**2 Kings 17-20** - April 14th

Hoshea Last King of Israel

**17**In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned nine years. **2**He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, but not like the kings of Israel who preceded him.

**3**Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up to attack Hoshea, who had been Shalmaneser’s vassal and had paid him tribute. **4**But the king of Assyria discovered that Hoshea was a traitor, for he had sent envoys to So[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9988a)] king of Egypt, and he no longer paid tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. Therefore Shalmaneser seized him and put him in prison. **5**The king of Assyria invaded the entire land, marched against Samaria and laid siege to it for three years. **6**In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes.

Israel Exiled Because of Sin

**7**All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods **8**and followed the practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. **9**The Israelites secretly did things against the Lord their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns. **10**They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. **11**At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the Lord had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that aroused the Lord’s anger. **12**They worshiped idols, though the Lord had said, “You shall not do this.” **13**The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: “Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your ancestors to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.”

**14**But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their ancestors, who did not trust in the Lord their God. **15**They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their ancestors and the statutes he had warned them to keep. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the Lord had ordered them, “Do not do as they do.”

**16**They forsook all the commands of the Lord their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshiped Baal. **17**They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sought omens and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, arousing his anger.

**18**So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left, **19**and even Judah did not keep the commands of the Lord their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced. **20**Therefore the Lord rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence.

**21**When he tore Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat their king. Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the Lord and caused them to commit a great sin. **22**The Israelites persisted in all the sins of Jeroboam and did not turn away from them **23**until the Lord removed them from his presence, as he had warned through all his servants the prophets. So the people of Israel were taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria, and they are still there.

Samaria Resettled

**24**The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Kuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim and settled them in the towns of Samaria to replace the Israelites. They took over Samaria and lived in its towns. **25**When they first lived there, they did not worship the Lord; so he sent lions among them and they killed some of the people. **26**It was reported to the king of Assyria: “The people you deported and resettled in the towns of Samaria do not know what the god of that country requires. He has sent lions among them, which are killing them off, because the people do not know what he requires.”

**27**Then the king of Assyria gave this order: “Have one of the priests you took captive from Samaria go back to live there and teach the people what the god of the land requires.” **28**So one of the priests who had been exiled from Samaria came to live in Bethel and taught them how to worship the Lord.

**29**Nevertheless, each national group made its own gods in the several towns where they settled, and set them up in the shrines the people of Samaria had made at the high places. **30**The people from Babylon made Sukkoth Benoth, those from Kuthah made Nergal, and those from Hamath made Ashima; **31**the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire as sacrifices to Adrammelek and Anammelek, the gods of Sepharvaim. **32**They worshiped the Lord, but they also appointed all sorts of their own people to officiate for them as priests in the shrines at the high places. **33**They worshiped the Lord, but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought.

**34**To this day they persist in their former practices. They neither worship the Lord nor adhere to the decrees and regulations, the laws and commands that the Lord gave the descendants of Jacob, whom he named Israel. **35**When the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites, he commanded them: “Do not worship any other gods or bow down to them, serve them or sacrifice to them. **36**But the Lord, who brought you up out of Egypt with mighty power and outstretched arm, is the one you must worship. To him you shall bow down and to him offer sacrifices. **37**You must always be careful to keep the decrees and regulations, the laws and commands he wrote for you. Do not worship other gods. **38**Do not forget the covenant I have made with you, and do not worship other gods. **39**Rather, worship the Lord your God; it is he who will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.”

**40**They would not listen, however, but persisted in their former practices. **41**Even while these people were worshiping the Lord, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their ancestors did.

Hezekiah King of Judah

**18**In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. **2**He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother’s name was Abijah[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-10027c)] daughter of Zechariah. **3**He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David had done. **4**He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.)

**5**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. **6**He held fast to the Lord and did not stop following him; he kept the commands the Lord had given Moses. **7**And the Lord was with him; he was successful in whatever he undertook. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. **8**From watchtower to fortified city, he defeated the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory.

**9**In King Hezekiah’s fourth year, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria marched against Samaria and laid siege to it. **10**At the end of three years the Assyrians took it. So Samaria was captured in Hezekiah’s sixth year, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel. **11**The king of Assyria deported Israel to Assyria and settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in towns of the Medes. **12**This happened because they had not obeyed the Lord their God, but had violated his covenant - all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded. They neither listened to the commands nor carried them out.

**13**In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah’s reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. **14**So Hezekiah king of Judah sent this message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: “I have done wrong. Withdraw from me, and I will pay whatever you demand of me.” The king of Assyria exacted from Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-10039e)] of silver and thirty talents of gold. **15**So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the temple of the Lord and in the treasuries of the royal palace.

**16**At this time Hezekiah king of Judah stripped off the gold with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple of the Lord, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem

**17**The king of Assyria sent his supreme commander, his chief officer and his field commander with a large army, from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They came up to Jerusalem and stopped at the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman’s Field. **18**They called for the king; and Eliakim son of Hilkiah the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went out to them.

**19**The field commander said to them, “Tell Hezekiah:

“‘This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: On what are you basing this confidence of yours? **20**You say you have the counsel and the might for war -but you speak only empty words. On whom are you depending, that you rebel against me? **21**Look, I know you are depending on Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff, which pierces the hand of anyone who leans on it! Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who depend on him. **22**But if you say to me, “We are depending on the Lord our God” - isn’t he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, “You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem”?

**23**“‘Come now, make a bargain with my master, the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses - if you can put riders on them! **24**How can you repulse one officer of the least of my master’s officials, even though you are depending on Egypt for chariots and horsemen[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-10049g)]? **25**Furthermore, have I come to attack and destroy this place without word from the Lord? The Lord himself told me to march against this country and destroy it.’”

**26**Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and Shebna and Joah said to the field commander, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, since we understand it. Don’t speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people on the wall.”

**27**But the commander replied, “Was it only to your master and you that my master sent me to say these things, and not to the people sitting on the wall—who, like you, will have to eat their own excrement and drink their own urine?”

**28**Then the commander stood and called out in Hebrew, “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! **29**This is what the king says: Do not let Hezekiah deceive you. He cannot deliver you from my hand. **30**Do not let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in the Lord when he says, ‘The Lord will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’

**31**“Do not listen to Hezekiah. This is what the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me and come out to me. Then each of you will eat fruit from your own vine and fig tree and drink water from your own cistern, **32**until I come and take you to a land like your own - a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey. Choose life and not death!

“Do not listen to Hezekiah, for he is misleading you when he says, ‘The Lord will deliver us.’ **33**Has the god of any nation ever delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? **34**Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they rescued Samaria from my hand?**35**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?”

**36**But the people remained silent and said nothing in reply, because the king had commanded, “Do not answer him.” **37**Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went to Hezekiah, with their clothes torn, and told him what the field commander had said.

Jerusalem’s Deliverance Foretold

**19**When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and went into the temple of the Lord. **2**He sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary and the leading priests, all wearing sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. **3**They told him, “This is what Hezekiah says: This day is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace, as when children come to the moment of birth and there is no strength to deliver them. **4**It may be that the Lord your God will hear all the words of the field commander, whom his master, the king of Assyria, has sent to ridicule the living God, and that he will rebuke him for the words the Lord your God has heard. Therefore pray for the remnant that still survives.”

**5**When King Hezekiah’s officials came to Isaiah, **6**Isaiah said to them, “Tell your master, ‘This is what the Lord says: Do not be afraid of what you have heard—those words with which the underlings of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. **7**Listen! When he hears a certain report, I will make him want to return to his own country, and there I will have him cut down with the sword.’”

**8**When the field commander heard that the king of Assyria had left Lachish, he withdrew and found the king fighting against Libnah.

**9**Now Sennacherib received a report that Tirhakah, the king of Cush,[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+17-20&version=NIV#fen-NIV-10071h)] was marching out to fight against him. So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah with this word: **10**“Say to Hezekiah king of Judah: Do not let the god you depend on deceive you when he says, ‘Jerusalem will not be given into the hands of the king of Assyria.’ **11**Surely you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the countries, destroying them completely. And will you be delivered? **12**Did the gods of the nations that were destroyed by my predecessors deliver them—the gods of Gozan, Harran, Rezeph and the people of Eden who were in Tel Assar? **13**Where is the king of Hamath or the king of Arpad? Where are the kings of Lair, Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah?”

Hezekiah’s Prayer

**14**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. **15**And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: “Lord, the God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. **16**Give ear, Lord, and hear; open your eyes, Lord, and see; listen to the words Sennacherib has sent to ridicule the living God.

**17**“It is true, Lord, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste these nations and their lands. **18**They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by human hands. **19**Now, Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone, Lord, are God.”

Isaiah Prophesies Sennacherib’s Fall

**20**Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I have heard your prayer concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria. **21**This is the word that the Lord has spoken against him:

“‘Virgin Daughter Zion despises you and mocks you. Daughter Jerusalem
    tosses her head as you flee. **22**Who is it you have ridiculed and blasphemed?
    Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes in pride?
    Against the Holy One of Israel! **23**By your messengers you have ridiculed the Lord.
And you have said, “With my many chariots I have ascended the heights of the mountains, the utmost heights of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars,
    the choicest of its junipers. I have reached its remotest parts, the finest of its forests. **24**I have dug wells in foreign lands and drunk the water there. With the soles of my feet
    I have dried up all the streams of Egypt.”

**25**“‘Have you not heard? Long ago I ordained it. In days of old I planned it;
    now I have brought it to pass, that you have turned fortified cities into piles of stone.
**26**Their people, drained of power, are dismayed and put to shame.
They are like plants in the field, like tender green shoots, like grass sprouting on the roof, scorched before it grows up. **27**“‘But I know where you are and when you come and go and how you rage against me. **28**Because you rage against me and because your insolence has reached my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth, and I will make you return by the way you came.’

**29**“This will be the sign for you, Hezekiah: “This year you will eat what grows by itself,
    and the second year what springs from that. But in the third year sow and reap,
    plant vineyards and eat their fruit. **30**Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah
    will take root below and bear fruit above. **31**For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. “The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

**32**“Therefore 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. **33**By the way that he came he will return;
    he will not enter this city, declares the Lord. **34**I will defend this city and save it,
    for my sake and for the sake of David my servant.’”

**35**That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning - there were all the dead bodies! **36**So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

**37**One day, while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisrok, his sons Adrammelek and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and they escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son succeeded him as king.

Hezekiah’s Illness

**20**In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, “This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover.”

**2**Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, **3**“Remember, Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

**4**Before Isaiah had left the middle court, the word of the Lord came to him: **5**“Go back and tell Hezekiah, the ruler of my people, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the Lord. **6**I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David.’”

**7**Then Isaiah said, “Prepare a poultice of figs.” They did so and applied it to the boil, and he recovered. **8**Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, “What will be the sign that the Lord will heal me and that I will go up to the temple of the Lord on the third day from now?” **9**Isaiah answered, “This is the Lord’s sign to you that the Lord will do what he has promised: Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or shall it go back ten steps?” **10**“It is a simple matter for the shadow to go forward ten steps,” said Hezekiah. “Rather, have it go back ten steps.” **11**Then the prophet Isaiah called on the Lord, and the Lord made the shadow go back the ten steps it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

Envoys From Babylon

**12**At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of Hezekiah’s illness. **13**Hezekiah received the envoys and showed them all that was in his storehouses - the silver, the gold, the spices and the fine olive oil - his armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.

**14**Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, “What did those men say, and where did they come from?” “From a distant land,” Hezekiah replied. “They came from Babylon.” **15**The prophet asked, “What did they see in your palace?” “They saw everything in my palace,” Hezekiah said. “There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.”

**16**Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord: **17**The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord.**18**And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

**19**“The word of the Lord you have spoken is good,” Hezekiah replied. For he thought, “Will there not be peace and security in my lifetime?” **20**As for the other events of Hezekiah’s reign, all his achievements and how he made the pool and the tunnel by which he brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? **21**Hezekiah rested with his ancestors. And Manasseh his son succeeded him as king.