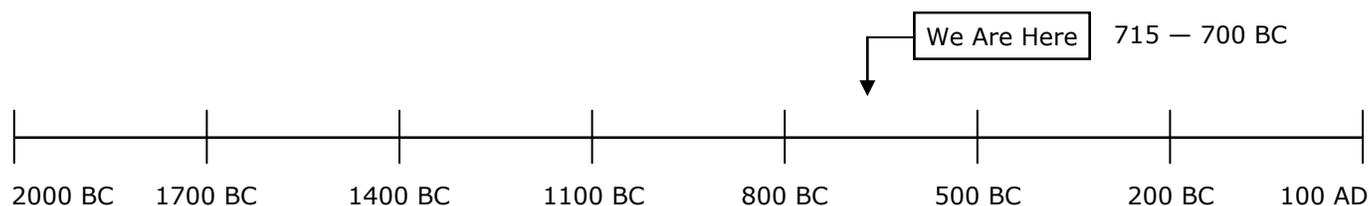


Enemy at the Gate

Week 29: July 16-22 — *2 Kings 18-20; Isaiah 18-39; Micah 1-7* 55.3% Complete — 162 Days to Go



Helpful Resources

Overview of Bible History (p.37), Kings and Prophets (p.71)

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

Much of our time was given to the prophecies of Micah and Isaiah. While both men delivered messages of judgment to other nations, their main concern was Judah. While we will not dwell on any particular prophecy, it's important to note that Judah was on a similar path as Israel and judgment was certainly in its future. However, there were pauses in its decadence, even a reversal, of sorts, with the reign of men like Hezekiah. In 703 BC, the Assyrians were on the prowl. Just 20 years earlier in 722, Israel was consumed by these wicked people. Two decades later, the Assyrians were still the dominant force. It would make sense, now that the Israelites had fallen, that the Assyrians would try to invade Judah. They did in 703, and they fully expected to be victorious; the only problem was that there was a righteous king in Judah at the time. Because of Hezekiah's devotion to God, the people of Jerusalem witnessed a miracle.

- Personal Application

1. **When we get excited about the things of God, our Enemy gets excited to stop us.** Hezekiah was unlike most kings; he sought the Lord with his whole heart and desired to do what was right (*2 Chron. 31*); but, *2 Chronicles 32* begins with Sennacherib invading. Our Enemy loves to see us lifeless, spiritually indifferent, growing little or not at all; but as soon as we get fired up about God's ways, we'll find opposition to cool us down again.
2. **Our Enemy's intention is to destroy us** (*2 Chron. 32:1, 2*). Since Lucifer was cast out of heaven, he's had two goals — to pervert God's ways and neutralize His followers. He has wanted to annihilate the Jews; he wants the same for Christians. Whatever it takes to steal, kill, and destroy what God has established or is planning, Lucifer will do.
3. **We must anticipate the Enemy's attack and be prepared to defend ourselves** (*2 Chron. 32:2-6*). We must be like Hezekiah who, first, "consulted with his officials and military advisers." We must surround ourselves with godly people who will encourage us, fight beside us, and keep us accountable. Second, "He decided to stop the flow of the springs to the city." Hezekiah ordered this done so that the Assyrians could not use it to sustain them during the siege. Likewise, we must not give our Enemy any foothold that he can use against us. Third, "He strengthened existing walls and even built new walls around the city." Each of us knows where we are vulnerable, and to protect ourselves against attack, we must guard ourselves with spiritual armor (*Ephesians 6:1-12*).

4. **We are not to fear our Enemy but know Who is on our side** (2 Chron. 32:7, 8).
The Assyrians were the most feared people of ancient history. They established a nation based on terrorism and intimidated nations with their barbaric practices. Likewise, Satan and his cohort are powerful and dangerous, and they want us to surrender to them. While we should respect this evil force, we are not to be afraid of them, for we have on our side Someone who has overcome them (1 John 4:4).
5. **Our Enemy lies so that we will forsake the Lord** (2 Kings 18:19-37; 19:10-13; 2 Chron. 32:10-15). Sennacherib sent messages to Hezekiah to persuade him to give up; his messages were filled with lies in an effort to intimidate him. Such is the way of our Enemy, who is the father of lies (John 8:44). What are some the lies the Enemy uses against us? They are similar to what Sennacherib used against Jerusalem: "There is no one who can help you stand against me. God cannot be trusted. He will not save you. Giving into me is what's best for you. My way is the better way. The grass is greener on my side of the fence. God has let you down before, and He will let you down again."
6. **We cannot fight our Enemy in our own way; we must rely upon the Lord** (2 Kings 18:13-18). Hezekiah tried to defy the Assyrians and then throw money at them to keep them away from Jerusalem. It didn't work. Sennacherib wanted Jerusalem destroyed and the people dispersed, just as with Israel. We must remember that we do not fight against flesh and blood but against the spirit world; therefore, no power that we can wield in the physical sense will prevail against it (1 Cor. 10:3, 4; Eph. 6:12). King Hezekiah did the right thing and took the fight to the Lord (2 Kings 19:1, 14-19).
7. **God is not intimidated by any enemy of ours. He can overcome our opposition.**
No matter what we face in life, God can overcome it. Though we may get overwhelmed, we can do all things through Him. His power supplants our weaknesses (2 Kings 19:1-7; Isaiah 37:36-38).
8. **Our Enemy will try many ways to neutralize us — if not the frontal attack, then the sneak attack.** Though we may win a battle, the war is not over; Satan will continue to attack, even in ways we don't foresee. Hezekiah may have ousted the Assyrians, but he will give in to the Babylonians. Because of pride, he invited them in and revealed his riches. I believe that many times Satan doesn't have to attack us because we blindly invite him into our lives (2 Kings 20:12-19). Even then, God is merciful to help us.

- Prophetic Passages

1. **Judah's Downfall** (Isaiah 30:1-17; 31:1-3; Micah 3:1-12; 4:10-12)
2. **The Destruction of the Assyrians** (Isaiah 31:8,9; 33:1-4)
3. **The End Times** (Isaiah 24:1-27:13; 32; Micah 4:1-7)

The Bottom Line

We cannot *fight* our Enemy in our *own* way; we must *rely* upon the *Lord*.

Questions to Consider

1. Describe a time when Satan either tried to frustrate or stop your spiritual momentum.
2. In your opinion, what's the best way to defend yourself against enemy attack?
3. What are some lies that Satan has told you over the years? How did you defeat them?