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# “Open Church – Open Bible

Min. Marossa Davis

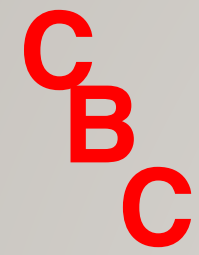


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# Sunday Church School

JULY 11, 2021

“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”  
II Chronicles 32: 1-8, 22 - 23



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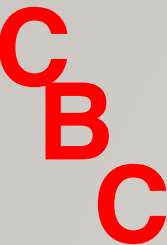
“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”  
II Chronicles 32: 1-8, 22-23 ( KJV)

**v. 1 “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.**

v. 2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

**v. 3 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.**

v. 4 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?”



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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

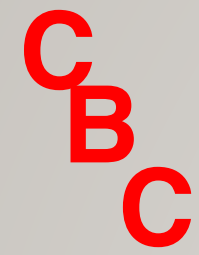
II Chronicles 32: 1-8, 22-23

**v. 5 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.**

v. 6 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,

**v. 7 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:**

v. 8 With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

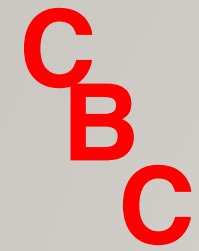


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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”  
II Chronicles 32: 1-8, 22-23

**v. 22 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.**

**v. 23 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.”**

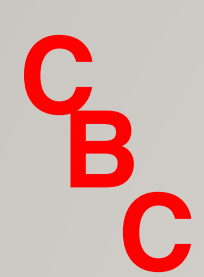


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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”  
II Chronicles 32: 1-8, 22-23

**Hezekiah, the 13th king of Judah**, was a godly man and one of the most devout kings in Jewish history ( cf. II Chr. 29:2 ). He reversed the idolatrous practices of his father Ahaz, who was one of the most wicked kings Judah had ever known. He cleaned the temple and restored proper worship there, reinstated the Passover celebration in Jerusalem, and organized the priesthood. None of these righteous deed, however, prevented an attack from the ruthless Assyrian Empire. On the human level, Hezekiah’s response was the determining factor as to whether or not Judah would survive.

**The account of King Hezekiah** leading Judah against the powerful Assyrian threat is an example of preparation and the power of God to protect His people. This week’s **Related Scriptures** points out the parallel accounts of this battle found in II Kings 18: 13- 19:37 and Isaiah chapters 36 and 37.



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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

## TODAY’S AIM

**FACTS**: to affirm that Christians will face tremendous pressure and adversity in this life..

**PRINCIPLE**: to establish that God will never abandon us to face hardships on our own.

**APPLICATION**: to learn that the key to overcoming adversity and fear is to call on the Lord in faith.

## LESSON OUTLINE

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| I. PREPARATION FOR A SIEGE        | II CHRONICLES 32:1-5    |
| II. ENCOURAGEMENT TO STAND STRONG | II CHRONICLES 32: 6-8   |
| III. VICTORY FROM THE LORD        | II CHRONICLES 32: 22-23 |

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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

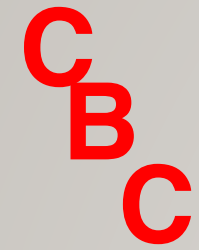
## I. PREPARATION FOR A SIEGE      II CHRONICLES 32: 1-5

**Hezekiah is characterized in both Kings and Chronicles** as one of the godliest and most faithful rulers since David. Only Josiah, who reigned later , is credited with a more unblemished record. Hezekiah had some failings , but they do not appear in this weeks lesson text nor impinge on its concerns.

**The nation of Judah** had fallen on hard times under the evil rule of Hezekiah’s father Ahaz. Hezekiah spent the first 14 years after Ahaz’s death conducting a massive reform of Judah’s spiritual life. As mentioned earlier, he repaired the temple , destroyed pagan altars and high places, he restored the Passover (which had been neglected) and refurbished the temple and its workings. These efforts are described in detail in II Chronicles 29—31.

**We might think that after** faithfully carrying out such an extensive program intended to restore honor to the Lord, Hezekiah might be granted a

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

well earned time of rest and peace. But it was not to be. The great reforms were hardly completed when Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, invaded Judah. He laid siege to all the smaller fortified cities , intending to break their defenses and take them for himself.

**An Assyrian invasion** should not have been a great surprise to Hezekiah. During his 4th year as king, he had watched from the sidelines as Sennacherib’s grandfather, Shalmaneser V, laid waste to the northern kingdom of Israel and eventually carted off its population to permanent exile ( II Kings 17:3-6; 18:9-12). Assyria was the most feared power of their time! Their extreme cruelty and overwhelming power were impossible to ignore. Now, in Hezekiah’s fourteenth year, **they were back!**

**For Hezekiah, it was bad enough** to see the other fortified cities of Judah fall into the Assyrian king’s grip. He soon realized, that even Jerusalem

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

was not safe, that Sennacherib intended to extend his conquest to the capital as well.

**II Kings 18 adds the detail** that Hezekiah ( “Yahweh is my strength” in Hebrew) initially tried to buy off Sennacherib with a massive tribute, even to the point of stripping the gold off the doors of the Temple ( vs. 14-16). The reprieve was temporary at best. The Assyrian king soon sent a massive army to the gates of Jerusalem to lay siege to the city ( v. 17 ). His messenger’s accusation that Hezekiah was now rebelling against Sennacherib ( v. 20 ) suggests that at some point Hezekiah had stopped paying the tribute.

**II Chronicles account omits** the issue of paying tribute, concentrating rather on Hezekiah’s **defensive preparations**. In verse 3 of our text, we are told that he met with his officials and military advisers and made plans to cut

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

off “ the waters of the fountains” outside the city. This is a reference to **springs** located just outside the city whose flow could be blocked or redirected as needed. The officials meeting with Hezekiah immediately agreed to lend their assistance.

**In short order, a large force** assembled and succeeded in stopping the flow of the springs as well as a stream that ran through the fields. They knew the importance of what they were doing. Why should the Assyrian king come to attack and find an abundant water supply for his troops?

**Hezekiah did not stop** with securing the water supply. He immediately set about strengthening Jerusalem’s physical defenses, beginning with the city wall. Over the years, sections of it had weakened or broken down; Hezekiah repaired these and made them even stronger by building towers on top of them. Then he built an entire second wall outside the first one!

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

**Hezekiah’s wall has become known as the Broad Wall**, and a portion of it has been excavated and can be viewed in Jerusalem today. Archaeologists tell us that Hezekiah built this wall to enclose the west side of the city, which up to then was unprotected by such a defense. It must have taken a large force of workers to construct even that portion so quickly. Of course, it would have taken Sennacherib considerable time to subdue all the towns of Judah.

**Hezekiah also reinforced** a structure known as the **Millo**. This was a fortification that dated to Jebusites times and to which King David had added ( II Samuel 5:9 ). Most archaeologists identify it with a steeped or terraced structure on Jerusalem’s southeast side. In addition to these measures , the king greatly increased the supply of weapons and shields. The makers of these items must have been working feverishly around the clock.

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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

II ENCOURAGEMENT TO STAND STRONG

II CHRONICLES 32: 6-8

**Hezekiah’s next step was to appoint** military officers ( captains of war ) over the people. It was important to establish clear lines of authority and organization and not let the people face the enemy as an unruly mob. After choosing his officers, the king asked them to assemble before him in the square at the city gate. It is possible that “ them” refers to all the people , but more likely it was the newly appointed captains.

**When our lesson texts says that Hezekiah** “spoke comfortably” to his men in verse 6 , the meaning is that he spoke **words of encouragement** - encouragement in the true sense of the term- that is **he instilled courage** into them. That is one of the most important things a good leader can do. Courage, based on true hope is more crucial than all the weapons and defensive arrangements combined.



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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

**As the Lord once exhorted Joshua** ( Joshua 1:9 ) , Hezekiah urged his men to be strong and courageous. There was no need to fear the Assyrian king or the large army he had behind him. **Why?** The King offered one reason only, but it was decisive: as large as Sennacherib’s army looked, a far greater power was present with the men of Judah

**In case his officers failed to grasp** his point, Hezekiah spelled it out. The Assyrian king had only an “ arm of flesh” at his disposal v. 8. He had a great army, but they were only men. It really did not matter how many of them there were, for Hezekiah and his men had the Lord their God with them. He would not only help them but also fight their battles for them. It was a bold statement, but it proved absolutely true. And it was exactly what was needed; the men took courage ( rested themselves) upon his words.

**III. VICTORY FROM THE LORD**

**II CHRONICLES 32: 22-23**

**The last two verses of our text** summarize the **victory** the Lord gave

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

His people, but it is helpful to briefly review the particulars of what happened in between. Sennacherib, who was still besieging in the city of Lachish, must have gotten wind of Hezekiah’s morale boosting speech, for he sent a mocking reply intended to vaporize the newly instilled fortitude ( v. 9 ). In doing so, he struck at the heart of Hezekiah’s message.

**Sennacherib took direct aim** at Hezekiah’s assurance that the Lord would fight for Judah. He derided the notion, basing his own confidence on the fact that no nation’s gods had stopped him- why should the people of Judah think their God would do any better ( vs. 11-14 )? Of course, this was an empty boast since **Israel’s God was the one true God**. He labeled Hezekiah’s words of encouragement as a desperate **attempt at deception** that no one should listen to.

**Sennacherib repeated his brazen claim:** no god had ever rescued anyone from him or from his ancestors, and that was not about to change v.15

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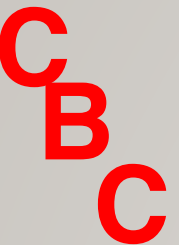
## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

There followed a concerted campaign by his officials and messengers to heap scorn on the very name of the Lord and His power ( vs. 16-19). It was an unremitting propaganda campaign, calculated to strike fear and doubt in the populace of Jerusalem. Sennacherib’s messengers even made sure they got the message in their own language, speaking to them in Hebrew.

**What the Assyrian king never realized** was that his mocking attack on the Lord’s presence and power sealed his own undoing. Granted, his words did have the effect of rattling and bringing great distress to his enemies. However, that only caused Hezekiah to turn more desperately to the One who could help them. Along with the Prophet Isaiah, Hezekiah “;prayed and cried unto heaven” ( v. 20).

**The account in II Kings** provides more detail on this. When Hezekiah heard the discouraging reports, he tore his clothes and sent a desperate message to Isaiah who encouraged him by messenger to remain steadfast ( 19:35-37 ). He added his own prayers to those of Hezekiah’s.

The Lord answered those prayers dramatically, having heard Sennacherib’s



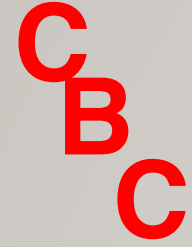
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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

insults only too clearly. We are told in II Chronicles 32:21 that He sent an angel who destroyed the Assyrian Army with all its officers. Sennacherib returned home in disgrace, only to be slain by his sons as he entered his own god’s temple.

**In II Kings 19:35-37**, we learn additionally that the Lord’s angel slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers and that Sennacherib was killed by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer. Such specificity removes any doubt as to the historical truth of the biblical accounts.

**“ Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah** and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hands of Sennacherib the king of Assyria.” The Assyrian king found out too late that there was one crucial difference between all the pagan gods that had failed to resist him and the God of Judah. Those pagan gods were all man- made, with no more power than a block of wood



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“ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

or stone. When he dared to taunt Judah’s God, however, Sennacherib was pitting himself against the Lord of heaven and earth, who possesses all power.

**The Lord, therefore,** had rescued Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from Sennacherib’s threat just as their king had assured them He would. As it turned out, **He fought their battle for them entirely on His own,** requiring no assistance from them whatsoever. The defensive preparations and amassing of weapons were really not needed, although it was not at all wrong to undertake such readiness. It demonstrated, at least, that they were not giving up.

**The Lord simultaneously rescued them** from “ the hand of all other,” that is, from any other threat that might have arisen. That “ He guided them” means He took care of them, or gave them rest. So Jerusalem and all Judah had peace on every side.

**The sudden destruction** of 185,000 enemy soldiers does not go unnoticed by surrounding nations. An obvious result of Jerusalem’s dramatic

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

deliverance was a boost in the city’s prestige , especially for the Lord and for Hezekiah. Many of the neighboring peoples brought gifts to both the Lord and the king. Hezekiah’s reputation in the region remained on an elevated status from that time forward.

**Hezekiah’s experience** provides a vivid illustration of the principle taught by our Lord: “ Whosoever exalted himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted ( Luke 14:11 ). When the king and his city were faced with their greatest threat, he did not rally his people around **himself**; he rallied them to trust in the only One who could save them. And the Lord proved Himself fully able and faithful to do just that.

**Hopefully, not many of us** will ever face an army bent on destroying everything we hold dear. If Hezekiah could stand up to such

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## “ Hezekiah Rallies Judah’s Army ”

a threat with courage and faith in the Lord’s protection, can we not trust Him to fight for us in the things we face?

**In conclusion**, there is much for the contemporary Christian to study in today’s lesson. God is just as able to care for His children today as He was in ancient times. He has not changed. Nothing about God has changed. The key to Hezekiah’s resolve was his faith in the Lord. Although Judah was tiny in comparison to the massive Assyrian empire, Hezekiah believed he had the advantage because the Lord was with him and Judah.

**Because Hezekiah turned to the Lord**, God heard him and spared Jerusalem from ruin. Sennacherib had every advantage from a military standpoint, but he lacked what was most important: the blessing of God. Hezekiah’s example demonstrates that the prayer of faith is a weapon mightier than the greatest armies of earth.

**Hezekiah did not waver in his trust** in the Lord. He had led Judah to

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follow God after a long period of gross idolatry during his father’s reign. Hezekiah did not follow his father’s footsteps but sought the Lord instead. This certainly aided him when the enemy attacked as God was there to help this righteous king.

**God may not always protect** His people from all earthly harm today, but He will most assuredly keep us safe spiritually. And He certainly has protected believers from innumerable earthly harms and can be fully trusted to ensure our ability to do His will. He has also undoubtedly protected us from many threats that we knew nothing about. Let us keep our eyes of faith on Him!

**God is still, looking for people like Hezekiah**, whose heart is completely devoted to Him( cf. 16.9 ). He will greatly honor and work through those who trust Him fully.

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## Practical Points

1. No one who seeks to live a godly life will go unchallenged ( II Chronicles 32:1; cf. II Chronicles 29: 1 —31: 21; II Tim 3 :12 ).
2. We should plan for success with sound strategy and partnerships that do not compromise God’s Word ( II Chronicles 32: 2-3).
3. God gives wisdom and resources to face both long term and immediate challenges ( v. 4 ).
4. Faith does not discourage preparation but rather inspires it ( vs. 7-8 ).
5. As believers we can face enemies and challenges with confidence , knowing God is with us ( vs. 7-8 ).
6. God is glorified when we act wisely and trust Him ( vs. 22-23 ).

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## For Further Discussion

1. Why do you think God allows believers to have enemies?
2. Why is it important to understand that faithfulness does not insulate anyone from attacks?
3. Where do we find the proper balance between trusting God and making wise plans for our future?!
4. What are some areas in our life in which we might experience spiritual attacks today?
5. Have you seen God fight “ battles” for you or one of His other children? ( II Chronicles 32:8 ).
6. What effects did the miraculous deliverance of King Hezekiah and the people of Judah have on them and on others?

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