II Kings 19

Review…

- **I Kings 18 – The reign of Hezekiah…**
  - Hezekiah was the 13th King of Judah – he reigned for 29 years and was a good King
    - Hezekiah immediately began to reform Judah – calling on the priests to purify themselves…
    - He tore down the High Places – and broke up the Bronze serpent from **Numbers 21**…
    - He opening the doors of the Temple – and restoring the Passover Celebration!
    - There was no King like Hezekiah in Judah or Israel – either before or after him…
    - He is the only of the 40 kings of the North and South – called 'like his father David'
    - Because he trusted the Lord – and did not depart from His commandments!
  - In the 14th year of Hezekiah – Sennacherib of Assyria attacked Judah…
    - He conquered all of the cities of Judah – except for the capitol of Jerusalem…
    - Hezekiah knew he needed more time to prepare Jerusalem for a siege…
    - So bought off the Assyrians with Gold and Silver – and used the time to fortify the city…
    - But Hezekiah was not trusting in military might / he trusted in the Lord!
  - Sennacherib sent three of his officials – along with great army against Jerusalem…
    - The Assyrian offer was simple – surrender and live…
    - But if they refused – misery / suffering / and death were all they could look forward to!
    - The officials warned – do not listen to Hezekiah – 'The Lord will save us'…
    - All of the other nations Assyrian had conquered had gods – The Lord would be no different!

The siege of Jerusalem… (*4 things*)

- **1st – Running to the Lord… vs. 1-4** Read: II Kings 19:1-4
  - 1st - Hezekiah had a real problem – the enemy was at the door and things looked desperate!
    - It would have been easy for him to doubt – fear – loose himself in worry…
      - Life has a tendency to throw challenges / problems our way…
      - We tend to spend much of our time worrying about those problems…
      - The problem is worrying about our problems does not help – it makes things worse
      - It can even make us physically sick – upset stomach / high blood pressure…
      - **Proverbs 12:25** – "Worry weighs a person down…"
      - Satan loves to distract us from Jesus - by getting us focused on our problems…

- When we focus on the problems of this life - we are not focused on Jesus!

- God knows what we need – so we do not need to worry…
  - **Luke 12:29-31** – "Do not worry about food - what to eat and drink. Do not worry whether God will provide it for you. These things dominate the thoughts of most people, but your Father already knows your needs. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you."
  - Worry is the opposite of trust – we are worried because we are not trusting in God!
  - So instead of killing ourselves by worrying – run to Jesus and find peace!
  - We trust God with our eternity – we trust He can save us from hell…
  - But somehow we have a hard time trusting Him for our daily needs…
  - If God can save us eternally – certainly He can provide for us today!

- 2nd – When King Hezekiah heard the ultimatum from the Assyrians he did 4 things…
  - He tore his clothes – a sign of anger over the blasphemous words of the Assyrians…
    - There are times when we as believers in Jesus - we should be angry...
    - Angry when evil is presented by the world as good / and good as evil!
    - **Isaiah 5:20** - "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil..."
    - When you see movies depict 'living together' as an acceptable lifestyle...
    - When you see adds that make it look 'cool' to be drunk...
    - Not angry at sinners - they need our help - but angry at sin...
    - We need to speak out - we need to take action - because it destroys lives...
    - **Ephesians 4:26** - "Be angry, and do not sin..."
  - Hezekiah covered himself with sackcloth – as a sign of humility…
    - Sackcloth is a very abrasive and coarse material – made from itchy / smelly goats hair…
      - It was meant to make you uncomfortable – remind you life is not about this world…
      - When hard times come – and we overwhelmed by the trials…
      - Its good to remember this is not our home – just passing through – **Hebrews 11:13-16**
      - Far too often we get way to attached to things in this life and forget…
      - We are not home yet – our home is a place we have yet to see – heaven…
      - We need to remember to keep a light touch on things here – just living in tents!
    - It was not the fabric for Kings – it was the clothing of the poor / destitute…
      - The King set aside is royal garments – and showed humility…
      - Declaring he would not trust in his power – instead admit to his great need for help!
      - **Matthew 5:3** – "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
      - It can be hard for us to imagine being poor is being a blessing...
      - But when we realize we have nothing - we are constantly looking to the Lord!
      - We are not limited to they money in our pockets - or perhaps in the bank...
      - Instead we have access to all the wealth of our Father in Heaven - His Kingdom!
  - Hezekiah went into the house of the Lord…
    - Because perspective is everything – and he needed to get a better view…
    - Sometimes it can be very hard for us to look beyond our problems – like HUGE wall...
    - We cannot see beyond them – we do not know what will happen next...
    - We can become discouraged – and even be in danger of stumbling in our walk...

- But when we come to the Lord Lord – it changes our perspective…
- We no longer see our problems - instead our God who is greater than any problem!
- We can have peace knowing that we do not stand-alone – Jesus stands with us!
- Our problems swallowed up – and we being to praise our incredible Lord!
- **II Corinthians 4:18** – "Do not look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever."

▪ Hezekiah sent word to Isaiah the prophet…

- He told the prophet - this was a day of trouble / rebuke / and blasphemy…
  - Like a child ready to be born – but the mother has no strength…
  - Hezekiah had great hope the Lord to do something amazing (*joy of a new child*)…
  - In the face of the Assyrian might he lost all strength (*mother to weak to give birth*)…
  - Israel was gone – Judah had been ravaged – only Jerusalem was left!
- Hezekiah understood – he needed help to be bold…
  - **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10** - "Two are better than one... if one person falls, the other can reach out and help, but people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble."
  - We all have bad days - we get overwhelmed – we all make mistakes in life...
  - If we are struggling with a trial in life - we do not have to face it alone...
  - God has surrounded us with Godly men and women who are there to help...
  - By giving us accountability - being willing to ask us the hard questions...
  - They are there to encourage us – stand beside us – counsel us...
  - They are there to pray for us - and point us back to Jesus!

- **2ND – THE PROMISE OF THE LORD… VS. 5-19** READ: II KINGS 19:5-19
  - 1st – Isaiah sent a message back to Hezekiah with 3 promises… vs. 5-7

▪ God was going to send a RUMOR to distract the King of Assyria!

- God would send a SPIRIT upon the servants of Assyria – the Angel of the Lord!
- And the King of Assyria was going to FALL by the sword – in his own land!

▪ It was just the message you would want to hear – the promise of victory…

- I love the promises of God – they can give us great courage…
- But the challenge comes when we realize the timing of the promises…
- God does promise us victory in the end – but the road is far from easy…
- **Romans 8:37** – "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."
- **Romans 8:36** – "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

  - 2nd – In the mean time - the king of Assyria was making war against Judah… vs. 8-19

▪ He had conquered Lachish (*invincible*) and was attacking Libnah (*in Judah*)…

- But he heard a RUMOR that Tirhakah the king of Ethiopia was attacking Assyria…
- So he sent a message to Hezekiah – 'Do not let the God in whom you trust deceive you…'
- No other nation – or god – had ever survived the wrath of Assyria…
- Even though the king had to leave – he was coming back to finish off Jerusalem!

▪ When Hezekiah got the letter – it was very disheartening…

- But rather than take it personally – he took the letter to the Lord…

- It was true that Assyria had laid waste to every nation – burning their gods in the fire…
- But that was because they were not Gods – they were just work of men's hands…
- **Isaiah 44:19-20** - "The person who made the idol never stops to reflect, 'Why, it's just a block of wood! I burned half of it for heat and used it to... roast my meat. How can the rest of it be a god? Should I bow down to worship a chunk of wood?'"
- The idea of trusting in idols to answer prayers / help in hard times
- We might argue that we are far beyond that – we are far more educated today…
- But we forget what our money is made of – paper is a wood product…
- Many still trust in George - $1 / Abe - $5 / and our favorite – Ben - $100 to save them!

▪ In contrast Hezekiah called on the Lord to save – so all could see the Lord alone is God!

- When we get out of step with the Lord – we end up fighting our own battles…
- As a result we make things a lot harder than they should be…
- When we realize the battle belongs to the Lord – we no longer have to carry the burden!
- **I Samuel 17:47** – "The battle belongs to the LORD…"

- **3RD – THE ANSWER FROM THE LORD… VS. 20-34** READ: II KINGS 19:20-34
  - 1st - Because Hezekiah had prayed to the Lord – God heard… vs. 20

▪ God sent Isaiah the prophet to give Hezekiah His Answer!

▪ I think we get the idea a lot of times that God is not listening to us…

▪ But it is not God who is silent – we just tend to forget to ask – go to the Lord in prayer!

▪ **James 4:2** – "You do not have because you do not ask."

  - 2nd – God's message to Sennacherib king of Assyria… vs. 21-28

▪ Even the young women (*virgins*) of Israel (*Zion*) are laughing at you…

- Because it is not Judah who you are challenging – it is the Holy One of Israel…
- You boast because of your great chariots – your mighty army…
- You have cut down the mighty trees of Lebanon (*perhaps referring to its leaders*)…
- You have dug wells in strange lands – crushing the defenses of all who opposed you

▪ But do you not know – God is the one who allowed it!

- It was all a part of God's plan – Assyria was only great because of the LORD…
- He had raised them up as a power to bring judgment upon Israel…
- That is why the nations cowered in fear – and were like grass beneath their feet!
- But God knew where Sennacherib lived – and knew what he was saying about the LORD!
- So He would put a hook in the nose of Assyria – and bridle in their mouths…
- As sure as the Lord raised up Assyria – He Would just as quickly tear them down!

▪ All authority comes from God - so no government is there by accident – **Romans 13:1**

- We have a hard time with this concept – we might think – not our government
- We look at the corruption – poor policies – the injustice all around us…
- And what about evil governments – muslim / communist / Iran / North Korea…
- Surely God cannot approve of these governments – much less be responsible!

▪ Paul wrote this during the time Caesar Nero was the emperor of Rome…

- The ruler who clothed Christians in animal skins – then fed them alive to the dogs…

- Who rode his chariot down the road lined with burning Christians for light…
- This was Paul's Government – the one he was saying to obey and respect!
- If you want all men to have a rich and easy life – all governments should be perfect…
- But if you want people in heaven - muslim or communist governments work best!
- If governments were perfect – we would never learn to look to and trust in God…
- It is in the imperfections of our governments we see our need for the Lord!
- It is not that all the governments are good – God just uses them all for our good!

- 3rd – God's promise to Jerusalem… vs. 29-34
  - The land had not be planted because of the siege by the Assyrian army…
    - Yet miraculously the Lord would cause a bumper crop to keep the people fed…
    - Not just for one year – but for two years – presumably the 2nd year was a Jubilee year…
    - Then on the 3rd year they would be able to plant and harvest again!
  - Because God would protect the remnant of Zion…
    - Sennacherib would never step foot inside the city / or even shoot a single arrow at it…
    - Because the Lord Himself would defend the city and keep it safe!
    - I can remember as a kid - when a bigger kid than you picked on you...
    - You would fall back on 'my Dad is bigger than your Dad' - Dad was the protector!
    - We have a 'Dad' who is bigger / tougher / stronger / and more powerful than anyone...
    - Who can come against us - who can pick on us - when our Father is God in Heaven!

- **4TH – THE WRATH OF THE LORD… VS. 35-37** READ: II KINGS 19:35-37
  - 1st – A SPRIT from the Lord… vs. 35
    - It came to pass on a certain night – the Angel of the Lord went out…
    - It killed 185,000 men – only a handful lived to see a camp full of corpses in the morning…
    - There are a few different views on exactly what this 'Angel of the Lord' was…
    - A 'simoom' – poison wind - a super heated dust storm that bows off of the Sahara…
    - It can cause temperatures to jump to over 135°F – with blistering dust filled winds
    - An Angel of the Lord - like the one that brought destruction on Israel…
    - During the census of King David – a plague killed over 70,000 men - **II Samuel 24:16**
    - The Angel of the Lord spoke to Moses from the burning bush - **Exodus 3:2**
    - Whether they faced a sand storm / an Angel / or the Lord Himself – the point is simple…
    - God does not fight fair - it is no wonder we win in the end!
    - It is no wonder Paul says - 'If God is for us, who can be against us...' - **Romans 8:31**
  - 2nd – An important event…
    - We have a historical account from the 'Annals of Sennacherib' – though it is biased…
    - But the defeat of Sennacherib is also found in **II Chronicles 32 / Isaiah 37**

- God does not stutter – He is not interested in wasting time or space in the Bible
- If God repeats Himself – it means what is being said is VERY important – pay attention!
- God wants us to know we have no reason to worry – He is on our side!

- 3rd – Sennacherib returned defeated to Nineveh – and FELL by the sword… vs. 36-37
  - While he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch (*eagle*) – two of his sons killed him…
  - The Rabbis say Sennacherib wanted to know whey the Lord did such miracles for Judah…
  - His wise men told him it was because Abraham had been willing to offer Isaac…
  - So Sennacherib made plans to sacrifice two of his sons…
  - When his sons found out – they killed him – and fled to the land of Ararat!
  - Sennacherib thought it was the ritual – and did not understand it was about knowing God!
  - It is easy for us to forget and begin to think of our faith as a ritual…
  - If I go to church on Sunday God will bless me – rather than going to learn about God…
  - If I give to those in need God will give to me – rather than giving out of love…
  - But when we get caught up in methods – we forget it is all about Jesus…
  - It is not about how we read / pray / worship / give – the power is in knowing the Lord