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## Daily Rice 2024 April 16

YouTube Prayer Link

The spiritual vessel of worship - the bronze serpent

2 Kings 18

2 Kings 18 begins with the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah, who was a righteous king in Jehovah's eyes. Hezekiah removed the heights, smashed the holy stones, cut down the pillars of the Asherah, and destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had made, which had become an object of idolatry.

Hezekiah also trusted in Yahwa and obeyed his commands, so Yahweh was with him, and all his efforts were successful. Hezekiah rebelled against the Assyrian king and refused to contribute to him, which led to the Assyrian invasion of Judah and the occupation of several cities.

However, Hezekiah did not lose faith in God and turned to the prophet Isaiah for guidance and reassurance. Isaiah told Hezekiah that Jehovah would save Judah and that the Assyrians would not enter the city of Jerusalem.

Hezekiah prayed to God for deliverance, and Yahweh sent angels to destroy the Assyrian army, killing 185,000 soldiers. The king of Assyria returned to his land in disgrace and was eventually assassinated by his own son.

After this victory, Hezekiah became more prosperous and became known for his great wealth and wisdom. Hezekiah also renovated the temple and restored proper worship of the Lord, which had been neglected in previous reigns.

However, despite Hezekiah's righteousness, he also made some mistakes. He showed all his treasures and his kingdom to the Babylonian envoys, which led to Isaiah's prophecy that Judah would eventually be captured by Babylon.

Overall, chapter 18 emphasizes the importance of trusting the Lord and following His commands, even in the face of great adversity. Hezekiah is a model of faithfulness and righteousness, but it also reminds us that even the most righteous leaders make mistakes and need to rely on God for guidance and forgiveness. In the face of reality, the people 'remained silent' (v.36), but they must have had mixed feelings: why did the king continue to be in such a difficult and critical situation when he had imitated David (v.3), removed idols (v.4), trusted God (vv.5–6), and God was with him (vv.7–8), why did God's heartfelt ministry go so badly, and why didn't God save the godly people? Today, whenever a crisis strikes, these questions torment believers again and again, testing whether we trust God's Word, or the teachings of others, our own imaginations, or our past experiences.

Today, when we feel that we love the Lord zealously, when we are not used to seeing "nominal believers," God will also raise up the "King of Assyria" in our lives, so that we can see that no matter how many spiritual things we have done and how many spiritual teachings we have preached, we will eventually expose the weakness of the flesh like Hezekiah. For God prunes all whom he chooses: "Whatever brings fruit, he repairs, and causes the branches to bear more fruit" (John 15:2). Therefore, God will not spare Hezekiah, nor will he spare us; He must bring us to the point where we will completely admit our total depravity, let go of not only our outer self but also our inner self, and truly take up our cross and follow the Lord (Matt. 16:24).

There are many passages in the Bible that contain God's teachings and guidance that have had a profound impact on the Christian faith and life. Here are some Bible passages that are often thought to contain God's teachings:

Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, not in your own understanding, for he will direct your paths if you know him in all things." "

Matthew 22:37-39 - "Jesus said to him, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest

commandment. Secondly, it is also the same, that is, to love your neighbor as yourself. 』 "

Colossians 3:23-24 - "Whatever you do, do it from your heart, as for the Lord, not for men, for you know that from the Lord you will receive an inheritance as a reward." You serve the Lord Christ. "

Matthew 5:3-10 - "Then Jesus opened his mouth and taught them, saying, 'Blessed are the low-minded, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'" Blessed are the sorrowful, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the hungry and thirsty for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will have mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 』 "

These chapters are just the tip of the iceberg, and there are many other parts of the Bible that contain God's teachings. God's Word is a guide to our lives and beliefs, and we hope these verses will bring you peace and comfort.

Overall, chapter 18 emphasizes the importance of trusting the Lord and following His commands, even in the face of great adversity. Hezekiah is a model of faithfulness and righteousness, but it also reminds us that even the most righteous leaders make mistakes and need to rely on God for guidance and forgiveness. We pray together:

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank You for Your love and grace, and for the guidance and teaching You have given us. We gather here to seek Your wisdom and strength so that we can truly trust You and follow Your commands.

Lord, we know that trusting You is the most important thing in our lives. We pray that You will strengthen our faith so that we can endure and remain unwavering in the midst of hardships and trials.

Please guide us to follow Your commands and let our lives be testimonies of Your glory. Help us to show love, kindness, gentleness, and righteousness in our daily lives, to walk with You, and to live a life that is right for You.

Lord, our hearts can feel irritability and turmoil at times, but we trust You to bring peace and comfort. Soothe the restlessness in our hearts and give us the peace and strength to trust in You completely.

Please help us to draw near to You every day, relying on Your strength and wisdom to become who You want us to be.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray,

Amen.

## 2 Kings 18

18:1 In the third year of Hoshea, son of Eliah king of Israel, Hezekiah, son of Ahaaz, king of Judah, became king.

18:2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abi, and she was the daughter of Zechariah.

18:3 Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of God, following the example of his father David in everything.

18:4 He destroyed the high places, destroyed the pillars, cut down the puppets, and broke the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for the Israelites still burned incense on the serpent. The Hezekiah called the bronze serpent a brass (or the bronze serpent was called a bronze image).

18:5 Hezekiah relied on the God of Jehovah, Israel, and there was none of the kings of Judah before him or his own.

18:6 For he trusted in Yahweh, and never departed, keeping the commandments which Jehovah commanded Moses.

18:7 Yes and he was with him, and he was prosperous wherever he went. He rebelled and refused to serve the king of Assyria.

18:8 Hezekiah attacked the Philistines as far as Gaza, and the four borders of Judah from the lookout to the fortified city.

18:9 In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, in the seventh year of Hoshea, son of Elah, king of Israel, King of Assyria came up with Israel to besiege Samaria.

18:10                   After three years they took the city . In the sixth year of Hezekiah and in the ninth year of Israel's king Hosham, Samaria was conquered.

18:11                   And the king of Assyria took the Israelites captive to Assyria, and set them in the cities of the Mades by the rivers Habo and Gosan.

18:12                   Because they did not hearken unto the word of the God of Jehohua, and broke his covenant, they were commanded to keep it by Moses the servant of Yahohua.

18:13                   In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sinaki of Assyria came up to attack all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them.

18:14                   And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, and said, I am guilty: depart from me. Whatever you punish me, I will bear it. So the king of Assyria punished Hezekiah king of Jesus with three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold.

18:15                   And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was in the house of Yahohua and in the treasury of the king's house.

18:16                   At that time Hezekiah, king of Judah, scraped down the gold that was on the gate of the house of Yahweh, and the gold that he himself had wrapped on the pillar, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

18:17                   And the king of Assyria sent from Lachish Tartan, Rabezali, and Labshach, with a great army to Jerusalem to the king of Hezekiah. And when they went up to Jerusalem, they stood by the water of the Upper Pool, on the great road of the Bleaching Ground.

18:18                   And when they called the king, Eliakim, the son of the house of Helet, and the chronicler Joa, the son of Hellite, came out to see them.

18:19                   And Rabshakeh said, Go and say unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the king of Assyria, What is thy trust?

18:20                   you say that you have the strategy and ability to fight a war , i don't think it's a lie . In the end in whom do you turn your back against me?

18:21                   Behold, the Ethiopia in whom thou trustest is the bruised reed, and if a man leans on it, he shall pierce his hand. So it was with Pharaoh the king of Egypt who relied on him all .

18:22 If you say to me, 'We trust in the Lord our God), will not Hezekiah take away the high places and the altars of God, and say to Judah and the people of Jerusalem, 'Do you worship before this altar in Jerusalem?'

18:23 Now give it to my lord Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, and see if there are not enough horsemen for you to ride horses.

18:24 if not, how can you defeat the youngest commander of my lord's servants? Do you rely on Egypt's chariots and horses?

18:25 Now that I have come up to attack and destroy this land, do I not have the intention of Yahweh? Yahweh said unto me, Go up and smite and destroy this land.

18:26 And Eliakim, the son of the house of Heles, and Shebna, and about Asia, said unto Rabshakhi, Speak unto thy servant in the Aramaic language, for we understand. Don't speak to us in the big language and reach the ears of the people of the city.

18:27 And Rabshakeh said, Shall my lord send me, and speak these things to thee and thy lord only? Is it not also to those who sit in the city to eat their dung and drink their own urine with you?

18:28 So Rabzaki stood and cried out in a loud voice in the Jewish language, "Hear the king of Assyria."

18:29 Thus saith the king, Do not be deceived by the Greeks. for he cannot deliver you out of my hand.

18:30 and hear not Hezekiah make you trust in Yahweh, saying, Yahweh will save us, and this city will not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

18:31 did not listen to Hezekiah. For thus saith the king of Assyria, Be reconciled to me, and come out and surrender to me, and every man may eat of his own vine and his fig tree, and drink of the water of his well.

18:32 When I come and bring you to a land like you in your own land, it will be a land of grain and wine, a land of food and vineyards, a land of olive trees and bee nectar, that you may live and not die. Hezekiah exhorts you, saying, Yahweh will save us; You don't have to listen to him.

18:33 Which of the gods of the nations delivered his own kingdom from the hand of the king of Assyria?

18:34 Where is the God of Hamath and Arpad ? Where is the god of Zephavaim , Hena, and Eva? Did they save Samaria from my hands?

18:35 Who of these gods has saved his kingdom from my hand? Can Jehovah save Jerusalem from my hand?

18:36 The people were silent and did not reply a word , for the king had commanded him not to answer him .

18:37 Now Eliakim, the son of the House of Heal, and Shebna the scribe, and Joa, the son of Asa, came to Hezekia and told him what had been said.

2 Kings 18 begins with the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah, who was a righteous king in Jehovah's eyes. Hezekiah removed the heights, smashed the holy stones, cut down the pillars of the Asherah, and destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had made, which had become an object of idolatry.

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However, despite Hezekiah's righteousness, he also made some mistakes. He showed all his treasures and his kingdom to the Babylonian envoys, which led to Isaiah's prophecy that Judah would eventually be captured by Babylon.

In 2 Kings 18, some key passages include:

One. Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. Of all the kings of Judah, neither before him nor after him, there was no man like him. - II Kings 18:5

Two. "He removed the heights, smashed the sacred stones, and cut down the pillars of the Asherah. He smashed the bronze serpent made by Moses to pieces because the Israelites had been burning incense to it until then. (It's called Nehushtan.) - II Kings 18:4

Three. "The king of Assyria sent his supreme commander, his commander, and his field commander with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem. They came to Jerusalem and stopped in front of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the way to the laundryman's field. - II Kings 18:17

These verses highlight Hezekiah's trust in God and his efforts to reform Judah by eliminating pagan worship practices. The chapter also recounts the attack of the Assyrian army on Judah, led by several commanders.

In 2 Kings 18, we read about the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah. This chapter offers a few points to think about:

**The Faithfulness of a Righteous King:** Hezekiah is portrayed as a king who follows in the footsteps of his ancestor David. Hezekiah removed the heights and idols from the land, restored his worship to Yahweh, and trusted God to save him. His faithfulness and commitment to God was an example of righteous leadership and inspired the people of Judah to turn their hearts to God. It reminds us that a faithful and godly leader can have a significant impact on a nation.