

## A MAN NAMED

# Hezekiah

~ Facing The Challenges of Life ~

## HEALTHY REBELLION

(II Kings 18:5-8)

Many elements combined to produce the great successes of Hezekiah's life, not the least important of which was the healthy rebellion he is said to have had in II Kings 18:7.

*"And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not."*

Here is an interesting linking of two seemingly opposite concepts in the Bible. *"The Lord was with him,"* we are told, and then, *"he rebelled against the king."* Although normally rebellion brings God's curse, in this case it brought God's blessing. Hezekiah's rebellion was a good kind, a kind every Christian ought to exhibit.

### 1. Not Against Legitimate Authority.

King Hezekiah *"rebelled against the king of Assyria,"* the Bible says. This king was not Hezekiah's rightful superior. Assyria did not rule over Judah. The relationship between Judah and Assyria is explained in II Kings 16. Hezekiah's father Ahaz was attacked by the king of Israel in partnership with the king of Syria (vs. 5-6). In order to defeat them, Ahaz called upon *"Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria"* to rescue him (vs. 7-8). For this favor, Ahaz sent him gold and silver. The Assyrians did save Judah at this time, and a friendly relationship was begun between the two kings (vs. 9-20). This relationship gave Assyria both a cultural and a religious influence over the kingdom of Judah. It was this pagan influence that Hezekiah rebelled against.

The Bible teaches that human authority is ordained by God.

*"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of*

*God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."*  
(Romans 13:1-2)

Rebellion against God's authority by direct disobedience to God's commands or by resistance to divinely-appointed human authority is always wrong. Submission to human authority, however, does not always mean *obeying* what they say. Some notable Christians in the Bible *disobeyed* human authority because they were ordered to disobey God's direct commands (See Exodus 1:15-21, Daniel 3, and Acts 5:25-42). In these cases God *blessed* those who disobeyed the authority of men because they bowed to His Word over theirs. In doing this, however, they were *not* rebelling against legitimate authority; they were submitting to it. Notice that Daniel's friends disobeyed the king, but subjected themselves to his power to punish them. They didn't run away or fight back. They were not rebelling; they were yielding to divine authority. Because God said, "Don't" when the king said, "Do it," they obeyed the higher command while yielding to the lesser but legitimate authority under it. In this way they submitted but did not obey.

Hezekiah was absolutely subject to God's authority. He *"kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses"* (2 Kings 18:6). But *"he rebelled against the king of Assyria"* (2 Kings 18:7).

### 2. Against Illegitimate Pagan Influence.

What the Assyrian king had over Judah was not legitimate authority, but rather an illegitimate pagan influence. The king of Assyria that brought this influence over the kingdom through his friendship with King Ahaz was Tiglath-pileser (See II Kings 16:5-10). When Hezekiah became king, Shalmaneser either was already or soon became king of Assyria (See II Kings 17:1-6 and 18:9-10). So when Hezekiah got Judah back on the track of serving the

Lord, Scripture says *‘he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.’* Judah’s rightful allegiance was to the Lord, and she had no business serving pagan religion. Hezekiah’s healthy rebellion was against this influence. Pagan influence is growing in America, and good Christians *need to rebel* against it. Rebellion is the proper response of God’s people to the influence of evil, and we do not rebel enough. It is interesting that some Christian teenagers are more likely to rebel against the Biblical standards their parents and church uphold than against the immoral pressures of their peers. We need to teach them to rebel against bad things instead of good things. Here are some ideas for their parents and grandparents to follow in healthy rebellion:

1. Say something to management when pornographic materials are displayed and sold at the corner store.
2. Speak up when company policy is changed by your employer to accommodate homosexual “couples.”
3. Turn off a filthy program appearing on a television in a waiting room.
4. Call the public school if something offensive to the Christian faith is sponsored by them.
5. Write lawmakers when something bad is happening in Washington or Lansing.

Always be polite, proper, and Christian when you “rebel,” but don’t just let evil prevail without a protest from you. The fact is that folks around you are probably a bit surprised that you haven’t said anything yet. Don’t just yield; rebel!

### 3. Loyalty to the Lord means rebellion against the Devil!

Hezekiah *“clave to the Lord”* (v. 6) but *“rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not”* (v. 7). Beyond this, *“He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city”* (v.8 ). He threw the Philistines out of cities that rightfully belonged to God’s people. He was fearless and determined in his efforts to rid Judah of pagans and paganism! The Bible is showing us in this record that you can’t follow God (v. 6) without rebelling against the Devil (v. 7).

*“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”* (James 4:7)

It takes backbone to have the blessing of God. Don’t miss the first part of II Kings 18:7

*“. . . the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth . . .”*

This was because he followed the Lord and rebelled against the evil of his day. Let us follow this good man’s example, and have the blessing he had!