

## Don't POKE the Bear ~ 2 Chronicles 32 (2 Kings 18-20)

→Scripture Reading - 2 Kings 18:35, 19:14, 19:32-34

### INTRODUCTION

Don't RATTLE the cage - unless you are sure it is locked

Don't POKE the Bear

**2 Kings 18:1-3** (NLT) <sup>1</sup> Hezekiah son of Ahaz began to rule over Judah in the third year of King Hoshea's reign in Israel... <sup>3</sup> He did what was PLEASING in the LORD's sight, just as his ancestor David had done.

### Preparing for the SEIGE ~ 2 Chronicles 32:1-8

<sup>1</sup> After Hezekiah had faithfully carried out this work, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah. He laid siege to the fortified towns, giving orders for his army to break through their walls. <sup>2</sup> When Hezekiah realized that Sennacherib also intended to attack Jerusalem, <sup>3</sup> he consulted with his officials and military advisers, and they decided to stop the flow of the springs outside the city. <sup>4</sup> They organized a huge work crew to stop the flow of the springs, cutting off the brook that ran through the fields. For they said, Why should the kings of Assyria come here and find plenty of water? <sup>5</sup> Then Hezekiah worked hard at repairing all the broken sections of the wall, erecting towers, and constructing a second wall outside the first. He also reinforced the supporting terraces in the City of David and manufactured large numbers of weapons and shields. <sup>6</sup> He appointed military officers over the people and assembled them before him in the square at the city gate. Then Hezekiah encouraged them by saying: <sup>7</sup> "Be strong and courageous! Don't be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria or his mighty army, for there is a power far greater on our side! <sup>8</sup> He may have a great army, but they are merely men. We have the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles for us!" Hezekiah's words greatly encouraged the people. (NLT)

### IMPLICATION

<sup>7</sup>...there is a POWER far greater on our side. <sup>8</sup> He may have a great army, but they are merely men. We have the LORD OUR God to help us and to fight our battles for us...

**2 Kings 18:5-6** (NIV) Hezekiah TRUSTED in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among ALL the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. <sup>6</sup> He HELD FAST to the LORD and did NOT Cease to Follow Him; he KEPT the commands the LORD had given Moses.

**Deuteronomy 30:19-20** (NIV) This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you LIFE and DEATH, Blessings and Curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live <sup>20</sup> and that you may LOVE the LORD your God, LISTEN to His voice, and HOLD FAST to Him. For the LORD IS your life...

**Isaiah 43:1-3** (NIV) But now, this is what the LORD says - He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are MINE. <sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. <sup>3</sup> For I AM the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...

### A Real THREAT to Jerusalem ~ 2 Chronicles 32:9-23

<sup>9</sup> While King Sennacherib of Assyria was still besieging the town of **Lachish**, he sent his officers to Jerusalem with this message for Hezekiah and ALL the people in the city: <sup>10</sup> This is what King Sennacherib of Assyria says: What are you trusting in that makes you think you can survive my siege of Jerusalem? <sup>11</sup> Hezekiah has said, The LORD our God will rescue us from the king of Assyria. Surely Hezekiah is misleading you, sentencing you to DEATH by famine and thirst! <sup>12</sup> Don't you realize that Hezekiah is the very person who destroyed all the LORD's shrines and altars? He commanded Judah and Jerusalem to worship only at the altar at the Temple and to offer sacrifices on it alone. <sup>13</sup> "Surely you must realize what I and the other kings of Assyria before me have done to all the people of the earth! Were any of the gods of those nations able to rescue their people from my power? <sup>14</sup> Which of their gods was able to rescue its people from the destructive power of my predecessors? What makes you think your God can rescue you from me? <sup>15</sup> Don't let Hezekiah deceive you... <sup>16</sup> And Sennacherib's officers further MOCKED the LORD God and his servant Hezekiah, heaping insult upon insult. <sup>17</sup> The king also sent letters SCORNING the LORD, the God of Israel. (NLT)

**2 Kings 18:35** (NIV) <sup>35</sup> Who of all the gods of these countries has been able to save his land from me? How then can the LORD deliver Jerusalem from my hand?...

<sup>19:14</sup> Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD... (NIV)

<sup>19:19</sup> Now, O LORD our God, DELIVER us from his hand, so that ALL kingdoms on earth may know that You ALONE, O LORD, are God. (NIV)

<sup>20</sup> Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz CRIED OUT IN PRAYER to God in heaven. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD sent AN Angel who destroyed the Assyrian army with ALL its commanders AND officers. So Sennacherib was forced to return home in disgrace to his own land. And when he entered the temple of his god, some of his own sons killed him there with a sword. <sup>22</sup> That is how the LORD rescued Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria and from all the others who threatened them. So there was PEACE throughout the land. <sup>23</sup> From then on King Hezekiah became highly respected among all the surrounding nations, and MANY gifts for the LORD arrived at Jerusalem, with VALUABLE presents for King Hezekiah, too. (NLT)

## IMPLICATION

<sup>14</sup> ...What makes you think your God can rescue you from me? <sup>15</sup> Don't let Hezekiah deceive you! Don't let him fool you like this...

<sup>16</sup> And Sennacherib's officers further MOCKED the LORD God and his servant Hezekiah, heaping insult upon insult. <sup>17</sup> The king also sent letters SCORNING the LORD, the God of Israel.

→ **Don't RATTLE the Cage - Don't POKE the Bear**

**2 Kings 19:32-33** (NIV) ...this is what the LORD says concerning the king of Assyria: He will NOT enter this city or shoot an arrow here. He will NOT come before it with shield or build a siege ramp against it. <sup>33</sup> By the way that he came he will RETURN; he will NOT enter this city, declares the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> And the LORD sent AN ANGEL who destroyed the Assyrian army with ALL its commanders AND officers. So Sennacherib was forced to return home in disgrace to his own land

<sup>19:14</sup> ...received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the LORD and SPREAD IT OUT before the LORD... (NIV)

→ **Laying it out before the Lord**

**1 Peter 5:6-7** (NIV) Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast ALL your anxiety ON Him because He cares for you.

## Dangerous PRIDE ~ 2 Chronicles 32:24-33

<sup>24</sup> About that time Hezekiah became deathly ill. He prayed to the LORD, who healed him and gave him a miraculous sign. <sup>25</sup> But Hezekiah did not respond appropriately to the kindness shown him, and he became PROUD. So the LORD's anger came against him and against Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>26</sup> Then Hezekiah humbled himself and Repented of his pride, as did the people of Jerusalem. So the LORD's anger did not fall on them during Hezekiah's lifetime. <sup>27</sup> Hezekiah was VERY wealthy and highly honored. He built special treasury buildings for his silver, gold, precious stones, and spices, and for his shields and other valuable items. <sup>28</sup> He also constructed many storehouses for his grain, new wine, and olive oil; and he made many stalls for his cattle and pens for his flocks of sheep and goats. <sup>29</sup> He built many towns and acquired vast flocks and herds, for God had given him great wealth. <sup>30</sup> He blocked up the upper spring of Gihon and brought the water down through a tunnel to the west side of the City of David. And so he succeeded in everything he did. <sup>31</sup> However, when ambassadors arrived from Babylon to ask about the remarkable events that had taken place in the land, God withdrew from Hezekiah in order to TEST him and to see what was really in his heart. <sup>32</sup> The rest of the events in Hezekiah's reign and his acts of devotion are recorded in The Vision of the Prophet Isaiah Son of Amoz, which is included in The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. <sup>33</sup> When Hezekiah died, he was buried in the upper area of the royal cemetery... (NLT)

## TAKE AWAY ??

**Micah 6:8** (NIV) He has showed you, O man, what is GOOD. And what does the LORD REQUIRE of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly WITH your God.