

# THE OVERTHROW OF SENNACHERIB'S ARMY

**BIBLE TEXT** : II Chronicles 32:1-23; II Kings 19:14-37

LESSON 344 Senior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1).

## **BIBLE TEXT** in King James Version

### **2 Chronicles 32:1-23 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.

<sup>2</sup> And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

<sup>3</sup> He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which *were* without the city: and they did help him.

<sup>4</sup> So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?

<sup>5</sup> Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised *it* up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo *in* the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

<sup>6</sup> And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying,

<sup>7</sup> Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: for *there be* more with us than with him:

<sup>8</sup> With him *is* an arm of flesh; but with us *is* the LORD our God to

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **I Sennacherib's Invasion and Hezekiah's Faith**

1. Sennacherib encamps against the fenced cities of Judah, II Chronicles 32:1;

#### **2 Kings 18:13-16 (KJV)**

<sup>13</sup> Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

<sup>14</sup> And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.

<sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

<sup>16</sup> At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

#### **Isaiah 36:1 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, *that* Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.

2. Hezekiah makes valiant efforts to defend Jerusalem, II Chronicles 32:2-5.

3. His faith in God enables him to speak words of encouragement, II Chronicles 32:6-8.

### **II Sennacherib's Blasphemy and Hezekiah's Prayer**

1. Reviling speeches are directed against Hezekiah and against the Lord, II Chronicles 32:9-19;

#### **Isaiah 36:2-22 (KJV)**

<sup>2</sup> And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

<sup>3</sup> Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.

<sup>4</sup> And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

<sup>5</sup> I say, *sayest thou*, (but *they are but* vain words) *I have* counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

<sup>6</sup> Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.

<sup>7</sup> But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?

<sup>8</sup> Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

<sup>9</sup> How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

<sup>10</sup> And am I now come up without the LORD against this

help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

<sup>9</sup> After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he *himself laid siege* against Lachish, and all his power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that *were* at Jerusalem, saying,  
<sup>10</sup> Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem?

<sup>11</sup> Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

<sup>12</sup> Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?

<sup>13</sup> Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of *other* lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?

<sup>14</sup> Who *was there* among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?

<sup>15</sup> Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?

<sup>16</sup> And his servants spake yet *more* against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah.

land to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

<sup>11</sup> Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand *it*: and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

<sup>12</sup> But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? *hath he* not sent me to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

<sup>13</sup> Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

<sup>14</sup> Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you.

<sup>15</sup> Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

<sup>16</sup> Harken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make *an agreement* with me *by* a present, and come out to me: and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern;

<sup>17</sup> Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

<sup>18</sup> *Beware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

<sup>19</sup> Where *are* the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

<sup>20</sup> Who *are they* among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?

<sup>21</sup> But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

<sup>22</sup> Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, that *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

## **2 Kings 18:17-37 (KJV)**

<sup>17</sup> And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field.

<sup>18</sup> And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

<sup>19</sup> And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

<sup>20</sup> Thou sayest, (but *they are but* vain words,) *I have* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

<sup>21</sup> Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, *even* upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

<sup>22</sup> But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is* not that he, whose high places and whose altars

Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

<sup>23</sup> Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses,

<sup>17</sup> He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.

<sup>18</sup> Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that *were* on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

<sup>19</sup> And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* the work of the hands of man.

<sup>20</sup> And for this *cause* Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.

<sup>21</sup> And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.

<sup>22</sup> Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and guided them on every side.

<sup>23</sup> And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

## **2 Kings 19:14-37 (KJV)**

<sup>14</sup> And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house

if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

<sup>24</sup> How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

<sup>25</sup> Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

<sup>26</sup> Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand *it*: and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

<sup>27</sup> But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

<sup>28</sup> Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria:

<sup>29</sup> Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

<sup>30</sup> Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

<sup>31</sup> Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make *an agreement* with me by a present, and come out to me, and *then* eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

<sup>32</sup> Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

<sup>33</sup> Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

<sup>34</sup> Where *are* the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

<sup>35</sup> Who *are* they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

<sup>36</sup> But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

<sup>37</sup> Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

## **2. Sennacherib sends blasphemous letters to Hezekiah, II Chronicles 32:17;**

### **2 Kings 19:8-13 (KJV)**

<sup>8</sup> So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

<sup>9</sup> And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying,

<sup>10</sup> Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

<sup>11</sup> Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?

<sup>12</sup> Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; *as* Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in Thelasar?

<sup>13</sup> Where *is* the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad,

of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest *between* the cherubims, thou art the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

<sup>16</sup> LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

<sup>17</sup> Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,

<sup>18</sup> And have cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

<sup>19</sup> Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

<sup>20</sup> Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *That* which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.

<sup>21</sup> This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

<sup>22</sup> Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy *One* of Israel.

<sup>23</sup> By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the

and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

**Isaiah 37:14 (KJV)**

<sup>14</sup> And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

3. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," James 5:16; II Kings 19:14-19; II Chronicles 32:20;

**Isaiah 37:15-20 (KJV)**

<sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,

<sup>16</sup> O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubims, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

<sup>17</sup> Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

<sup>18</sup> Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries,

<sup>19</sup> And have cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

<sup>20</sup> Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.

**Psalms 46:1 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

**III The Lord's Answer and Sennacherib's Destruction**

1. Sennacherib's fate is pronounced through Isaiah, II Kings 19:20-34;

**Isaiah 37:21-35 (KJV)**

<sup>21</sup> Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

<sup>22</sup> This *is* the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

<sup>23</sup> Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> By thy servants hast thou reproached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, *and* the forest of his Carmel.

<sup>25</sup> I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.

<sup>26</sup> Hast thou not heard long ago, *how* I have done it; *and* of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldst be to lay waste defenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore their inhabitants *were* of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the housetops, and *as* corn blasted before it be

height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, *and into* the forest of his Carmel.

<sup>24</sup> I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places.

<sup>25</sup> Hast thou not heard long ago *how* I have done it, *and* of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.

<sup>26</sup> Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the housetops, and *as corn* blasted before it be grown up.

<sup>27</sup> But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

<sup>28</sup> Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

<sup>29</sup> And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

<sup>30</sup> And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

<sup>31</sup> For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD *of hosts* shall do this.

<sup>32</sup> Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He

grown up.

<sup>28</sup> But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

<sup>29</sup> Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

<sup>30</sup> And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat *this* year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.

<sup>31</sup> And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

<sup>32</sup> For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

<sup>33</sup> Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

<sup>34</sup> By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

<sup>35</sup> For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

2. The visitation of the angel brings death to the army of Assyria, II Kings 19:35-37; II Chronicles 32:21-23;

#### **Isaiah 37:36**

<sup>36</sup> Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

### **NOTES:**

#### **Unity**

"Where no counsel is, the people fall" (Proverbs 11:14). As soon as Hezekiah knew that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was coming to fight against him, he took counsel with his princes and mighty men. Together they worked to strengthen their defences and prepare themselves to fight against Sennacherib. The unity that prevailed under these trying circumstances speaks well of the revival of spiritual worship during Hezekiah's reign. Hezekiah did what he could and then "spake comfortably" to his people.

#### **Encouragement**

"Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed" (II Chronicles 32:7). How often these or similar words of encouragement have spurred the hearts of God's soldiers to press the fight of faith. It may be through the dismal valley of the shadow of death His warriors are called to go, but the child of God need not fear, for he can look up into Heaven and know that God will "keep him in perfect peace," whose mind is stayed on Him (Isaiah 26:3).

#### **God's Host**

"There be more with us than with him" (II Chronicles 32:7). The king of Assyria had his multitudes and was even so bold as to offer 2,000 horses to Hezekiah to make the battle more nearly

shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

<sup>33</sup> By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

<sup>34</sup> For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

<sup>35</sup> And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

<sup>36</sup> So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

<sup>37</sup> And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

even, yet Hezekiah could say, "There be more with us than with him." Though his eyes may not have seen the horses and chariots of fire round about as did the servant of Elisha, yet, like Elisha, he knew they were there.

Often we hear the mad sea roar, and we start to tremble, forgetting that we are serving Him who said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed" (Job 38:11). Let us be assured that "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19). Even though the flood may crumble the walls of brick and mortar and sweep many a pretentious structure from its sandy foundation, the standard of the Lord shall not shake in the fury of the wind nor go down at the pounding of the waves.

What though the arm of flesh seem strong, which is greater, the creature or He who created it? If a word from the Creator could bring it into existence, could not a word from Him also cause it to cease to exist? Shall we His creatures fear to trust God with these bodies in the time of trial and affliction and think the arm of flesh more capable than His Word of power? Shall we tremble at the roar of the devil when we know that he can go no farther than the Lord will permit? God has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

#### **Accusations**

"And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah." How the enemy railed! Oh, the accusations he hurled when he saw the people trusting God! Can you not hear him say, "You will die surely if you do not do something about it! You will die of famine! You will die of thirst! God is not with Hezekiah, God is angry with him! Look at all the places of worship Hezekiah has torn down and the altars he has destroyed!" Often the enemy points to some hypocrite as though he is an example of true Christianity. It is true that Hezekiah destroyed the high places, but he did it in accordance with God's plan. To top off all his rage, Sennacherib blasphemously declared that he had the Lord on his side, and that the Lord had said to him, "Go up against this land, and destroy it" (II Kings 18:25).

#### **Silence**

"But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not" (II Kings 18:36). There is no use parleying with the devil. You do not have to answer him. Against railing accusations, Jesus answered "never a word" (Mathew 27:14); and Michael the archangel replied to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 9). To argue with those who are antagonistic to your religious views usually avails nothing. Do not argue or strive, but "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness" (I Peter 3:15).

#### **Hezekiah's Prayer**

In the time of trouble Hezekiah humbled himself, rent his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. He also sent for Isaiah, that stalwart prophet of God, to join him in prayer. It grieved these holy men to hear the God of Israel blasphemed and classed with the gods of the heathen which were the work of the hands of sinful men. With Sennacherib's infamous letter spread before him, Hezekiah implored God to protect Jerusalem "that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only" (II Kings 19:19).

#### **The Answer**

God sent back the answer to Hezekiah that he had heard his

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What did Hezekiah do to defend Jerusalem?
2. How could Hezekiah say that "there be more with us than with him?"
3. How did the people react to the words of Hezekiah?
4. Name as many ways as you can in which Sennacherib was wrong in his accusations against Hezekiah and against God.
5. Why was the king of Assyria able to destroy many nations?
6. Whom did Hezekiah ask to help him pray?
7. For whose sake did God say He would defend Jerusalem?
8. How many were slain by the angel of the Lord?
9. Of what rank were those who were slain?
10. What happened to Sennacherib?

prayer, and then revealed just why Sennacherib had been able to conquer the nations. His feats did not seem nearly so mighty when the Lord revealed that the nations he laid ruin were "as corn blasted before it be grown up" (II Kings 19:26). On more than one occasion the Lord has made it known that He rules in the kingdom of men. The hardened heart of Pharaoh resisted God until Egypt was destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar lifted himself up with pride until God drove him from his kingdom and stripped him of his reason. Belshazzar revelled in sin until the finger of God wrote his doom upon the plaster of the wall. Let Sennacherib and all the rulers of the earth know that "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1). Satan can go no farther than God permits. Sennacherib found a hook in his nose and a bridle in his lips and returned with shame of face to his own land.

### **The Angel of Death**

The account of the Lord's sending his angel to cut off 185,000 of the armies of Assyria, including all the mighty men of valour and the leaders and captains, is beautifully told in the following poem by Lord Byron:

### **The Destruction Of Sennacherib**

**The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,  
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;  
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the  
sea,  
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.**

**Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:  
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath  
blown,  
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.**

**For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,  
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;  
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,  
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew  
still!**

**And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,  
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his  
pride:  
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.**

**And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;  
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.**

**And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,  
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;  
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the  
sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!**