

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 32

Sennacherib Invades Judah

After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. 2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, 3 he planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. 4 A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that flowed through the land, saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?” 5 He set to work resolutely and built up all the wall that was broken down and raised towers upon it, and outside it he built another wall, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David. He also made weapons and shields in abundance. 6 And he set combat commanders over the people and gathered them together to him in the square at the gate of the city and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, 7 “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him, for there are more with us than with him. 8 With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people took confidence from the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

2:1–23 The record of Sennacherib’s invasion is much more detailed in 2 Kings and Isaiah. (CSB)

The Chronicler’s emphasis on Hezekiah’s religious activity cannot be separated from his presentation of the warfare in this chapter. Overall, the Chronicler focuses on Hezekiah as a great reformer, not as a warrior. As with David and Solomon, the Chronicler omits material that casts Hezekiah in a negative light. (TLSB)

32:1 The Chronicler omits the date of the invasion (701 B.C., Hezekiah’s 14th year; see 2Ki 18:13; Isa 36:1). (CSB)

32:2–8 Unique to the Chronicler, but normal preparations for invasion. (CSB)

Hezekiah prepares for war. Rather than portraying the king as looking to Egypt for help (2Ki 18:20–25), the Chronicler speaks of Hezekiah’s trust in the Lord. (TLSB)

32:3 *planned*. Before the siege began, Hezekiah cut off the supply of water outside the city (vv 3–4); strengthened the city’s fortifications and stepped up the production of weaponry (v 5); converted the city into a military camp, setting “combat commanders over the people” (v 6); bolstered the morale of the defenders, reminding them that the enemy, “an arm of flesh” (v 8), was no match for the Lord, who would fight their battles (vv 7–8). (TLSB)

32:4 *brook*. The Gihon. Cf v 30. Archaeologists have discovered foundations of huge defensive towers around these water supplies. Water formerly flowed down to the Kidron Valley, irrigating gardens. (TLSB)

32:5 *Millo*. Part of the city’s fortification, it needed periodic repair (cf 1Ki 9:15; 11:27). (TLSB)

Sennacherib Blasphemes

9 After this, Sennacherib king of Assyria, who was besieging Lachish with all his forces, sent his servants to Jerusalem to Hezekiah king of Judah and to all the people of Judah who were in Jerusalem, saying, **10** “Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria, ‘On what are you trusting, that you endure the siege in Jerusalem? **11** Is not Hezekiah misleading you, that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, “The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria”? **12** Has not this same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, “Before one altar you shall worship, and on it you shall burn your sacrifices”? **13** Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all able to deliver their lands out of my hand? **14** Who among all the gods of those nations that my fathers devoted to destruction was able to deliver his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand? **15** Now, therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you out of my hand!” **16** And his servants said still more against the LORD God and against his servant Hezekiah. **17** And he wrote letters to cast contempt on the LORD, the God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, “Like the gods of the nations of the lands who have not delivered their people from my hands, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver his people from my hand.” **18** And they shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, in order that they might take the city. **19** And they spoke of the God of Jerusalem as they spoke of the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of men's hands.

32:9–19 Message of Sennacherib’s servants and the challenge they present to Judah on behalf of the king of Assyria (cf 2Ki 18:17–35; Is 36:2–20). (TLSB)

32:9 The Chronicler bypasses 2Ki 18:14–16, which records Hezekiah’s suit for peace with its accompanying bribe stripped from the temple treasures. These acts were apparently out of accord with the Chronicler’s portrait of Hezekiah. He also omits 2Ki 18:17b–18. (CSB)

servants. Sennacherib’s attempt to cajole and frighten Hezekiah and the people into surrender (v 18) is described in greater detail in 2Ki 18:14–37; 19:8–14. (TLSB)

32:10 The Chronicler omits 2Ki 18:20–21 (and Isa 36:5–6), containing a portion of the Assyrian commander’s speech ridiculing Hezekiah and the citizens of Jerusalem for trusting in Egypt and Pharaoh. This, too, may be theologically motivated, in light of the Chronicler’s attitude toward foreign alliances. The same concern with foreign alliances is also likely the reason for the omission of the material in 2Ki 18:23–27 (and Isa 36:8–12), where mention is again made of the hope of Egyptian intervention (see 2Ki 19:9 for the incursion of Tirhakah). (CSB)

32:15–18 Each verse directly reflects or paraphrases a portion of the accounts found in 2Ki 18–19; Is 36–37, the bulk of which are omitted by the Chronicler: v 15 (2Ki 18:29; Is 36:14); vv 16–17 (2Ki 19:14; Is 37:14); v 18 (2Ki 18:28; Is 36:13). (TLSB)

32:16 *said still more.* The Chronicler appears to assume his reader’s familiarity with the longer account of the Assyrian taunts found in Kings and Isaiah. (CSB)

32:17 *letters to cast contempt.* Curse letters were used in ancient times. (TLSB)

32:18 *language of Judah.* Hebrew. (TLSB)

The LORD Delivers Jerusalem

20 Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed because of this and cried to heaven. **21** And the LORD sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword. **22** So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the hand of all his enemies, and he provided for them on every side. **23** And many brought gifts to the LORD to Jerusalem and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward.

32:20 This brief reference to the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah abridges the much longer narrative in 2Ki 19:1–34 (and Isa 37:1–35). (CSB)

prayed ... cried. Cf 2Ki 19:15–34 for Hezekiah’s prayer and God’s answer through Isaiah. There, however, the prophet’s intercession is not mentioned. (TLSB)

32:21 See 2Ki 19:35–37; Isa 37:36–38. The Chronicler and the parallel accounts telescope events somewhat: Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah was in 701 B.C., while his death at the hand of his sons was in 681. (CSB)

32:22–23 Summary of Hezekiah’s reign. Like David and Solomon (1Ch 14:17; 2Ch 9:23–24), Hezekiah was honored by the nations. (TLSB)

32:22 *He provided for them.* Lit, “He led them.” (TLSB)

32:23 *exalted in the sight of all the nations.* Another effort to compare Hezekiah with Solomon 88888(see 9:23–24). (CSB)

Hezekiah’s Pride, Success and Death

²⁴ In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. He prayed to the LORD, who answered him and gave him a miraculous sign. ²⁵ But Hezekiah’s heart was proud and he did not respond to the kindness shown him; therefore the LORD’s wrath was on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. ²⁶ Then Hezekiah repented of the pride of his heart, as did the people of Jerusalem; therefore the LORD’s wrath did not come upon them during the days of Hezekiah. ²⁷ Hezekiah had very great riches and honor, and he made treasuries for his silver and gold and for his precious stones, spices, shields and all kinds of valuables. ²⁸ He also made buildings to store the harvest of grain, new wine and oil; and he made stalls for various kinds of cattle, and pens for the flocks. ²⁹ He built villages and acquired great numbers of flocks and herds, for God had given him very great riches. ³⁰ It was Hezekiah who blocked the upper outlet of the Gihon spring and channeled the water down to the west side of the City of David. He succeeded in everything he undertook. ³¹ But when envoys were sent by the rulers of Babylon to ask him about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land, God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart. ³² The other events of Hezekiah’s reign and his acts of devotion are written in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ³³ Hezekiah rested with his fathers and was buried on the hill where the tombs of David’s descendants are. All Judah

and the people of Jerusalem honored him when he died. And Manasseh his son succeeded him as king.

32:24–26 Hezekiah becomes prideful, just as David had when he took a census (1Ch 21:1–4). (TLSB)

32:24 The Chronicler again abridges the narrative in 2Ki 20:1–11 (and Isa 38:1–8), assuming the reader’s familiarity with the role of Isaiah and the miraculous sign of the shadow reversing ten steps. (CSB)

sick. Cf 2Ki 20:1–11 for a more complete report of Hezekiah’s recovery from illness. (TLSB)

32:25–30 Not found in the parallel texts. (CSB)

32:25–26 *proud ... pride.* The Chronicler does not specify the nature of Hezekiah’s pride (however, see v. 31; 2Ki 20:12–13; Isa 39:1–2). Even for a “second Solomon” like Hezekiah, disobedience brings anger from the Lord. (CSB)

32:27–29 The Chronicler likens Hezekiah to Solomon also by recounting his wealth (9:13–14). (CSB)

Unique to 2Ch. Hezekiah, like David and Solomon, was the recipient of great honor and wealth. Archaeologists have found large storage rooms at Hazor, Samaria, Jerusalem, and Lachish. (TLSB)

32:31 See v. 25. The Chronicler assumes the reader’s knowledge of the fuller account in 2Ki 20:12–19 (and Isa 39:1–8). The envoys from Babylon were apparently interested in joint efforts against the Assyrians, hoping to open two fronts against them simultaneously. (CSB)

32:33 *upper part.* A rise in the terrain led to the royal sepulchers. (TLSB)

did him honor. For rites to honor the dead. (TLSB)

32:24–33 Hezekiah, blessed with great wealth and power, struggles with pride. This threatens to destroy him, his kingdom, and his descendants. Even if you are able to fend off all other threats, pride will still assault and defeat you if the Lord does not come to your aid. Like Hezekiah, humble yourself before the Lord and ask for His forgiveness. Recognize your successes as signs of His kindness, which He extends through the blessings of creation and the mercy of Jesus Christ. • Grant me sincere humility, O Lord, like that of Jesus, who became obedient until death, even death on a cross, for my salvation. Amen. (TLSB)