

Isaiah Chapter 22

Judah's Wake-up Call

Fred was a Type A kind of guy. He believed in getting things done and getting them done fast. So when he was driving he often got impatient when traffic was slow. After all, he was important and had big things to accomplish. He couldn't spend time waiting. So he drove his little red sports car just a tad above the speed limit. He also made a regular habit of running red lights. One day as he breezed through a red light he came within inches of hitting a car driven by a mother with her three children in the back seat. Fred had to jam on his brakes so hard that he spun the car around. He did manage to bring it to a stop at the side of the road. Shaken up, he breathed a sigh of relief. As he gradually pulled the car away and entered traffic again he thought, "*That was certainly a wake-up call. I'd better stop running those red lights or something more serious may happen the next time.*"

Susie had a family history of heart problems and she didn't like to think about it. Both her parents had died of heart attacks, as had two of her grandparents. Her brother had a quadruple bypass three years ago. But Susie still loved her whipped cream desserts, lots of red meat, omelets several times a week, along with lots of cookies. She'd had several blood tests that showed elevated cholesterol and triglycerides but didn't change her diet or start exercising. Her doctor lectured her about her lifestyle every time she saw him, but it went in one ear and out the other. Then one day, she felt sick at her stomach and had pain in her left arm. Wisely, she drove herself to the doctor who promptly put her in the hospital. They were able to do an angioplasty and avert a heart attack and major surgery. As Susie returned home, she thought, "*I guess after that wake-up call I'd better make some serious changes in my habits.*"

Have you ever had a wake-up call about something? How did you react? Did you heed it or did you keep on with life as usual until a disaster happened? In today's scripture we see how Judah was given a wake-up call and we see how various people reacted to it.

Isaiah is speaking here directly to the people of Jerusalem in Isaiah 22:1-25:

- 1 ***THIS MESSAGE CAME TO ME CONCERNING JERUSALEM:*** *What is happening? Why is everyone running to the rooftops?*
- 2 *The whole city is in a terrible uproar. What do I see in this reveling city? **Bodies are lying everywhere, killed by famine and disease.***
- 3 *All your leaders flee. They surrender without resistance. The people try to slip away, but they are captured, too.*
- 4 *Leave me alone to weep; do not try to comfort me. **Let me cry for my people** as I watch them being destroyed.*

5 *Oh, what a day of crushing trouble! What a day of confusion and terror the Lord, the Lord Almighty, has brought upon the Valley of Vision! The walls of Jerusalem have been broken, and cries of death echo from the mountainsides.*

6 **ELAMITES** are the archers; **ARAMEANS** drive the chariots. The **MEN OF KIR** hold up the shields.

7 *They fill your beautiful valleys and crowd against your gates.*

8 *Judah's defenses have been stripped away. You run to the armory for your weapons.*

9 *You inspect the walls of Jerusalem to see what needs to be repaired. You store up water in the lower pool.*

10 *You check the houses and tear some down to get stone to fix the walls.*

11 *Between the city walls, you build a reservoir for water from the old pool. **But all your feverish plans are to no avail because you never ask God for help. HE IS THE ONE WHO PLANNED THIS LONG AGO.***

12 *The Lord, the Lord Almighty, called you to weep and mourn. **He told you** to shave your heads in sorrow for your sins and to wear clothes of sackcloth to show your remorse. 13 **But instead**, you dance and play; you slaughter sacrificial animals, feast on meat, and drink wine. "Let's eat, drink, and be merry," you say. "What's the difference, for tomorrow we die."*

14 *The Lord Almighty has revealed to me that this sin will never be forgiven you until the day you die. That is the judgment of the Lord, the Lord Almighty.*

15 **Furthermore**, the Lord, the Lord Almighty, told me to confront **SHEBNA**, the palace administrator, and to give him this message:

16 *"Who do you think you are, building a beautiful tomb for yourself in the rock?"*

17 *For the Lord is about to seize you and hurl you away. He is going to send you into captivity, you strong man!*

18 *He will crumple you up into a ball and toss you away into a distant, barren land. There you will die, and there your glorious chariots will remain, broken and useless. You are a disgrace to your master.*

19 *"Yes, I will drive you out of office," says the Lord. "I will pull you down from your high position.*

20 *And then I will call my servant **ELIAKIM** son of Hilkiah to replace you.*

21 *He will have your royal robes, your title, and your authority. And he will be a father to the people of Jerusalem and Judah.*

22 *I will give him the key to the house of David—the highest position in the royal court. He will open doors, and no one will be able to shut them; he will close doors, and no one will be able to open them.*

23 *He will bring honor to his family name, for I will drive him firmly in place like a tent stake.*

24 *He will be loaded down with responsibility, and **he will bring honor to***

even the lowliest members of his family.”

25 The Lord Almighty says: “When that time comes, I will pull out the stake that seemed so firm. It will come out and fall to the ground.

Everything it supports will fall with it. I, the Lord, have spoken!”

It is not certain which Assyrian invasion Isaiah was speaking of in these verses. but it was most likely the invasion of **Sennacherib of Assyria**, who surrounded Jerusalem in 701 B.C. (Isaiah chapters 36-37). Isaiah may also be making some reference to the ultimate fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C. But it seems clear that much of the text here deals with the 701 B.C. invasion by Assyria. From God’s perspective the purpose of that invasion was to encourage Judah to turn to Him and repent of her sinful ways. Unfortunately the people did not respond positively to the invasion and instead used it as a time for partying (verse 2) and for shoring up the city’s defenses (verses 8-11).

Jerusalem would be attacked unless they repented and became obedient to God. Instead they used every means of protection possible **except** asking God for help. They wanted to trust in their own ingenuity, weapons, and even their pagan neighbors. They ignored their wake-up call.

In the United States today we’ve created the Office of Homeland Security, increasing our defenses against the enemy. Liberals and conservatives battle with each other over what is morally and politically correct, dividing our nation one against the other. Far too many of our leaders are driven by personal ambition, often corrupting their office in order to gain more power and financial benefits. Alcohol and drug abuse are at all time highs. People are living far beyond their financial means in order to enjoy all the worldly pleasures they can grab on to. The primary goal in the lives of Americans appears to be grabbing on to as much gusto as they can. **This country, I believe, has missed several wake-up calls** and reminds me of the way that Isaiah describes that Israel and Judah were living in the eighth century B.C. The Bible tells us what happened to them, and that should be a lesson to the United States if we don’t turn to God and **seek His help and guidance.** The problem, however, is that most Americans never read their Bibles and don’t know what happened in the eighth century B.C. Probably the same number of people don’t know much about history and thus don’t understand that the same fate has come upon every nation that ignored God over the centuries. It is our hope that by preaching on the book of Isaiah and putting these messages on the website, more and more people will come to this important realization and pass the word on to others.

Let’s now go back and get some more detail in Isaiah 22.

Isaiah 22:1-4

1 THE ORACLE CONCERNING THE VALLEY OF VISION. What is the matter with you now, that you have all gone up to the housetops?

2 You who were full of noise, you boisterous town, you exultant city; your slain were not slain with the sword, nor did they die in battle.

*3 **All your rulers have fled together, and have been captured** without the*

bow; all of you who were found were taken captive together, though they had fled far away.

4 Therefore I say, "Turn your eyes away from me, let me weep bitterly, do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction of the daughter of my people."

This **oracle, or prophecy** pertains to **the Valley of Vision**. Often Jerusalem is referred to as a mountain, Mount Zion, but here the city is called a valley. This also fits because God revealed Himself on Mount Zion which was surrounded by valleys. **From this city God was revealing Himself to Isaiah**; hence it was called the *Valley of Vision*. Jerusalem was filled with people from the surrounding towns and villages in Judah who had fled there for protection. Sennacherib wrote that he had captured 46 towns of Judah. The **leaders** had escaped but were captured by the **Assyrians**. People still inside the city of Jerusalem went up on the flat housetops to observe what the enemy was doing outside the city walls. Because the Assyrian advance had caused the destruction of many of Isaiah's people, he mourned their deaths.¹

Isaiah 22:5-7:

*5 For the Lord God of hosts has a day of panic, subjugation and confusion
In the valley of vision, A breaking down of walls And a crying to the
mountain.*

*6 **Elam** took up the quiver With the chariots, infantry and horsemen; And
Kir uncovered the shield.*

*7 Then your choicest valleys were full of chariots, And the horsemen took
up fixed positions at the gate.*

The Lord God of hosts is now dealing with the valley of vision (Judah). Isaiah is speaking directly to the population of Jerusalem and Judah.

Although Hezekiah, the king of Judah, was a good king and faithful to God, the people and other leaders, as we will soon see, were not.

The enemies of Judah with their battering rams are breaking down the walls, and Judah is in vain crying to the mountain, perhaps the mountain of God, Mount Zion, to save them.

The enemy possessed great numbers and strength and besieged Jerusalem. **ELAM** (that is, the **Persians**) came with their quivers full of arrows and with chariots of fighting men and horsemen. **KIR** (that is, the **Medes**) took up their arms and shields, getting everything ready for battle, everything ready for the attack on Jerusalem. Both of these armies joined together with the Assyrian army. Then the choicest valleys around Jerusalem that used to be filled with flocks and covered over with corn were full of chariots of war, and at the gate of the city horsemen took up their positions to cut off all supplies from going into the city. Jerusalem was in big trouble.

¹ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures . Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

Isaiah 22:8-11:

8 *And He removed the defense of Judah. In that day you depended on the weapons of the house of the forest.*

9 *And you saw that the breaches In the wall of the city of David were many; And you collected the waters of the lower pool.*

10 *Then you counted the houses of Jerusalem And tore down houses to fortify the wall.*

11 *And you made a reservoir between the two walls For the waters of the old pool. But you did not depend on Him who made it, Nor did you take into consideration Him who planned it long ago.*

However, in their sinful condition the people still tried to do things their own way. Rather than count on God for protection they wanted to depend on their own strength. So they got out the weapons from the **house of the Forest**, which Solomon had built (1 Kings 7:2; 1 Kings 10:17, 21). It got its name from the huge cedar columns brought to Jerusalem from Lebanon. Apparently armaments were stored in that building in Isaiah's day.

Let's look to selected passages from 2 Chronicles 32 to better help us understand what is going on here and how both Isaiah and King Hezekiah were trying to get the people to turn to God.

2 Chronicles 32:1-20:

1 *After Hezekiah (the king of Judah) had faithfully carried out this work, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah. He laid siege to the fortified cities, giving orders for his army to break through their walls.*

2 *When Hezekiah realized that Sennacherib also intended to attack Jerusalem,*

3 ***he consulted with his officials** and military advisers, and **they decided** to stop the flow of the springs outside the city.*

4 ***They** organized a huge work crew to stop the flow of the springs, cutting off the brook that ran through the fields. For **they** said, "Why should the kings of Assyria come here and find plenty of water?"*

5 *Then Hezekiah further strengthened his defenses by repairing the wall wherever it was broken down and by adding to the fortifications and constructing a second wall outside the first.*

6 *He appointed military officers over the people and asked them to assemble before him in the square at the city gate. Then Hezekiah encouraged them with this address:*

7 *"Be strong and courageous! Don't be afraid of the king of Assyria or his mighty army, for there is a power far greater on our side!"*

8 *He may have a great army, but they are just men. We have the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles for us!" These words greatly*

encouraged the people.

9 Then King Sennacherib of Assyria, while still besieging the town of Lachish, sent officials to Jerusalem with this message for Hezekiah and all the people in the city:

10 “This is what King Sennacherib of Assyria says: What are you trusting in that makes you think you can survive my siege of Jerusalem?”

11 Hezekiah has said, ‘The Lord our God will rescue us from the king of Assyria.’ Surely Hezekiah is misleading you, sentencing you to death by famine and thirst!

13 “Surely you must realize what I and the other kings of Assyria before me have done to all the people of the earth! Were any of the gods of those nations able to rescue their people from my power?

14 Name just one time when any god, anywhere, was able to rescue his people from me! What makes you think your God can do any better?

15 Don’t let Hezekiah fool you! Don’t let him deceive you like this! I say it again—no god of any nation has ever yet been able to rescue his people from me or my ancestors. How much less will your God rescue you from my power!”

16 And Sennacherib’s officials further mocked the Lord God and his servant Hezekiah, heaping insult upon insult.

17 The king also sent letters scorning the Lord, the God of Israel. He wrote, “Just as the gods of all the other nations failed to rescue their people from my power, so the God of Hezekiah will also fail.”

18 The Assyrian officials who brought the letters shouted this in the Hebrew language to the people gathered on the walls of the city, trying to terrify them so it would be easier to capture the city.

19 These officials talked about the God of Jerusalem as though he were one of the pagan gods, made by human hands.

At the time of Sennacherib’s threat, Hezekiah took several defensive measures **as the result of advice received from his political and military leaders:**

- 1) He repaired broken parts of the wall (2 Chronicles 32:5) in the City of David (2 Samuel 5:7, 9).
- 2) He collected water in the Lower Pool (2 Chron.icles32:4).
- 3) He demolished some houses to use their material for repairing the wall.
- 4) He preserved the city’s water supply in a reservoir between the two walls.

But the leaders and people failed to turn to God as King Hezekiah had suggested they do.

Now let’s go back to Isaiah and continue, beginning with verse 12.

Isaiah 22:12-14:

12 Therefore in that day the Lord God of hosts called you to weeping, to wailing, To shaving the head and to wearing sackcloth.

13 Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die."

14 But the Lord of hosts revealed Himself to me, "Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you Until you die," says the Lord God of hosts.

When the people saw the enemy they should have repented as both the king and Isaiah were instructing them to do, realizing they were helpless before the Assyrians. Pulling out their hair (Ezra 9:3; Nehemiah 13:25) and wearing sackcloth were signs of mourning. **But instead** of mourning as they were instructed to do by God, the Jerusalemites "lived it up" in non-stop partying (verse 2), wining and dining in the face of their impending death. The Lord's urgent call for repentance had only met with cynicism and selfish fleshly indulgence. But God's fatherly love cannot be so blatantly disregarded and despised without the severest consequences. It took the horrors of the invasion in 701 B.C. to bring Jerusalem back to repentance and a renewed commitment to God.² They did not believe God was powerful enough to save them and to follow through on His promises. Therefore a pronouncement of woe came to the people through Isaiah. This sin of lack of trust in the LORD was so ingrained in them that they would never repent. Thus they would pay for this kind of behavior until the day they died. Eventually the curses of the Mosaic Covenant (Leviticus 26:14-39; Deuteronomy 27:15-26; 28:15-68) would come on the nation of Judah.³

Now God zeroes in His focus on one of the highest ranking leaders in the court of King Hezekiah.

Isaiah 22:15-25:

15 Thus says the Lord God of hosts, "Come, go to this steward, To Shebna, who is in charge of the royal household,

16 'What right do you have here, And whom do you have here, That you have hewn a tomb for yourself here, You who hew a tomb on the height, You who carve a resting place for yourself in the rock?

17 'Behold, the Lord is about to hurl you headlong, O man. And He is about to grasp you firmly

18 And roll you tightly like a ball, To be cast into a vast country; There you will die And there your splendid chariots will be, You shame of your master's house.'

19 "I will depose you from your office, And I will pull you down from your station.

20 "Then it will come about in that day, That I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah,

21 And I will clothe him with your tunic And tie your sash securely about him. I will entrust him with your authority, And he will become a father to

² Pfeiffer, C. F. 1962. The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament . Moody Press: Chicago

³ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures . Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.

22 *“Then I will set the key of the house of David on his shoulder, When he opens no one will shut, When he shuts no one will open.*

23 *“I will drive him like a peg in a firm place, And he will become a throne of glory to his father’s house.*

24 *“So they will hang on him all the glory of his father’s house, offspring and issue, all the least of vessels, from bowls to all the jars.*

25 *“In that day,” declares the Lord of hosts, “the peg driven in a firm place will give way; it will even break off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off, for the Lord has spoken.”*

The reason for this judgment on Shebna is not explicitly stated. **Shebna** was a high court official, probably second in command to the king, who was **involved in the negotiations with Sennacherib** before and during the siege of Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37; 19:2; Isaiah 36:3, 11, 22; 37:2). Why he was to be removed from this important position is not stated. Perhaps he opposed Isaiah’s message of impending judgment, or the king’s message of reliance on God. There is also the distinct possibility that Shebna thought life was all about Shebna and he ignored one of the essential rules required for service to God, and that is **to look out for the welfare of others.**

Shebna’s attempt to glorify his memory in the history of Judah apparently involved his constructing a very elaborate tomb for his burial, as people did in many of the surrounding nations. However, Isaiah prophesied that Shebna, rather than having a glorious permanent resting place, would be demoted and would die in a large foreign country, probably Assyria. There is no record of what happened to him other than the prophecy given here by Isaiah.⁴ We have here a prophecy concerning the removal of Shebna, a great officer of the court who held a position of honor and trust, and replacing him with **ELIAKIM**. This prophecy is likewise a confirmation in general of the hand of divine control and direction in all events of this kind, which to us seem dependent on the decisions of world leaders. **BUT IN REALITY, GOD IS THE FINAL JUDGE.**

Here is yet again another prophecy, **THE PROPHECY OF SHEBNA’S DISGRACE**. He appears to be the treasurer, who is entrusted with managing the nation’s revenue as well as being in charge of the royal household. Apparently such positions of authority and responsibility weren’t enough to satisfy his ambitions.

It is certainly not uncommon for self-seeking men and women to want more than they can manage and in the process lose all of what they have.

It was true in Isaiah’s day and it is also true today. **Hezekiah was himself a good king**, but the best leaders cannot always be sure of good servants. Because of this we need to pray for government leaders to be given the wisdom to select good and honest servants,

⁴ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures . Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

that they may be wise and discerning in the choice of those they place in positions of trust and authority. In this message to Shebna we see criticism of his pride, vanity, and security. He had set up a monument for himself in his lifetime and set it in a very prominent place. After a while Shebna would not only lose his position of authority but he would also be driven out of his country and spend the rest of his days in mediocrity and obscurity.

Then we have the prophecy of Eliakim's advancement. He is God's servant who has proved himself faithful in other positions, and therefore God will call him to this high station.

Those that are responsible in doing their duty in lower positions are the ones God calls on for greater responsibilities.

It is here declared that Eliakim would be put into Shebna's office. Eliakim's advancement is further described by the laying of **the key of the house of David** upon his shoulders. Eliakim was a trustworthy man, a true statesman, and a loyal servant of Hezekiah. He was a statesman and not a mere politician like most who serve in the U.S. government. He was motivated by a sincere love for his country and characterized by the fear of God. After assuming office he would be receiving the **KEY OF DAVID, which represented the authority to admit or refuse admission to the king's presence.** It might also suggest that he held the key to the royal treasury which he might open and close at his discretion. **IN ELIAKIM WE SEE A VERY CLEAR TYPE, OR PREDICTION, OF JESUS,** who uses the very expressions used here when he writes to the church in Philadelphia found in Revelation 3:7.

To those who look up to Jesus as their Lord and savior, He opens the door to the throne room or treasure house of divine truth, revealing to them all the treasures of God's Word. His power in the kingdom of God both in Heaven and on earth, and in the ordering of all the affairs of that kingdom is absolute.

This authority to admit or refuse admittance into the king's presence shows the king's great confidence in Eliakim. Jesus applied this terminology to Himself as One who could determine who would enter the kingdom of God.

Eliakim also was involved in the negotiations with Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37; Isaiah 36:3, 11, 22; 37:2). He would be a respected leader, like a father to the Judahites, and a faithful administrator who would make wise decisions. In contrast with Shebna, who was to be cast aside, Eliakim was to be like a well-driven peg, a firm foundation for the nation. He would be an honorable person, and would cause his family name to be well known to humble people, figuratively called lesser vessels, and to more influential family members, figuratively called bowls and jars. However, Isaiah warned that eventually even this peg would come to an end, signifying that eventually the kingdom of Judah

would be taken away into captivity.⁵

Honor comes from God to all those who use it for His glory. Our Lord Jesus is as a nail in a sure place: his kingdom cannot be shaken.

I believe we have another very important lesson to learn here. Rulers should be fathers to those that are under their government, to teach them with wisdom, rule them with love, and correct what is wrong with tenderness; to protect them and provide for them, and be as caring about them as a man or woman is with their own children and family. It is a good thing for the people when the court, the city, the state, and the country have no separate interests, but all center in the same high standards and values, so that all the leaders are true patriots.

Now for the rest of the story, let's see what king Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah did to save the city of Jerusalem from the Assyrian invaders.

2 Chronicles 32:20 tells us:

20 Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz cried out in prayer to God in heaven.

And this is what Hezekiah and Isaiah prayed according to 2 Kings 19:15-37:

15 And Hezekiah prayed this prayer before the Lord: "O Lord, God of Israel, you are enthroned between the mighty cherubim! You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You alone created the heavens and the earth.

16 Listen to me, O Lord, and hear! Open your eyes, O Lord, and see! Listen to Sennacherib's words of defiance against the living God.

17 "It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all these nations, just as the message says.

18 And they have thrown the gods of these nations into the fire and burned them. But of course the Assyrians could destroy them! They were not gods at all—only idols of wood and stone shaped by human hands.

19 Now, O Lord our God, rescue us from his power; then all the kingdoms of the earth will know that you alone, O Lord, are God."

20 THEN ISAIAH SON OF AMOZ SENT THIS MESSAGE TO HEZEKIAH: "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I have heard your prayer about King Sennacherib of Assyria.

21 THIS IS THE MESSAGE THAT THE LORD HAS SPOKEN AGAINST HIM: 'The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and laughs at you. The daughter of Jerusalem scoffs and shakes her head as you flee.

⁵ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures . Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

22 *'Whom do you think you have been insulting and ridiculing? Against whom did you raise your voice? At whom did you look in such proud condescension? It was the Holy One of Israel!*

23 **By your messengers you have mocked the Lord.** You have said, "With my many chariots I have conquered the highest mountains— yes, the remotest peaks of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars and its choicest cypress trees. I have reached its farthest corners and explored its deepest forests.

24 I have dug wells in many a foreign land and refreshed myself with their water. I even stopped up the rivers of Egypt so that my armies could go across!"

25 *'But have you not heard? It was I, the Lord, who decided this long ago. Long ago I planned what I am now causing to happen, that you should crush fortified cities into heaps of rubble.*

26 *That is why their people have so little power and are such easy prey for you. They are as helpless as the grass, as easily trampled as tender green shoots. They are like grass sprouting on a housetop, easily scorched by the sun.*

27 *'But I know you well— your comings and goings and all you do. I know the way you have raged against me.*

28 *And because of your arrogance against me, which I have heard for myself, I will put my hook in your nose and my bridle in your mouth. I will make you return by the road on which you came.' "*

29 **Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah,** "Here is the proof that the Lord will protect this city from Assyria's king. This year you will eat only what grows up by itself, and next year you will eat what springs up from that. But in the third year you will plant crops and harvest them; you will tend vineyards and eat their fruit.

30 *And you who are left in Judah, who have escaped the ravages of the siege, will take root again in your own soil, and you will flourish and multiply.*

31 *For a remnant of my people will spread out from Jerusalem, a group of survivors from Mount Zion. The passion of the Lord Almighty will make this happen!*

32 *"And this is what the Lord says about the king of Assyria: His armies will not enter Jerusalem to shoot their arrows. They will not march outside its gates with their shields and build banks of earth against its walls.*

33 *The king will return to his own country by the road on which he came. He will not enter this city, says the Lord.*

34 *For my own honor and for the sake of my servant David, **I WILL DEFEND IT.**"*

35 *That night the angel of the Lord went out to the Assyrian camp and killed **185,000** Assyrian troops. When the surviving Assyrians woke up the*

next morning, they found corpses everywhere.

36 Then King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and returned to his own land. He went home to his capital of Nineveh and stayed there.

37 One day while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with their swords. They then escaped to the land of Ararat, and another son, Esarhaddon, became the next king of Assyria.

Now let's finish 2 Chronicles.

2 Chronicles 32:22, 23, 27, 30, 32, 33:

*22 **THAT IS HOW THE LORD RESCUED HEZEKIAH AND THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM** from King Sennacherib of Assyria and from all the others who threatened them. So there was peace at last throughout the land.*

23 From then on King Hezekiah became highly respected among the surrounding nations, and many gifts for the Lord arrived at Jerusalem, with valuable presents for King Hezekiah, too.

27 Hezekiah was very wealthy and held in high esteem. He had to build special treasury buildings for his silver, gold, precious stones, and spices, and for his shields and other valuable items.

30 He blocked up the upper spring of Gihon and brought the water down through a tunnel to the west side of the City of David. And so he succeeded in everything he did.

32 The rest of the events of Hezekiah's reign and his acts of devotion are recorded in The Vision of the Prophet Isaiah Son of Amoz, which is included in The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

*33 When Hezekiah died, he was buried in the upper area of the royal cemetery, and all Judah and Jerusalem honored him at his death. Then his son **Manasseh** became the next king.*

The honor men and women reflect upon their families and others they serve by their devotion and usefulness is more valuable than power or wealth or even a big tombstone.

God gave the people, and especially the leaders, of Judah a royal wake-up call through the prophet Isaiah. He warned them of the coming invasion by the Assyrians. And we see that the second most powerful man in the government, Shebna, ignored it. He focused on doing his own thing and trying to build a great name and reputation for himself. And the result was that he was driven out of office, pulled down from his high position in disgrace and sent off to die in a foreign land.

But then we see how King Hezekiah and Eliakim responded to the same wake-up call by turning to God and standing firm in the faith. Hezekiah cried out to God in a prayer of worship and dependence. He heeded the wake-up call, and because of that the country of Judah experienced God's miraculous deliverance from the Assyrians.

So when God gives you a wake-up call, you have a choice. You can reject it and go on

with life as usual until disaster overtakes you and possibly destroys you, or you can listen to the message and turn to God, worship Him, obey Him, and experience the victory that only He can give you. Which will it be?