CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
JUNE15 2024

Scripture Story: 2 Chronicles 32; 2 Kings 19.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 30.

not like other gods



Photo by The Crystal Lenz

keytext

"So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the hand of all others. He took care of them on every side."

(2 Chronicles 32:22, NIV)

flashlight

"Nothing more quickly inspires faith than the exercise of faith. The king of Judah had prepared for the coming storm; and now, confident that the prophecy against the Assyrians would be fulfilled, he stayed his soul upon God. . . . What though the armies of Assyria, fresh from the conquest of the greatest nations of earth, and triumphant over Samaria in Israel, should now turn their forces against Judah? . . . Judah had nothing to fear; for their trust was in Jehovah" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 351).

what do you think?

Circle "Agree" or "Disagree" to indicate your opinion on each statement.

Agree	Disagree	People who believe in God never need to be afraid.
Agree	Disagree	God will make sure nothing bad ever happens to His people.
Agree	Disagree	We can trust God to care for us even when things are going wrong.
Agree	Disagree	Preparing for hard times shows a lack of trust in God.

did you know?

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, ruled his empire for 24 years. During those years, Assyria was the most powerful and feared nation in that part of the world. Sennacherib's father, Sargon, defeated the northern kingdom of Israel and led 27,000 Israelites into captivity. The deported people were probably put to work digging canals in the new Assyrian capital city of Nineveh. Sennacherib also defeated the Babylonians, but he was unable to defeat King Hezekiah of Judah, even though Judah was a small nation and not very powerful. Trusting God made King Hezekiah and his people able to stand their ground against a tyrant who defeated all others.

INTO THE STORY

"After all that Hezekiah had so faithfully done, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah. He laid siege to the fortified cities, thinking to conquer them for himself. When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and that he intended to wage war against Jerusalem, he consulted with his officials and military staff about blocking off the water from the springs outside the city, and they helped him. . . . Then he worked hard repairing all the broken sections of the wall and building towers on it. . . . He also made large numbers of weapons and shields.

"He appointed military officers over the people and assembled them before him in the square at the city gate and encouraged them with these words: 'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him, for there is a greater power with us than with him. With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.' And the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah the king of Judah said.

"Later, when Sennacherib king of Assyria and all his forces were laying siege to Lachish, he sent his officers to Jerusalem with this message for Hezekiah king of Judah and for all the people of Judah who were there:

" 'This is what Sennacherib king of Assyria says: On what are you basing your confidence, that you remain in Jerusalem under siege? When Hezekiah says, "The LORD our God will save us from the hand of the king of Assyria," he is misleading you, to let you die of hunger and thirst. . . .

" 'Do you not know what I and my predecessors have done to all the peoples of the other lands? Were the gods of those nations ever able to deliver their land from my hand? . . . No god of any nation or kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand or the hand of my predecessors. How much less will your god deliver you from my hand!' . . .

"King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz cried out in prayer to heaven about this. And the LORD sent an angel, who annihilated all the fighting men and the commanders and officers in the camp of the Assyrian king. So he withdrew to his own land in disgrace. And when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons, his own flesh and blood, cut him down with the sword.

"So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from

the hand of all others. He took care of them on every side."

(2 Chronicles 32:1-22, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

What preparations did King Hezekiah make for Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem?

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What message of hope did Hezekiah have for his people?

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How did Sennacherib try to frighten the people of Judah? What was his confidence based on?

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How do you think the people of Judah reacted to Sennacherib's message?

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Why do you think the Lord defeated the Assyrians directly, rather than having Judah's army fight and win?

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punch lines

"I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth" **(Psalm 121:1, 2, NIV).**

"Do not be afraid of them; the LORD your God himself will fight for you" **(Deuteronomy 3:22, NIV).**

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God" **(Psalm 20:7, NIV).**

"Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's" **(2 Chronicles 20:15, NIV).**

"What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" **(Romans 8:31, NIV).**

further insight

"Love to Jesus will be manifested in a desire to work as He worked for the blessing and uplifting of humanity. It will lead to love, tenderness, and sympathy toward all the creatures of our heavenly Father's care."—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 77

Sabbath

Read 2 Chronicles 32:1-6.

When Sennacherib's army came to lay siege to Jerusalem, Hezekiah took some practical steps to get ready for war. List three specific things Hezekiah did to get Jerusalem ready for attack.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What do Hezekiah's preparations tell us about his trust in God? Do they show that he did trust God, or that he didn't?

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_____

Imagine you're taking a tough exam. You ask God for help—but you also study as hard as you can! Being well prepared doesn't show a lack of trust in God—rather, it puts us in a place where God is able to help us.

Sunday

Read Deuteronomy 3:22.

Siege was a popular battle tactic back in the days of walled cities. You simply parked your army outside the enemy city and waited for them to surrender or starve. This was Sennacherib's plan for conquering Jerusalem.

Of course, if you were the one sitting outside, your soldiers might get bored, or sick, or simply start to drift away if they didn't have some action. So the attacking army did what they could to make the siege go faster. This included sending messages to try to weaken the morale of those inside the walls.

Sennacherib's message to the people of Jerusalem hit right at the heart of their hope—Hezekiah's faith in God. What did Sennacherib remind God's people of, to try to weaken their faith?

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_____

The Assyrian armies had experienced huge success. None of the gods of the nations they'd conquered had been able to stand against them. But the God of Israel wasn't like other gods—He was real, ready, and able to defend His people.

Monday

Read 2 Chronicles 32:22.

Read the *Key Text* in a few different Bible translations (if you don't have multiple Bibles handy, go online to www.biblegateway.com). Notice how the last part of the text ("He took care of them on every side," NIV) is translated in different versions.

Which of these translations is most encouraging to you, when you think about God's protection over you? Explain.

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Tuesday

Read 2 Chronicles 20:15.

Nothing more quickly inspires faith than the exercise of faith." The *Flashlight* passage from *Prophets and Kings* tells us that the best way to develop greater trust in God is simple—try trusting Him! The people of Judah discovered that the Lord was not like other gods—He actually had the power to save them.

Think about a situation in your life today in which you need to trust God to care for you. Then, think of three times in the past when you know God protected and helped you. List them here:

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How does the knowledge of your experiences in the past of God's guidance and protection give you hope for the future?

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Wednesday

Choose one of the Bible texts from *Punch Lines* that you find encouraging. Cut a 1-inch strip from a piece of construction paper or cardstock and copy that verse neatly onto the strip. Use it as a bookmark in your Bible to remind you to trust God in difficult times!

Thursday

Read Psalm 20:7.

Look back at Tuesday's lesson. Do you have trouble trusting God because you don't have a lot of experience trusting Him? You can also learn from the experiences of others! If you didn't have three things to list on Tuesday, talk to a parent, teacher, or friend who's been a Christian longer than you have. Ask them for examples of times God has proven His ability to take care of them.

How do their experiences encourage you?

Parent _____

Teacher _____

Friend _____

If you still need a third example, write: "God saved Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army." The Bible is full of examples showing how God comes through for His people!

Friday

Read Romans 8:31.

Ellen White tells us, "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (*Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 162). How do these words encourage you as you think of those experiences that you and others have had of God's guidance, protection, and power?

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this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 30.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.