

## The Story, chapter 16 (excerpts from 2 Kings 17-21, Isaiah 3, 14, 49)

<sup>13</sup> 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.”

<sup>14</sup> But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their ancestors, who did not trust in the Lord their God. <sup>15</sup> 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.”

<sup>18</sup> So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left, (2 Kings 17:13-15, 18)

### Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem

<sup>17</sup> 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 [in Judah]. They came up to Jerusalem and stopped at the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman’s Field. <sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup> 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? <sup>20</sup> 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?

(2 Kings 18:10-20)

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. ... 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.”

<sup>35</sup> 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! <sup>36</sup> So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there. (2 Kings 19:15,19, 35-36)

*Yet even in Judah, bad kings outnumbered the good ones. Hezekiah’s son Manasseh did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites. <sup>3</sup> He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he also erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done. <sup>7</sup> He took the carved Asherah pole he had made and put it in the temple... Manasseh led them astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the Lord had destroyed before the Israelites.*

(2Ki 21:2-9)