

1 Invasion

2 Chr. 32

2 Hezekiah's Reign

- When he took the throne, Hezekiah had two goals as king:
 - First, to return the nation of Judah to Jehovah so that it could once again be a nation that God could bless.
 - Second, to free Judah from oppression by its enemies, specifically Assyrian oppression.

3 Assyria

- At this time in history, the area of Palestine was at the heart of a conflict between the two most powerful empires in the known world: Egypt and Assyria.
- During Ahaz's reign, Judah ceased to be a major world power and became a "client state" of Assyria and were forced to pay an oppressive tribute (2 Chronicles 28:20).

4 Assyria

- As part of his goals of reformation and restoration, Hezekiah will rebel against Egypt, leading us to the events of the next few lessons.
- Assyria will invade Judah, besiege the city of Lachish and then ultimately, the city of Jerusalem.
- During this time they will use the most advanced tactics of the day to defeat Judah.

5 Our Enemy

- *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.* (Eph 6:12)
- As Christians we are engaged in spiritual warfare.
- A soldier would be foolish if they went into battle without making any preparation to study their opponent.

6 Our Enemy

- *Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.* (2Co 2:10-11)
- One of the purposes for the Old Testament is to provide illustrations of or shed light upon New Testament truths.
- In the tactics that the Assyrians use, we can see some of the most deadly strategies of our own enemy.

7 Hezekiah's Reign

- There are three major events that define the latter part of Hezekiah's reign:
 - The Assyrian Invasion
 - Hezekiah's Sickness
 - Visit from the Babylonian envoys
- These three events are detailed for us in 2 Chronicles 32, and in 2 Kings 18-20. There is also an identical account in Isa. 36-39.
- These events are presented as part of a whole, but are not necessarily related in chronological order, but rather as being concurrent.

8 Hezekiah's Reign

- *After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself.* (2Ch 32:1)
- We know that these three events take place after Hezekiah's religious reforms, but a different wording is used when transitioning between each of the three stories.

9 Hezekiah's Reign

- ***In those days*** Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.'" (2Ki 20:1)
- This verse transitions us from the invasion to the sickness.
- The words "in those days" literally translate as "around the same time." The events are listed in order of scope, with the understanding that they are happening at roughly the same time but all within the greater context of the most major event – the Assyrian invasion.

10 **The Sickness**

- Based on this verse, we know that Hezekiah's sickness and miraculous healing takes place around the same time as the Assyrian invasion.
- This is actually corroborated by Jewish tradition.

11 **The Sickness**

- We know, however, that the sickness took place before the visit by the envoys from Babylon.
- ***At that time*** Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. (2Ki 20:12)

12 **The Sickness**

- We are also told that immediately following the sickness, Hezekiah is lifted up in pride:
- *But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem.* (2Ch 32:25)

13 **The Babylonian Envoys**

- Babylon at this point was little more than upstart city in the Assyrian empire, constantly rebelling and attempting to overthrow their masters.
- The apparent friendship between Babylon (the king of Babylon sends envoys to Hezekiah when he hears he is sick) and Judah during a time when both are attempting to throw off the Assyrian yoke is significant.

14 **The Babylonian Envoys**

- We know that Hezekiah was already consorting with other enemies of Assyria – notably Egypt (Isa. 30-31, 36:6-9) while planning his rebellion.
- *"Ah, stubborn children," declares the LORD, "who carry out a plan, but not mine, and who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin; who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my direction, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!"* (Isa 30:1-2)

15 **The Babylonian Envoys**

- God was already chastising Judah for trusting in the armies of foreign nations to accomplish their own plans.
- Isaiah takes Hezekiah to task for his courtship of the Babylonians, and his display of massive wealth to them.

16 **The Temple Treasure**

- *And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; withdraw from me. Whatever you impose on me I will bear." And the king of Assyria required of Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house. At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD and from the doorposts that Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria.* (2Ki 18:14-16)

17 **The Temple Treasure**

- To satisfy Assyria's demands, Hezekiah not only emptied out his treasuries, but he also had to take the treasure he had contributed to the temple, much in the way his father had done.
- If this all happens "around the same time", Hezekiah would not have had the wealth to boast of to Babylon's envoys.

18 **Timeline**

- Based on these facts, we can establish a working timeline for the latter part of Hezekiah's reign (following the religious reforms):
 - Hezekiah courts relationships with Assyria's enemies (Egypt and possibly Babylon) and begins to rebel
 - Hezekiah becomes ill, but is miraculously healed
 - Babylonian envoys arrive and are shown Hezekiah's vast wealth
 - Assyrian invasion, siege of Lachish and Hezekiah impoverishes himself
 - Siege of Jerusalem, miraculous victory

19 **Timeline**

- *It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.* (Pro 25:2)
- The timeline matters, because understanding the order of events is crucial to getting a proper perspective on Hezekiah's life.

20 **Timeline**

- If the order of events is: Invasion, Sickness, Envoys, then Hezekiah's story is of a successful man who is lifted up in pride, but who ultimately ends his life on a high note.
- If the order of events is: Sickness, Envoys, Invasion, then it tells a very different story – a story of man who began righteous, became proud, and who was ultimately humbled.

21 **1) The enemy strikes when we are at our proudest**

- It is when Hezekiah is at his proudest (having devised his own plan with Egypt that God said is not His plan, having boasted of his own wealth and success) that the Assyrian armies come.
- Pride is the single most damaging, most insipid of all sins. Pride is so destructive because it cuts us off from God's enabling grace and makes God resist us.

22 **1) The enemy strikes when we are at our proudest**

- Our pride causes God to resist us, because pride is directly opposed to one of the most fundamental truths about God: He is jealous for his own glory, and His highest goal is His own glory.
- *I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other...* (Isa 42:8a)