### 2 Kings

## Chapter 18

1It was in the third year of the reign of King HosheA (son of ElAh) of IsraEl that HezekiAh (son of Ahaz) the king of Judah started his reign. 2He was 25 years old when he started to rule, and he reigned for 29 years in JeruSalem. His mother’s name was Abou, and she was the daughter of ZachariAh.  
  
3HezekiAh did what was upright in the eyes of Jehovah… Every bit as much as did his ancestor David! 4For he removed the high places of worship and all the monuments... He also destroyed the groves of sacred poles and the brass snake that Moses had made, because the people of IsraEl had started burning incense to it back in those days!  
  
So he called it, The Consumer.  
  
5HezekiAh placed his hope in Jehovah the God of IsraEl, and among the kings of Judah, there were none others like him… Not those who lived before him or those who came after him!  
  
6He stuck to Jehovah and never stopped following Him, and he obeyed all the Commandments of Moses. 7So, Jehovah was with him in everything that he did, and he became very wise.  
  
He also annulled Judah’s allegiance to the king of Assyria and refused to serve him. 8Then he attacked the Philistines in Gaza and throughout their borders, from their guard towers to their walled cities.  
  
  
9It was in the 4th year of the reign of King HezekiAh, which was the 7th year of King HoSheA (son of ElAh) of IsraEl, that King SalamaNasar [V] of Assyria came against Samaria and laid siege to it.  
  
10It took him three years, but in the 6th year of HezekiAh and in the 9th year of King HoSheA of IsraEl, he conquered Samaria. 11Then he relocated all the people of IsraEl to Assyria (in Halae of Habor on the Gozan River, and in the mountains of the Medes), 12[which happened] because they wouldn’t listen to the voice of their God Jehovah.  
  
For they’d violated the Sacred Agreement that He made through His servant Moses, and they just refused to listen and do as they were told.  
  
  
13Then in the 14th year of King HezekiAh, King SenNacherIb of Assyria came against the walled cities of Judah and captured them! 14So, King HezekiAh of Judah sent messengers to the king of Assyria (who was at LachIsh at the time), saying:  
  
 ‘I have sinned!  
  
 ‘Please turn away from me!  
  
 ‘Whatever you tell me to do, I will do!’  
  
Then King HezekiAh of Judah sent a tribute to the king of Assyria consisting of 10 tons (9,000kg) of silver and a ton of gold… 15He sent him all the silver that he could find in the Temple of Jehovah and in the treasuries of the king’s palace. 16He even cut off the Temple Sanctuary doors and their supports, which were covered with gold, and gave them to the king of Assyria.  
  
17But the king of Assyria sent Tharthan, Raphis, and RapSakes from LachIsh (along with a huge army) to King HezekiAh at JeruSalem. And when they got to JeruSalem, they stood outside by the aqueduct to the upper pool along the road to the field where [women] washed clothes, 18and they yelled for HezekiAh.  
  
Well, HezekiAh’s right-hand man EliAkim (son of HelkiAh), SomNas the Scribe, and JehoAsh (son of ShaPhat) the record-keeper, came out [to meet them].  
  
19And RapSakes said:  
  
 ‘Tell HezekiAh that the great king of Assyria says this:  
  
 ‘What is this thing that you’re putting your trust in? 20For with your lips, you’ve spoken of your power to go to war! So, who is it that you were trusting in when you annulled your allegiance to me?  
  
 21‘{Look!} Are you leaning on that broken stalk of reeds called Egypt? Who would [be foolish enough] to lean on them, for they’ll puncture your hand and go right through it! Isn’t that what PharaOh, the king of Egypt, does to all those who rely on him?  
  
 22‘Or if you should say to me that you’re relying on your God Jehovah... Aren’t you the one who removed His high places of worship and His altars, and who told the people of Judah and JeruSalem to bow before the Altar in JeruSalem?  
  
 23‘Now, come and ally yourself with my master the king of Assyria and I’ll give you 2,000 horses upon which you can mount yourself and your cavalry!  
  
 24‘But if you turn your back on even the least of my lord’s servants, you’ll have to trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen thereafter.  
  
 25‘And do you really think that we came here to destroy this place without [the blessings of Jehovah]?  
  
 ‘It was Jehovah who told me to attack this land and destroy it!’  
  
26Then EliAkim (son of HelkiAh), SomNas, and JehoAsh said to RapSakes:  
  
 ‘Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, because we can also understand that.  
  
 ‘Don’t speak to us in the Judean language, because all the people who are on the walls can hear what you’re saying.’  
  
27And RapSakes replied:  
  
 ‘Do you think that my lord sent me here just to speak to you and to your lord? I’ve come here to speak to the people who are sitting on the walls… Those who’ll have to eat their own turds and drink their own urine – along with you!’  
  
28Then RapSakes stood up and shouted as loud as he could in the Judean language:  
  
 ‘Listen to the words of the great king of Assyria!  
  
 29‘My king says:  
  
 ‘Don’t trust in HezekiAh, because there’s no way that he’s going to save you from my hands!  
  
 30‘And don’t listen to HezekiAh when he tells you to put your trust in Jehovah… That He will rescue you and never give you into the hands of the king of Assyria.’  
  
 31‘No, don’t listen to HezekiAh, because this is what the king of Assyria [has promised]:  
  
 ‘If you will praise me and come out to me, you’ll all drink [wine] from your own grapevines, eat figs from your own trees, and drink water from your own wells!  
  
 32‘For I will come and take you to a land that’s like yours… A land of grain, wine, bread, vineyards, olive oil and honey, where you can live and not have to die!  
  
 ‘So, don’t listen to HezekiAh, because he’s fooling you when he says that Jehovah will rescue you!  
  
 33‘Which of the gods of the rest of the nations have saved [their people] from the hands of the king of Assyria? 34Yes, where are the gods of HaMath and ArPhad, and where are the gods of SepharVaim, Ana, and Aba?  
  
 ‘They weren’t able to rescue Samaria from my hands!  
  
 35‘So, since none of the gods of any of the lands have been able to save their countries from my hands, how can Jehovah rescue JeruSalem from my hands?’  
  
36Well at that, everything got very quiet and no one said a word in reply, because the king had commanded that no one should give an answer.  
  
37Then EliAkim (son of HelkiAh) the king’s right-hand man, SomNas the scribe, and JehoAsh (son of ShaPhat) the recorder, returned to HezekiAh and they started ripping their clothes as they told him all the things that RapSakes had said.