

## A MAN NAMED

# Hezekiah

~ Facing The Challenges of Life ~

## THE DEVIL'S LIES

(II Kings 18:17-37, 19:8-13; II Chronicles 32:1-20; Isaiah 36:1-22; 37:8-13)

The Assyrians were involved in a great campaign of conquest. We have already seen how they captured the northern kingdom of Israel, and first influenced and then threatened the southern kingdom of Judah. Assyria was a very ancient nation with its capital at Nineveh. The Assyrians occupied northern Mesopotamia and the area north of the Tigris River, while the Babylonians (Chaldeans) occupied southern Mesopotamia. They were cruel and ambitious warriors. Archeologists and historians believe the greatest era of their history was before David was king of Israel. Then they declined. However, they experienced a revival of power and conquest later. You remember that Jonah the prophet once preached in Nineveh. This may have been fifty years before Hezekiah. The conflict between Hezekiah king of Judah and Sennacherib king of Assyria (which we are examining this week) happened when the Assyrians were pursuing the conquest of the Middle East and decided to take Jerusalem. Remember that Hezekiah's policy of appeasing them led to the awful confrontation with the three representatives of Sennacherib (II Kings 18:17). They met with representatives of Hezekiah (v. 18) at Jerusalem "under the white flag" to call for the city's immediate surrender. The Assyrian army was "*a great host*" surrounding Jerusalem, and the threats of the pagan king had to be taken seriously. In the arguments of Sennacherib's men we hear arguments the Devil still uses to get Christians to give up and give in to him today. It is interesting that they logically contradict themselves. The Devil does this, too. When you are a liar, as he is (John 8:44), you tend to be inconsistent because you are not bound to the standard of truth. Often we will experience the Devil taking two sides of an issue.

*"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."*

(2 Corinthians 2:11)

He will tempt us to do wrong, and when we have sinned he will condemn us and say that

God won't forgive. The bottom line of the Devil, whatever he says, is that we give up and give in to evil. Let's be warned as we look at the 5 arguments of Rabshakeh.

### 1. Your human resources will fail (II Kings 18:19-21).

In a way, he is telling the truth about this. The Devil says, "You can't handle the challenge that God has allowed to come. Look at yourself. You'd better cave in to me and do what I want." Of course, the conclusion the Devil gives us is dead wrong, but the premise that we don't have the ability to handle some situations in our own strength is true. Often our Enemy will use an element of truth in his enticements. The fact is that God *will* allow things to happen to us that we (in ourselves) cannot handle. Those who say He will never give us more than we can bear are *wrong*. The truth, however, is that God will never let us have a burden we cannot handle *with His help*! Look at what the Bible says in John 15:5 and Philippians 4:13.

### 2. You have offended God, and He won't help you (II Kings 18:22).

The Devil was really tricky here. Hezekiah had ordered the altars and high places destroyed because they were forbidden by the Law of Moses. It was only at the Temple in Jerusalem that sacrifices were to be made to Jehovah. Yet, in the times of ignorance and apostasy, the Jews had called the ceremonies of these unauthorized places "worshiping the Lord." So Rabshakeh said that Hezekiah had attacked the worship of the Lord when he destroyed these places of worship. Therefore, he concluded, God would not help Judah because Hezekiah had offended Him. Of course, the opposite was true. Hezekiah had conformed Judah's worship to the Law of the Lord. But this was not the only time the Devil has sought to discourage God's people by claiming that they have ruined any chance of God's helping them. Christian, if you have

sinned, confession will bring complete cleansing (I John 1:9). But, Satan often tries to make us think we have sinned when we have not. Check everything with the Bible. Don't listen to the Devil; listen to God!

**3. The Lord is the One that wants you to give up (II Kings 18:23-25).**

Rabshakeh said that the Lord had told Sennacherib to capture Jerusalem; therefore he is invincible. Of course, this was a lie, but it is a lie that has regularly worked for the Devil! He makes you wonder if doing wrong might be the right thing to do. Again, listen to God and not to the Devil. If His Word says one thing, God is not saying the opposite.

**4. It wouldn't be too bad to give up and give in (II Kings 18:29-32).**

The Assyrians promised to make it nice for the Jews in captivity. But it is *never* nice to get out of the will of God. Sometimes people think that God will strike them dead if they refuse to obey Him, and when He doesn't, they think He doesn't care or doesn't exist. But the Lord does exist and He does care what we do. He just doesn't always bring the consequences of sin upon us right away! It *will* be bad to give in to the Devil! Don't let him paint a rosy picture of disobedience in your mind. Giving up on God always bears ill fruit.

**5. The Lord can't help you! (II Kings 18:33-35, and 19:10-13).**

We can easily see that the Devil is behind Rabshakeh's words. He is a big liar, and liars are inconsistent. In II Kings 18:22, he says that God is offended and *won't* help Judah. In II Kings 18:25, he says that God Himself has sent the Assyrians to conquer Judah. Then in II Kings 18:35 he says that he is mightier than any god and that the Lord is no match for him! Now which is it? Is Sennacherib *for* God or *against* Him? The Devil will say whatever works—he's always lying! This is a lie that often works: the assertion that God is not able. Of course, God is able, and He will deliver those who trust in Him. See this in II Chronicles 16:8-9, 20:5-6, and 32:6-8. See it also in what happened to Sennacherib!