



LESSON 29

God is glorified by protecting Judah

2 KINGS 18:1-19:37



The LORD defends His people for the glory of His name.



“So now, O LORD our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone” (2 Kgs 19:19).

Supporting Truths

1. The LORD is always able to save.
2. The LORD defends His own honor.
3. The LORD's people can trust Him to save.
4. The LORD's power over nations proves He is the true God.
5. The LORD answers the prayers of His people.

Objectives

1. Tell how God saved Jerusalem from the Assyrians.
2. Explain how Rabshakeh mocked the LORD.
3. Describe how Hezekiah trusted the LORD.
4. Contrast the LORD's power with the weakness of other nations' gods.
5. List several characteristics of Hezekiah's prayer.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God is glorified by protecting Judah • 2 Kings 18:1–19:37



Lesson Summary

Israel had already fallen to the Assyrians. They were exiled because of their sins, just as God had warned. But Judah remained, experiencing renewal and prosperity under godly King Hezekiah. But the Assyrians invaded Judah as well. They tried to undermine Judah's faith, even mocking the LORD Himself. So when Hezekiah prayed that God would save Jerusalem and defend His honor, the LORD answered. The LORD single-handedly slaughtered the Assyrians and saved His people for the honor of His name.

Spotlight on the Gospel

God displayed His mighty power when He rescued Jerusalem from the Assyrians. He did this in order to defend and display His great glory. But we see God's ability to save even more powerfully in the gospel. While there is no denying the blessings the believer receives in salvation, it's also true that God saves sinners in order to glorify Himself by revealing His boundless grace and compassion. Heaven is full of praise for God's glory in saving sinners.

LAST WEEK



Elijah and the prophets of Baal
1 Kings 16:29–17:1;
18:1–2, 17–46

THIS WEEK



God is glorified by protecting Judah
2 Kings 18:1–19:37

NEXT WEEK



God punishes Judah
2 Kings 21:1–18;
24:1–25:30

DIVIDED KINGDOM

Lesson Commentary

The LORD defends His people for the glory of His name.

Most of 1–2 Kings records Israel's failure to follow the LORD, proving that the LORD was right to send them into exile. But in the midst of the sin and judgment, the LORD preserved a faithful remnant so that one day He could restore His people Israel. So when Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem cried out to God, the LORD delivered them from terrible trouble and overwhelming opponents (cf. Isa 36:1–39:8). The LORD did this in order to defend the honor of His name and the lives of His covenant people.

The Assyrians came (18:1–16)

After Israel divided during Rehoboam's reign (1 Kgs 12), Judah became its own kingdom. Unlike Israel in the north, Judah enjoyed several good kings. But none of them so far had been as zealous for God as David had been—until Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:3). Hezekiah eradicated idolatry and all forms of unauthorized worship (18:4). He trusted God more than any other king of Judah (18:5), keeping the LORD's commands (18:6b) and remaining faithful to the

end (18:6a). As a result, the LORD blessed Hezekiah with the success that comes from obedience to God's word (18:7–8; Deut 28:1–14; Josh 1:8).



THINK ABOUT IT

The key to success is obedience.

Perhaps Hezekiah learned from Israel's mistakes. In the north, Israel had never followed the LORD, so Abijah had prophesied their exile (1 Kgs 14:15). This prophecy came true while Hezekiah was reigning in Judah (722 BC). He saw the Assyrians defeat Israel, capture their capital, and remove the people to faraway places (2 Kgs 18:9–11). Why? Because Israel had forsaken God's commands (18:12).



THINK ABOUT IT

Disobedience is never worth it.

But if obedience leads to blessing and disobedience to cursing, why was Judah devastated by Sennacherib, the king of Assyria (18:13)? Was the godly Hezekiah

cursed? First, Judah's defeat was a direct consequence of past sin. The failures of Solomon (1 Kgs 11), Rehoboam (1 Kgs 12), and others brought Judah to this point, a reminder of how our sins can affect people many generations after us. Second, as the

story will show, God allowed such trouble in order to show His great power to deliver. Third, this trouble increased Hezekiah's faith. At first Hezekiah tried to deter Sennacherib by his own strength (18:15–16). But when his bribe failed, he threw himself entirely upon God. So God's blessing may come in the midst of great pain and sorrow.

The Assyrians boasted (18:17–36; 19:8–13)

Before attacking Jerusalem, Sennacherib sent a message through his official, the Rabshakeh. His goal was to undermine Judah's faith in God. He spoke loudly in Hebrew in an effort to not only weaken Hezekiah's faith, but also the faith of all the people in Jerusalem (18:26–28). As Satan did with Eve in the Garden of Eden, the Rabshakeh twisted the truth to create doubt and confusion.

The cunning Rabshakeh mixed truth with error. He was right that Judah could not trust Egypt (18:21), and he was right that Hezekiah had destroyed the high places (18:22). But, he wrongly asserted that the LORD was upset about the destruction of the high places. However, since Judah had worshiped at the high places since the time of Rehoboam, the people may have been tempted to consider Rabshakeh's lie. Was Assyria's invasion proof that Hezekiah should not have destroyed the high places?

The Rabshakeh then resorted to outright lies. After mocking Judah's weakness (18:23–24), he claimed the LORD had told Sennacherib to destroy Judah (18:25). Could this be true? After all, God had promised that if Israel was unfaithful He would cause Israel's enemies to defeat them (Deut 28:25). Were Hezekiah's reforms too late, or maybe even misguided? Was this the final judgment against Judah's sins?

The Rabshakeh continued to undermine Judah's trust by questioning their hope of deliverance. He claimed that if Judah continued to resist, they would be left so hungry that they would eat and drink filth (2 Kgs 18:27). He asserted that neither Hezekiah nor the LORD would be able to deliver them (18:29–30), so they should trust Sennacherib instead. He promised peace and prosperity in a new and good land (18:31–32). Which should Judah choose? Certain misery and defeat or the possibility of a new and happy life outside the promised land?

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God is glorified by protecting Judah • 2 Kings 18:1–19:37



Finally, the Rabshakeh insulted the LORD Himself, comparing Him to the powerless gods of other nations (18:33–35; 19:8–13). This seemed like a clever strategy, for it was based on the historical fact that no god had been able to resist Assyria. Could Judah be sure the LORD was so different? So the people of Judah now faced a massive army outside their walls and gnawing doubt inside their hearts. But the Rabshakeh's mockery would prove to be his ruin.

Hezekiah prayed (18:37–19:7, 14–19)

What could Hezekiah do? His enemies were great, his resources were low, and his allies were feeble. Judah was like a mother in the pains of labor but too weak to give birth (19:3). So Hezekiah went to the LORD's temple and mourned (19:1), casting all his burdens upon God (Ps 55:22; 1 Pet 5:6–7). He sought God's word through Isaiah the prophet (19:2), trusting the

LORD to respond in the defense of His own honor (19:4). Isaiah's response gave hope: Do not fear, for the king of Assyria will go away and die (19:5–7). God would personally intervene to demonstrate His supremacy over all other so-called gods.



THINK ABOUT IT

Satan combines external trouble with internal doubt in an attempt to destroy our faith.

But after a second message from the Rabshakeh (19:8–13), Hezekiah may have begun to doubt Isaiah's words. So Hezekiah prayed again (19:14–19). He began by remembering who the LORD is, praising Him as the only God and the Maker of all things (19:15). Then he presented his case to God (19:16–17), which helped to clarify his perspective (19:18). After this he presented his request, calling on God to save Judah (19:19a; Phil 4:6–7). Finally, he stated the reason for his request, “that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone” (2 Kgs 19:19b).

The LORD answered (19:20–34)

The LORD answered Hezekiah's prayer through the prophet Isaiah, exposing the error of the proud Assyrians. They had mocked the true God, “the Holy One of Israel,” not some false god (19:22). The LORD is *holy, separate*, not like other so-called gods. Sennacherib and the Rabshakeh were fools: by raging against the

LORD they guaranteed their own defeat (19:27; cf. 1 Sam 17:36).

Their foolishness was also demonstrated by their *arrogance, claiming credit for themselves* even though their victories had been given by the LORD (2 Kgs 19:23–26). Assyria often led away their captives with hooks in their noses, but now the LORD would do the same to them (19:28). Assyria had foolishly attacked the LORD, and in short order their crushing defeat would serve as an illustration of the LORD's glory.

While crushing Assyria, the LORD would rescue Jerusalem. He would cause food to grow for them despite the devastation caused by the Assyrians, and like the growing plants, Judah also would take root and grow (19:29–31). God would protect Jerusalem, preventing Assyria from stepping foot inside the city (19:32–33). Why was the LORD so zealous to defend Jerusalem? He would do it “for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David” (19:34). Just as Hezekiah had prayed, the LORD always acts for the sake of His own name, for His own glory (Isa 42:8; 48:11), and He does so by keeping His loving promises to His people.

The Assyrians left (19:35–37)

But would God's word really come true? What about Rabshakeh's boasts? How could Judah defeat the massive Assyrian army? They couldn't, but God did. In one night the angel of the LORD slaughtered 185,000 Assyrians (2 Kgs 19:35), and those who survived returned to Nineveh (19:36). Nothing is impossible with God (Num 11:23). He is omnipotent, all powerful. Then, years later, Sennacherib's own sons assassinated him while he was worshiping his god (2 Kgs 19:37). Where now is the boasting of Sennacherib and Rabshakeh? It was silenced, just like all those who set themselves against the LORD (Rom 14:11). But while God casts out the proud, He rescues the humble (Matt 5:3), saving all those who trust in Him.

THINK ABOUT IT

Hezekiah honored the LORD's supremacy and trusted the LORD's sovereignty.



THINK ABOUT IT

The LORD fights against the proud (Jas 4:6).



Lesson Outline

The LORD defends His people for the glory of His name.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. The Assyrians attacked Judah (18:1–16).
2. The Assyrians mocked the LORD (18:17–36; 19:8–13).
3. Hezekiah prayed (18:37–19:7, 14–19).
4. The LORD defeated the Assyrians (19:20–37).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. The Assyrians came (18:1–16).
 - Hezekiah was a very godly king of Judah (18:1–8).
 - Assyria defeated Israel because of Israel's sin (18:9–12).
 - Assyria came to attack Jerusalem (18:13–16).
2. The Assyrians boasted (18:17–36; 19:8–13).
 - The Rabshakeh said the LORD wanted him to destroy Jerusalem (18:17–25).
 - The Rabshakeh said, “Resist and die or surrender and live in peace” (18:26–32).
 - The Rabshakeh said Assyria would defeat the LORD like the other gods (18:33–35; 19:8–13).
3. Hezekiah prayed (18:37–19:7, 14–19).
 - Hezekiah mourned and sought counsel from Isaiah (19:1–4).
 - Isaiah prophesied that the king of Assyria would go away and die (19:5–7).
 - Hezekiah prayed for deliverance so that all would know the LORD is God (19:14–19).
4. The LORD answered (19:20–34).
 - The LORD, the Holy One of Israel, was the one Assyria mocked (19:20–22).
 - The LORD had given Assyria its victories (19:23–26).
 - The LORD would now end their victories because of their arrogance (19:27–28).
 - The LORD would defend Jerusalem for His name's sake (19:29–34).
5. The Assyrians left (19:35–37).
 - The angel of the LORD slaughtered 185,000 Assyrians (19:35).
 - The rest of the Assyrians went home (19:36).
 - Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was killed in his own god's temple (19:37).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God is glorified by protecting Judah • 2 Kings 18:1–19:37



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Who attacked Judah?**
The Assyrians.
2. **What did Hezekiah do?**
He prayed.
3. **What did God do?**
He destroyed the Assyrians.
4. **Why did God do that?**
For the sake of His name. For His glory and honor.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **What was King Hezekiah known for?**
He was known for his great faith and for destroying all idols and high places.
2. **What happened to Israel and why?**
The LORD caused them to be defeated and exiled because of their sin.
3. **How did the Rabshakeh undermine Judah's faith?**
He said the LORD was unhappy with Hezekiah, that the LORD had told him to destroy Jerusalem, and that the LORD could not save Jerusalem because no other gods could save their nations.
4. **How did Hezekiah pray?**
He depended on God. He let God know his need. He remembered who God is and praised Him. He prayed for God to defend His glory.
5. **How did the LORD answer?**
The LORD answered that Assyria had no power of its own. God would take away Assyria's success because Assyria had attacked the LORD Himself. He would defend His glory.
6. **What happened to the Assyrian army?**
The angel of the LORD slaughtered 185,000 Assyrians in one night, and the rest went home.
7. **What happened to Sennacherib, the king of Assyria?**
He was assassinated by his own sons in the temple of his god.
8. **What did this prove?**
This proved that the LORD alone is God, that He has power over all, and that He can always rescue those who trust in Him.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



CARRIED AWAY

Because Israel did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, He allowed them to be taken away by another country (Assyria), as He had promised would happen. Pick four children to be the Assyrians, and divide the rest of the class into four teams. Each Assyrian will lead one blindfolded Israelite at a time through a maze of chairs to Assyria. The first team to bring all their Israelites to Assyria wins.

STRANGE SOUNDING WORDS

Children love strange sounding words. So say some of the interesting names and titles in this story, allowing the children to repeat after you: Hezekiah, Sennacherib, Jerusalem, Assyria, Rabshakeh, Eliakim, Isaiah, Tirhakah, Nisroch, and Nineveh. Briefly state who or what each name is and have the children raise their hands during the lesson when they hear one of these names.



CLINGING TO GOD

2 Kings 18:6 says, "For [Hezekiah] held fast to the LORD; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses." Ask the children what it means to cling. Give a child a stuffed animal, and ask him to cling to it. Try to gently remove it from him. Next, have a child hold onto a rope while being lifted or pulled. Tell the children that in today's lesson they will be learning about a king who clung to God.

THE NATIONS LIKE A DROP

Ask the children how big the world is. What's the farthest any of the children have ever traveled? Have any of them ever traveled outside the country? Pull out an eye dropper (make sure it's full of water) and show it to the children. Then tell them that all the nations of the world are like a drop of water before God (Isa 40:15). It was no problem at all for God to defeat the massive army of the Assyrians. Put a drop of water in each of their hands and ask them to imagine that they're holding all the countries of the world.



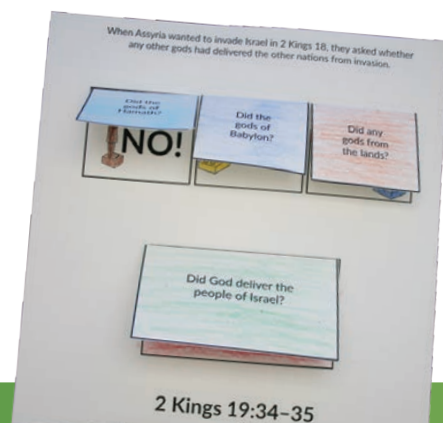
WHO CAN DELIVER THEM?

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheets, scissors, glue, and crayons.

Directions: Pre-cut the rectangles with phrases from the craft sheet. Have the children color the rectangles that you have cut out. Next they should color the pictures of the idols on the second craft sheet (in the boxes that have "NO! or YES! in them). Fold the rectangles along the dotted line and glue the rectangles onto the craft sheet, covering each box. Only the portion above the dotted line should be glued so that the pieces may function as doors.

Who Can Deliver Them?
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God is glorified by protecting Judah • 2 Kings 18:1–19:37



AGES 6–8



HEZEKIAH'S STORY

Have a teacher dress like Hezekiah with sackcloth and ashes. As he arrives in class, he can begin to excitedly explain what is happening in Judah. He can explain that although things look bleak for Judah, he has brought his request to the Lord, and is confident that God will act in order to demonstrate that He alone is God. Tell the children that today's lesson will reveal how God answered Hezekiah's prayer.

MOCKING

Have you ever had anyone make fun of you or one of your family members? How did that make you feel? What if they were making fun of God? We know that anything bad that people say about God is not true. God is good and holy and perfect. There is nothing bad about Him, and He never changes. In today's lesson we will learn about how a people called the Assyrians made fun of God and threatened God's people. Let's find out what happened to the Assyrians and the children of Israel.



WHAT IS 911?

It is the number you call in an emergency, so that police, firefighters, or paramedics come quickly. We consider them heroes for how quickly and courageously they come to the rescue. That is kind of like Hezekiah's prayer in the lesson today. His emergency turned into an opportunity for prayer, and God proved His great power and glory by coming quickly to the rescue.

LIKE NOTHING BEFORE HIM

Isaiah 40:17 says that "all the nations are as nothing before [God]." Bring an inflatable beach ball globe to class and blow it up in front of the children. While holding the globe, describe how easy it was for God to defeat the Assyrian army.



HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheets, scissors, yarn, hole puncher, and crayons.

Directions: Instruct the students to color and cut the hands out along the solid lines and then fold along the dotted lines. After all the pages have been cut out and placed together, punch two holes along the spine of the booklet. Weave yarn through the holes and tie it for binding.



Hezekiah's Prayer
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2

AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

TRUST

In 1860 a famous tight-rope walker named Charles Blondin crossed Niagara Falls several times, a distance of 1000 feet and a height of 160 feet above the crashing falls. One of the times he crossed with a wheelbarrow. As Blondin crossed he saw a man who was amazed by what Blondin could do. Blondin asked the man if he believed that he could put a person in the wheelbarrow and cross safely. The man answered “yes,” and Blondin then told him to get into the wheelbarrow, but the man refused. In our lesson today we will see how King Hezekiah didn’t just say that he trusted God. He actually did it.

POWER OF PRAYER

Ask the children in what ways a cell phone is like and unlike prayer. In today’s lesson we will see that Hezekiah, by asking God and through God’s power, was protected from his enemies, the Assyrians. Hezekiah’s desire was that God be glorified and that the nations know that God is God alone and that it is by His power that they are saved.



ILLUSTRATE

CLINGING TO GOD

Ask the children what it means to cling. Give them some examples: static cling, monkeys clinging to their moms when they are small, a little brother or sister, or even nursery children who cling to their parents or leader. Discuss why small children cling to their parents and then explain why we should cling to God. God, the ultimate provider of all things, should be the one we cling to in prayer, in our words, and in our actions. Explain that God desires us to cling to Him and desires our dependence on Him. When we don’t depend on and cling to Him, we show that we think we are better than God or that we don’t need God. We should be like King Hezekiah and trust God in all aspects of our life.

STAGGERING VICTORIES

The following stats reveal the number of enemies of God killed at one time by one person:

Jashobeam (1 Chr 11:11): 300.

Abishai (2 Sam 23:18): 300.

Shamgar (Judg 3:31): 600

Philistines with an ox goad.

Adino the Eznite (2 Sam 23:8): 800.

Samson (Judg 16:27): Over 3,000 Philistines.

The angel of the LORD (2 Kgs 19:35): 185,000 Assyrians.



APPLY

HOLD FAST

In 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17 Paul tells believers to “hold fast” in the faith. In today’s lesson we learned about King Hezekiah and how he held fast to his faith in the Lord, which was proved by his actions. Read the passage from 2 Thessalonians and go over how believers are to hold fast. Discuss the ability that believers have to pray and ask God to help and strengthen them in times of need. List some examples of situations that your children encounter at school, home, and around town, where their faith may be tested. Ask the children to name some times when they have to “hold fast” in their faith and trust God, as Hezekiah did.