

In Episode 2 we hear more mockery. This time not from among God's people but from the great king of Assyria, Sennacherib. Sennacherib comes with a war of words. He preaches against God's people.

Firstly he challenges their confidence in v10. He mocks Hezekiah for trusting in the LORD, and points out that Hezekiah has gotten rid of all their high places calling for worship only at the temple. He appeals to the people's loyalty to their idols... if only they could worship them they might triumph.

Then Sennacherib boasts of his conquests over other peoples and gods. No-one has been able to stand against him. And he's right. They haven't. He has been a flood-tide through the land. Once more (11, 15) he says Hezekiah is misleading and deceiving them. They should not believe what their King says – he boasts that their god cannot save them from him. He continues with further insults and blasphemy against the LORD (16-17) even speaking in Hebrew so that they can understand. It's gross blasphemy and he makes a fatal error. V19 – he spoke against the LORD as if he was just another god like all others... like those people invent and make for themselves. He overstretched himself. Anyone can beat imaginary gods. The difference is that the LORD is real. He exists. And he is very big. Very powerful. And very concerned for his own reputation. He doesn't like to be mocked.

And so Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah pray. They pray to the real God. Sennacherib has defeated the people of the nations who worship fake gods. But they call on the true God, the LORD. And the LORD sends an angel, a postman, who defeats Sennacherib's army with ease... and Sennacherib runs home in disgrace only to be killed by his family.

The LORD saves his people and vindicates his name. No one mocks God and gets away with it. This kind of mockery is the same that which happened to Jesus at the cross in Mark 15... he was taunted, mocked and blasphemed. But the LORD gets vindicated and he hears the prayers of his people.



Cell Notes >4/5. Hezekiah –
Don't mock God, humbly seek him!

Welcome (10)

Your cell is a **mission team** based in your hall.

Share together... WHAT IS GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE?

What's good? What's a struggle?

Explain that you'll study God's word together, pray and seek to encourage and equip one another to live and speak for Jesus.

This term we're studying 2 Chronicles a book about living in humble orthodoxy.

Witness (30)

Christian Union is a Mission Team – you're part of that!

Share stories of attempting to witness to friends.

Where do you need help? Who can you pray for?

Ask that God would spread his fame throughout all the earth.

Word (40)

2 Chronicles 30v1-31v1 & 32v1-23
Theme – God's King intercedes for God's glory and God's people.
Transformational-Faith-Aim:
Call out to the true God.

30v1-31v1 Episode 1: The King who intercedes for his humble people – the God who hears from heaven

30v1-5 What does Hezekiah call the people to do? Why does he write to them?

30v6-9 What are the people reminded of in the letter? What assurances are they given? How would it feel to receive this letter/proclamation?

30v10-18a What responses do the couriers get? What is the problem with those who do come?

30v18b-31v1 What does the King do for his people? What does God do? (20,27) What does this show us about the role of the King... and about God's concern for his people? How is He keeping his promise to them? (recall 2 Chronicles 7) What's the mood among the people because of this? (26, 27, 1)

Living for Jesus
Speaking for Jesus



32v1-23 Episode 2: The King who intercedes when God is mocked – the God who hears from heaven to vindicate his name.

1-8 What does Sennacherib do? How does Hezekiah respond?

9-23 What does Sennacherib say? Why does Sennacherib talk about the idols that Hezekiah tore down? What are Sennacherib's boasts? (13-14) Why would he boast like this? What other strategies does he use? (17/18) What is Sennacherib's error? (19)

The language used by Sennacherib here, and by the mockers in 30v10 is the same as that used against Jesus in Mark 15...

20-23 How do Hezekiah and Isaiah respond? (20) How does the LORD respond to Sennacherib's mockery and to the prayers of his King? What is the result of these events for the LORD and his King? What does this show us about our God?

Next Week

Josiah and the end...
2 Chronicles 35v20-36v23

ABOUT QUESTIONS!

OBSERVATION: what does it say, why does it say it here, why say it this way...

INTERPRETATION: what does it say about the gospel, what did it mean then, what does it mean now..

APPLICATION: how must this change my thoughts, affections, actions...

SUMMARY: Use good questions to unlock the passage and help the group find what it says. Try to avoid answering your questions. Use questions to rub their faces in the text – 'where does it say that' . At the end of each section, ask the group summarise the section in their own words. If it's way off ask them to revise it, and if necessary go back over things.

Worship (10)

Turn your 'education' into 'exultation' – ask God to glorify himself!

Word Notes

Two episodes in the reign of Hezekiah. Both deal with similar themes. Notice in both that Hezekiah intercedes for his people. This is part of the role of the King – and we know that King Jesus is always interceding for us. In the first episode Hezekiah calls the people to celebrate passover.

They're invited to come and receive God's grace. God is angry at them for their *stiff-neckedness* and failure to keep his word, but if they come he'll forgive because he is gracious and compassionate. His face will be on those who repent. The letter goes out as a proclamation of good news (10) but the people mock and scorn. Nevertheless some do respond with humility. They come however and celebrate passover irregularly and without all the proscribed consecration. Hezekiah knows this should incur judgment but prays for the people. And surprisingly the LORD hears from heaven and heals them of their uncleanness. He shows immense mercy to these humbled people... their worship isn't quite by the book, but their hearts are. Ultimately it was God who would purify them not their ritual and here it is proved. In 30v20 and v27 we're told that God hears from heaven – this was Solomon's great request. And here the promise is kept! There is great joy and celebration. God is vindicated – he looks glorious as he has mercy on his sinful but humble people.