

## 2 Kings 18

Verses 1 - 6

Now it came about in the third year of Hoshea, the son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah became king. <sup>2</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned for twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, in accordance with everything that his father David had done. <sup>4</sup> He removed the high places and smashed the memorial stones to pieces, and cut down the Asherah. He also crushed to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel had been burning incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan. <sup>5</sup> He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; and after him there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *among those who came before him*. <sup>6</sup> For he clung to the Lord; he did not desist from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses.

Now it came about in the third year of Hoshea, the son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah became king.

See chart 1805

	King	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
10	Jotham	750/740	731	16	10 years
11	Ahaz	743/731	715	16	12 years
12	Hezekiah	728/715	686	29	13 years
13	Manasseh	696/686	642	55	10 years
14	Amon	642	640	2	
15	Josiah	640	609	31	
16	Jehoahaz	609	609	3 months	
17	Jehoiakim	609	598	11	
18	Jehoiachin	598	597	3 months	
19	Zedekiah	597	586	11	

**<sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, in accordance with everything that his father David had done.**

Only three kings of the divided kingdom were given this kind of praise.

See chart 1810

	King	Good kings	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
1	Rehoboam		930	913	17	
2	Abijam (aka Abijah)		913	911	3	
3	Asa	Did good & right	911	870	41	
4	Jehoshaphat	Like David	873/870	848	25	3 years
5	Jehoram		853/848 ?	841	8	5 years ?
6	Ahaziah (aka Jehoahaz)		841	841	1	
	Athaliah		841-835	835	6	
7	Joash (aka Jehoash)		835-796	796	40	
8	Amaziah		796-767	767	29	
9	Uzziah (aka Azariah)		791/767	740	52	24 years
10	Jotham	Like Uzziah but better	750/740	731	16	10 years
11	Ahaz		743/731	715	16	12 years
12	Hezekiah	Like David	728/715	686	29	13 years
13	Manasseh		696/686	642	55	10 years
14	Amon		642	640	2	
15	Josiah	Like David	640	609	31	
16	Jehoahaz		609	609	3 months	
17	Jehoiakim		609	598	11	
18	Jehoiachin		598	597	3 months	
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**<sup>4</sup> He removed the high places and smashed the memorial stones to pieces, and cut down the Asherah.**

It took a lot of faith to remove the high places because this practice was deeply embedded in the culture of Judah and it could have resulted in an attempted overthrow of Hezekiah.

**He also crushed to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel had been burning incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan.**

Moses made this bronze serpent in 1407 BC and Hezekiah became king in 728 BC. Almost 700 years had passed.

Originally this was made to save people's lives.

See Numbers 21:5 – 9

**<sup>5</sup> So the people spoke against God and Moses: “Why have you brought us up from Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we are disgusted with this miserable food.” <sup>6</sup> Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. <sup>7</sup> So the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and against you; intercede with the Lord, that He will remove the serpents from us.” And Moses interceded for the people. <sup>8</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery *serpent*, and put it on a flag *pole*; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, and looks at it, will live.” <sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze serpent and put it on the flag *pole*; and it came about, that if a serpent bit someone, and he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.**

But it had become an idol that the people were worshipping.

**<sup>5</sup> He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; and after him there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among those who came before him.**

There was only one other King that compared to Hezekiah.

See 2 Kings 23:24-25

**<sup>24</sup> Moreover, Josiah removed the mediums, the spiritists, the household idols, the idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so that he might fulfill the words of the Law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. <sup>25</sup> Before him there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart, all his soul, and all his might, in conformity to all the Law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.**

See chart 1810 above.

Verses 7 - 9

<sup>7</sup> And the Lord was with him; wherever he went he was successful. And he revolted against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. <sup>8</sup> He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.

See Map 1815



Defeating Philistia was a very impressive victory considering the fact that the Philistines had remained an independent nation from the time that Israel conquered the land of Canaan until the time of Solomon.



Verses 9 - 12

<sup>9</sup> Now in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria marched against Samaria and besieged it. <sup>10</sup> And at the end of three years they captured it; in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was captured. <sup>11</sup> Then the king of Assyria led Israel into exile to Assyria, and put them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

<sup>12</sup> *This happened* because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, but violated His covenant, all that Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded; they would neither listen nor do *it*.

<sup>9</sup> Now in the **fourth year of King Hezekiah**, which was the **seventh year of Hoshea** son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria marched against Samaria and besieged it.

See chart 1820

Reigns of the Northern Kings						
	King		Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
15	Shallum		752	752	1 month	
16	Menahem		752	742	10	
17	Pekahiah		742	740	2	
18	Pekah		752	732	20	
19	Hoshea	732 - 7 = 725 BC	732	722	9	

  

Reigns of the Southern Kings						
	King	Good kings	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
10	Jotham		750/740	731	16	10 years
11	Ahaz		743/731	715	16	12 years
12	Hezekiah	728 - 4 = 725 BC	728/715	686	29	13 years
13	Manasseh		696/686	642	55	10 years
14	Amon		642	640	2	
15	Josiah		640	609	31	
16	Jehoahaz		609	609	3 months	
17	Jehoiakim		609	598	11	
18	Jehoiachin		598	597	3 months	
19	Zedekiah		597	586	11	

The siege began in 725 BC and ended in 722 BC. This event took place in the previous chapter but it is included here as part of the story about the reign of Hezekiah.

There are a lot of difficulties in getting the dates of the kings correct, but it seems that the time frame between these two kings is correct.

Verses 13 - 16

**<sup>13</sup> Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria marched against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them. <sup>14</sup> Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent *messengers* to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I have done wrong. Withdraw from me; whatever you impose on me I will endure.” So the king of Assyria imposed on Hezekiah king of Judah *the payment of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.* <sup>15</sup> Hezekiah then gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasuries of the king’s house. <sup>16</sup> At that time Hezekiah cut off *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the Lord, and *from* the doorposts, which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and he gave it to the king of Assyria.**

**<sup>13</sup> Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria marched against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.**

In verse 7 we learned that Hezekiah had revolted against the king of Assyria but now he was knocking at the door and Judah was in danger of being conquered.

From world history we know this took place in 701 BC.

See video 1825 8.53 The eclipse at Nineveh

<https://www.levickfamily.com/8.53.html>

Hezekiah had a co-reign that began in 728 BC but his sole reign began in 715 BC. If we use the beginning of his sole reign we get the following:  $715 - 14 = 701\text{BC}$ .

This is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> example that we have encountered which supports the idea that some of the kings of Israel had co-reigns.

<sup>14</sup> Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent *messengers* to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I have done wrong. Withdraw from me; whatever you impose on me I will endure.” So the king of Assyria imposed on Hezekiah king of Judah *the payment of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold*.

This has been estimated to be from 2 to 10 million dollars.

<sup>15</sup> Hezekiah then gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasuries of the king’s house. <sup>16</sup> At that time Hezekiah cut off *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the Lord, and *from* the doorposts, which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and he gave it to the king of Assyria.

This had become a recurring solution for paying off tribute to foreign kings.

See 2 Kings 12:18 Hazael king of Aram

<sup>18</sup> So Jehoash king of Judah took all the sacred offerings that Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had consecrated, and his own sacred offerings, and all the gold that was found among the treasuries of the house of the Lord and of the king’s house, and sent *them* to Hazael king of Aram. Then he withdrew from Jerusalem.

See 2 Kings 16:8 the king of Assyria

<sup>8</sup> And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king’s house, and sent a gift to the king of Assyria.

Verses 17 - 18

<sup>17</sup> Then the king of Assyria sent Tartan, Rab-saris, and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a large army to Jerusalem. So they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they went up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the road of the fuller’s field. <sup>18</sup> Then they called to the king, and Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the secretary, went out to them.

Tartan, Rab-saris, and Rabshakeh and a large army were sent from Lachish to Jerusalem.

See Map 1830



Verses 19 – 25

<sup>19</sup> And Rabshakeh said to them, “Say now to Hezekiah, ‘This is what the great king, the king of Assyria says: “What is this confidence that you have? <sup>20</sup> You say—but *they are* only empty words—‘I have a plan and strength for the war.’ Now on whom have you relied, that you have revolted against me? <sup>21</sup> Now behold, you have relied on the support of this broken reed, on Egypt; on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. That is how Pharaoh king of Egypt is to all who rely on him. <sup>22</sup> However, if you say to me, ‘We have trusted in the Lord our God,’ is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, ‘You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem’? <sup>23</sup> Now then, come make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to put riders on them! <sup>24</sup> How then can you drive back *even* one official of the least of my master’s servants, and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? <sup>25</sup> Have I now come up without the Lord’s approval against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, ‘Go up against this land and destroy it.’””



<sup>20</sup> You say—*but they are only empty words*—‘I have a plan and strength for the war.’ Now on whom have you relied, that you have revolted against me?

<sup>21</sup> Now behold, you have relied on the support of this broken reed, on Egypt; on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. That is how Pharaoh king of Egypt is to all who rely on him.

In the first year Hezekiah paid the tribute to Assyria by robbing the temple because he was facing a war with the King of Assyria. But before the next payment came due (one year later) Hezekiah had made an alliance with the King of Egypt. The king of Assyria found out about this alliance and informed Hezekiah that Egypt would not be able to protect Judah from Assyria.

In 2 Kings 17, Hoshea the king of Israel, had used the same approach toward the king of Assyria and it did not work out well for the northern kingdom.

See 2 Kings 17:4 - 5

<sup>4</sup> But the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea, who had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and had *then* brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as *he had done year by year*; so the king of Assyria arrested him and confined him in prison. <sup>5</sup> Then the king of Assyria invaded the entire land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years.

Sennacherib began his siege of Lachish with all of his forces and while engaged in this operation, he sent some of his troops to Jerusalem.

See 2 Chronicles 32:9

<sup>9</sup> After this Sennacherib king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem while he was besieging Lachish with all his forces with him, against Hezekiah king of Judah and against all of Judah who were in Jerusalem, saying,

<sup>22</sup> However, if you say to me, ‘We have trusted in the Lord our God,’ is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, ‘You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem’?

We can see from this that the King of Assyria did not understand that Hezekiah had been faithful to the Lord by getting rid of the high places. He thought Hezekiah would be punished for doing this.

<sup>23</sup> **Now then, come make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to put riders on them!**

<sup>24</sup> **How then can you drive back *even* one official of the least of my master's servants, and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?**

It is interesting to see how much the King of Assyria knows about Judah.

1. He knew about the king's alliance with Egypt.
2. He knew that Hezekiah destroyed the high places.
3. He knows that Judah has a limited Army.

<sup>25</sup> **Have I now come up without the Lord's approval against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'**

We know this was a lie. The King of Assyria may have known some current information about the land of Judah but he did not understand the relationship that Hezekiah had with the Lord. God would not allow a faithful king like Hezekiah to fall into the hands of an evil king.

Verses 26 - 27

<sup>26</sup> **Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah, said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, because we understand *it*; and do not speak with us in Judean so that the people who are on the wall hear *you*." <sup>27</sup> But Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me *only* to your master and to you to speak these words? *Has he not also sent me to the men who sit on the wall, doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?*"**

<sup>26</sup> **Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah, said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, because we understand *it*; and do not speak with us in Judean so that the people who are on the wall hear *you*."**

It is interesting to find out here that the leadership of Judah knew Aramaic but the common people didn't understand it. Also, was "Judean" a hybrid of the Hebrew language or was this just a matter of terminology.

It is surprising that the representatives of Hezekiah would admit that they didn't want their forces to hear the message.

Verses 28 - 35

<sup>28</sup> Then Rabshakeh stood up and shouted with a loud voice in Judean, saying, “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! <sup>29</sup> This is what the king says: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to save you from my hand. <sup>30</sup> And do not let Hezekiah lead you to trust in the Lord by saying, “The Lord will certainly save us, and this city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.” <sup>31</sup> Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: “Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat, each one, *from* his vine and each *from* his fig tree, and drink, each one, the waters of his own cistern, <sup>32</sup> until I come and take you to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees *producing* oil, and of honey, so that you will live and not die.” But do not listen to Hezekiah, because he misleads you by saying, “The Lord will save us.” <sup>33</sup> Has any of the gods of the nations actually saved his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? <sup>34</sup> Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they saved Samaria from my hand? <sup>35</sup> Who among all the gods of the lands *are there* who have saved their land from my hand, that the Lord would save Jerusalem from my hand?””

<sup>31</sup> Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: “Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat, each one, *from* his vine and each *from* his fig tree, and drink, each one, the waters of his own cistern, <sup>32</sup> until I come and take you to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees *producing* oil, and of honey, so that you will live and not die.” But do not listen to Hezekiah, because he misleads you by saying, “The Lord will save us.”

The Big Lie here is that if they surrender, they will be treated great. They will be treated well now and when they arrive at their new land. Was it ever the custom of an invading nation to treat their subjects with kindness?

<sup>35</sup> **Who among all the gods of the lands *are there* who have saved their land from my hand, that the Lord would save Jerusalem from my hand?”**

It seems that showing contempt for the gods of other nations was a point of pride for the king of Assyria. But the God of Judah is no common god and He will quickly humble this arrogant king.

Verses 36 - 37

**<sup>36</sup> But the people were silent and did not answer him *with even* a word, because it was the king's command: "Do not answer him." <sup>37</sup> Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the secretary, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and they reported to him the words of Rabshakeh.**

This was a difficult message to hear and it would have been tempting to insult the Assyrian army but the people remained silent as they had been instructed.