- **Discouragement**

If there were regulated pause between the buffetings of adversity, the spirit would stand prepared; but when they come suddenly and heavily, like the battering of great hailstones, the pilgrim may well be amazed. [When that...] last ounce is laid upon us...no wonder... if we for a while are ready to give up the ghost!" [Spurgeon]

The Christian life is not a constant high. I have my moments of deep discouragement."
[Billy Graham]

- Psalmist intimately knew the non-stop waves of discouragement...

Psalm 42:6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me; Therefore, I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, And from the heights of Hermon, From the Hill Mizar. 7 Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me.

- Waves of discouragement for the man of God...

17 Then the king of Assyria sent *the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh* from Lachish, with a **great army against Jerusalem**, to King Hezekiah. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they had come up, they went and stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool, which *was* on the highway to the Fuller's Field. **18** And when they had called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them. **19** Then *the Rabshakeh* said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What confidence *is* this in which you trust? **20** You speak of *having* plans and power for war; but *they are* mere words. And in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? **21** Now look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, 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 trust in 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 said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?'" ' **23** Now therefore, I urge you, **give a pledge** to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses—if you are able on your part to put riders on them! **24** How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen? **25** Have I now come up **without the Lord** against this place to destroy it? **The Lord** [your God] **said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'** "

- **King of Assyria sends the Rabshakeh**; i.e. "field commander" to Jerusalem
 1. Standing at Jerusalem's water source
 2. Seemingly in complete control and **Shouting at God's people...**

Demoralizing Words from the Enemy... we must recognize this voice

- **Voice of Satan:** You can't win and you are alone...
 1. **Your friends** will not help you
 2. **Your Leaders** will not help you
 3. **Your God** will not help you!
- **Purpose:** Discouragement through **Fear of Abandonment**
- **Truth:** We are only to fear God and His help comes the moment we do

Psalm 115:11 You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield.

Isaiah 41:13 For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

Hebrews 13:5b... For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

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

Demoralizing Words from the Enemy... we must recognize this voice

- **Voice of Satan:** Bad things will happen if you don't surrender to me...the worst things I can make you imagine

Lay siege, cut off your water and you will all be eating/drinking own waste

- **Purpose:** Discouragement through **Fear of Humiliation**
- **Truth:** Only God knows what will happen.

NOTE: God not yet in the picture. Instead we try to reason things out but fear brings confusion and confusion leads to poor decisions and endless questions. "Why is this happening to me" **"Why" is weakness** [NJC]

- **Result of trying to reason with a cruel enemy? Fuel for his rage**

28 Then *the* Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and spoke, 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 shall not be able to deliver you from his hand; **30** nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, "The Lord will surely deliver us; **this city shall 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 *peace* with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you **eat from his own vine** and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you **drink 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 groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, "The Lord will deliver us."'

Demoralizing Words from the Enemy... we must recognize this voice

- **Voice of Satan: Don't listen to God's Word.** Take the easy way out.
 1. Divorce instead of dying to self, humbling ourselves and reconciling
 2. Medicate instead dealing with life's ups/downs. [I know depression/victory]

3. Abandon friends/family rather than take responsibility
4. Stop going to church/fellowshipping rather than bear each other's burdens
5. Listening to man's wisdom; always the easy way. **Way of defeat**

- **Purpose:** Discouraging through **Fear of Defeat**
- **Truth:** God will get us through to the other side...but will must go though to get to the other side
- **Waves continue...**

33 Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? **34** Where *are* the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and Ivah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? **35** Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?' "

Demoralizing Words from the Enemy... we must recognize this voice

- **Voice of Satan:** Look around...Your God is not able to deliver
 1. Uncle Frank said he knew the Lord and he's now a drunk
 2. John and Fran knew the Lord and their divorced, kids scattered
 3. Lucy grew up in a "Christian home" went to college and now lesbian
- Satan loves to give examples of God's so-called failings

Matthew 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are **few who find it.**

- For those who find it God is always faithful

Jude 1:1 To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and **preserved in Jesus Christ...****24** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, **25** To God our Savior,

- We don't know the details of why people seem to fall away...

Maybe Uncle Frank raised his hand/made purely emotional response w/out repentance.
Maybe John and Fran are saved but miserable after selfishly divorcing, losing their family.
Maybe Lucie was only trying to please parents parroting words until she could leave home and fulfill her worldly desires that we watch lead to discontentment/ death **but know this...**

God is willing/able finish the good work He started in those who are truly His...

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

- **Voice of Satan:** Look around. God is not able to deliver
- **Purpose:** Discouragement through **Fear of Failure**
- **Truth:** God is faithful to those who are his. Those with a simple faith in Jesus.

36 But the people held their peace 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, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, **came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn,** and told him the words of *the* Rabshakeh.

Discouragement: Greatest tool Satan has in his arsenal

▪ **Satan uses discouragement through fear of...**

1. Abandonment
2. Humiliation
3. Defeat
4. Failure

God's people trust in God's love and past faithfulness to overcome discouragement

Psalm 42:6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me; Therefore, I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, And from the heights of Hermon, From the Hill Mizar. 7 Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me. **8 The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, And in the night His song shall be with me— A prayer to the God of my life.**