

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS  
LESSON 11B  
THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS  
CHAPTER 19**

**INTRODUCTION**

In life, there are many trials but there are few deliverances that is of the magnitude that King Hezekiah enjoyed by the grace of God. His capital city Jerusalem was surrounded by a mighty army. The army of the Assyrians were of great strength and power that Hezekiah was utterly and completely boxed in. He had literally nowhere to turn to for help. All the surrounding nations such as Egypt, the Babylonians, and the Syrians were in dire straits themselves for they too were under the same threat and bondage of the superpower Assyria.

King Hezekiah was driven to the throne of God's grace and mercy for help. The words of **Psalms 75:6-7** aptly describe what King Hezekiah experienced in this chapter, "*For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.*" When King Hezekiah was near death and was on the brink of total destruction, the LORD delivered the

king in a manner that did not need him to even lift a finger.

Overnight, the mighty army of the Assyrians was reduced by 185,000 elite fighting men and from superpower to 'super-powerless' within a brief encounter with the Almighty God. This occurred because of the prayer of King Hezekiah, God's reputation, and God's covenant relationship with King David. King Hezekiah learned an invaluable lesson of where real help comes from and where the real battle actually lies. It is NOT a wrestling against flesh and blood but one of fighting against principalities in high places. The might and strength and fighting experience of the Assyrian armies were futile and useless against the God of Israel.

The angel of the LORD came and the Assyrians died without a fight!

As Christians living in a world of spiritual darkness, where the Prince of this world continues to hold sway over the empires of sinful men, we are constantly fighting battles like King Hezekiah. It is not in terms of bows and arrows or guns and bullets but real battles nonetheless. These battles are fought in homes and schools and offices where a sin or a compromise would result in the loss of faith and testimony for Christ and shame to Christ would be the outcome.

We can learn much from this episode in Hezekiah's life and see how we too can have the victory over such powerful enemies.

## OUTLINE

1. Hezekiah sought The LORD (vv.1-13);
2. Hezekiah prayed to the LORD (vv.14-19);
3. God answered Hezekiah (vv.20-34)'
4. The fulfilment of God's promise (vv.35-37).

## COMMENTARY

### Hezekiah Sought The LORD – 19:1-13

When King Hezekiah heard the report from Eliakim, he was downcast and distressed. He expressed this feeling by tearing his clothes and putting on sackcloth. For a commoner to do this is humble enough but when a king did this in front of his people, it shows the dire state of affairs in Judah. It was a matter of life and death for Judah! It was an act of humility. The officials whom he sent to speak to Rabshakeh and the elders of the priests too wore sackcloth. He was overwhelmed by the difficulties and by a feeling of helplessness. He sought for someone who could intercede on his behalf and his country. **He sent for the same officials and the elders of the priests to Isaiah, the prophet, the son of Amoz.**

Hezekiah sent a letter to the prophet through them. In the letter, Hezekiah expressed that it was “a day of trouble, and of rebuke and blasphemy” (19:3). He described the situation like that of giving birth to a

child but there was no strength to bring forth. In other words he was too weak and without any more strength. He was at his wits' end. Hezekiah hoped that the LORD, the God of Isaiah, would have heard all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his king had sent to ridicule the living God. The LORD would remove him and deliver “the remnant” that remained (19:4). The “remnant” is a reference to Judah, the only Judean city left which was not captured. He appealed to Isaiah to intercede on behalf of Jerusalem.

It seems that Isaiah did not wait for the king's officials to meet and deliver the king's plea before he gave an answer. It gives the impression that Isaiah knew beforehand of their coming and of the word that they would bring. When they finally met Isaiah, the prophet had a ready answer for them. Isaiah told them to assure King Hezekiah that the LORD said to the king not to be afraid of the words which he had heard, and the words of blasphemy against the name of the LORD. The LORD promised that He would send “a blast” upon him (19:7). The word “blast” means literally, “spirit”. The LORD would send a spirit of fear to undermine the confidence of Sennacherib. He would hear a “rumour” and turn back to Assyria and in his own land he would be killed (v.7). The rumour referred to, is that of Tirhakah, King of Ethiopia was marching to war against Assyria (v.9). This report of an approaching attack against Assyria caused Sennacherib to return to his land to defend it. Before he left, he sent another letter to King Hezekiah.

In this second letter, Sennacherib was even bolder. He told Hezekiah that the God whom he trusted to deliver Jerusalem was deceiving him. There was nothing new in his argument for he repeated that all the kings of Assyria had destroyed the lands they had conquered and the gods of these nations could not save them from defeat. Judah would soon follow suit and be destroyed.

### **Hezekiah Prayed to the LORD – 19:14-19**

Hezekiah received the letter from Sennacherib. This time he went to the Temple in Jerusalem by himself to pray. He spread the letter, which was either written on leather or papyrus scrolls, before the LORD. He prayed before the LORD. His prayer was not a long one but is a good example of a prayer of supplication. He began by invoking the name of the LORD that He alone is God, and the Creator of the heaven and the earth. Then he pleaded with God to hear and see Sennacherib's words of ridicule and blasphemy of the living God. While it was true that the Assyrians conquered many lands and defeated many of the gods of these lands, it is noteworthy that the gods of these lands were no gods for they were made of wood and stone, the work of man's craftsmanship.

Finally, Hezekiah pleaded with the LORD, the God of Judah to save them so that all the kingdoms on earth might know that the LORD is God and the only one and true God and beside Him there is none other (v.19).

### **God Answered Hezekiah – 19:20-34**

The LORD God decided to answer Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah (vv. 20-34). The LORD replied that He had heard the king's prayer concerning Sennacherib, King of Assyria. The LORD described Jerusalem as "the virgin the daughter of Zion" and "the daughter of Jerusalem" (v.21). Jerusalem had not been ravaged since the days of David. No enemy had ever succeeded in conquering it. So Jerusalem could shake her head in derision and scorn at Sennacherib's threat.

God asked Sennacherib "whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed?" (v.22). It is a rhetorical question for the answer is obvious. It was not just to Jerusalem or Judah but to the "Holy One of Israel". This name of God is Isaiah's favourite. [Note that Isaiah also referred to Judah as Israel, using the ancient name of the people.] The Northern and Southern Kingdoms had become one people at this time of the siege. God then quoted Sennacherib's own boast (vv.23-24). and revealed that Assyria's success in conquering the other nations was because God allowed it (v.9:25). God then declared that He knew every place Sennacherib stayed at and all the travels he had made and even his rage against Him (v.27). God continued to declare "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips" and send him back by the way King Sennacherib had come (v.28).

Then God told Hezekiah that Jerusalem would prosper. In the first two years, the people would be able to

eat the fruit of the land which would grow naturally. And in the third year they could sow, plant and eat the fruits thereof (v.29). Still using the same agricultural metaphor, God declared that those who survived the crisis would live safely in the land and eat its fruit (vv.30,31). Therefore, because Sennacherib had boasted and blasphemed the LORD God, he would be prevented from taking Jerusalem. God would defend the city to save it for His own sake and for the sake of David His servant (19:34).

### **The Fulfilment – 19:35-37**

That very night, the angel of the LORD struck 185,000 soldiers dead in the camp of the Assyrians in Lachish. Sennacherib returned to Nineveh in Assyria. One day as he was worshipping his god Nisroch, he was assassinated by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer and both escaped to the land of Armenia after the deed. Esarhaddon, another son, succeeded him as King of Assyria. God's Word is always true and perfect.

### **PRACTICAL VALUE**

In times of crisis, Hezekiah humbled himself. Faced with the Assyrian threat, he realised the weakness of the nation and instead of turning to other nations for help, he turned to God. Although he was not perfect in the beginning having paid tribute to Assyria, he did not continue to do so. Instead, he sought the LORD for help. He prayed earnestly to the LORD who heard him and delivered him and the nation. When we face

problems and troubles in life, we need to be humble and present our needs to Him in a way acceptable to Him, the way Hezekiah did.

Hezekiah did not just seek God when he was in trouble. The reason why he sought God first is because he trusted God wholeheartedly. He believed in God's Word without any reservation or doubt. This was the basis of the well-being of his kingdom. Similarly, we ought to do the same.

We who live on this side of history are more privileged than Hezekiah. We have the full revelation of God in the Holy Scriptures which God has providentially preserved through the ages. It is not right that a Christian believes just to secure his salvation and not trust God later. A Christian must always trust God all his life. He must depend and trust in the teaching of God's Word always. AMEN

### **DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

#### **Daily Readings**

**MONDAY:** 2 Kings 19:1-7; Daniel 3:15-18; Matthew 10:28-31.

**TUESDAY:** 2 Kings 19:8-19; Psalm 86:1-17.

**WEDNESDAY;** 2 Kings 19:20-37; Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 33:29.

**THURSDAY:** 2 Kings 19:1-37.

**FRIDAY:** 2 Kings 19:1-37.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why did Hezekiah agree to give to the King of Assyria the tribute if he was such a godly man?

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2. How did Rabshakeh seek to show that neither Egypt nor the LORD is of any avail to helping Judah?

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3. What was the prophet Isaiah's answer to the Assyrian threat (19:6-7)?

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4. What was Sennacherib's view of the LORD God of Judah (19:8-13)? How did Isaiah view him with the eyes of faith?

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5. What can you learn from Hezekiah's prayer to help you whenever you pray to God (19:15-19)?

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6. What, in this chapter, is recorded to teach us that prayer makes a difference in our personal life and in the church?

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