

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

Week 17: Against All Odds - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. What once was the role of appointed Judges is now the role of kings. They were God's instruments in ruling and governing His people. Often it was through kings that God's divine will was accomplished. Priests were in charge of the Temple and everyday operations like sacrifices and upkeep. They led the people in worship and praise. Prophets, on the other hand, were the mouthpieces of God who provided divine guidance to the Kings.

2. King Hezekiah reigned 25 years from 715-686 BC. Prophets who lived during the reign of Hezekiah were possibly Hosea (758-725 BC?), Micah (738-698 BC) and Isaiah (760-673 BC). In the book of Hosea, God calls Hosea to marry a prostitute in order for him to understand fully how God feels about the rejection of the Israelites. Micah (whose name means "One who is like Jehovah") warns his brothers of coming judgement if they do not repent (Micah 6:8). Isaiah is the main prophet who witnessed the fall of Israel and now preaches to Judah to not fall in the same rebellious way like Israel did.

3. Hezekiah, son of Ahaz & Abi, in Hebrew means "God is my strength." Hezekiah was a good king and his accomplishments were:

- Removed all the high places, shattered the sacred pillars, cut down Asherah Poles, broke the bronze snake Moses made and rebelled against Assyria by stopping tribute taxes.
- Defeated the Philistines and expanded the territory of Judah.
- Allied himself with the Babylon & Egyptian Kings to protect his kingdom.
- Refortified the Jerusalem wall & built a famous tunnel for the Gihon spring which still stands today.

Archeological Note: The attack on Judah (2 Chronicles 32) is recorded on the SW wall of Nineveh today.

4. The remnant are a group of faithful survivors of the brutal destruction and captivity of Israel and Judah. They are always associated with the judgement of God and salvation or restoration. Some were taken to Assyria/Babylon, some alluded captivity and were left in Canaan. It is through this remnant of believers that the Messiah from David's lineage would be preserved. Metaphorically, like refining gold, the dross is skimmed away leaving purity to remain. References are Genesis 45:7; Isaiah 10:21-22; 11:11-16; Romans 11:5.

5. Hezekiah took an animate object, a note, to the throne of an inanimate God. He took the message from Rabshakeh directly to God in the Holy of Holies demonstrating his faith that God will come to his aid. His prayer started with praise and admiration. Notice Hezekiah was concerned with the reputation of God before foreigners.

6. Analogous to David's response to Goliath, Isaiah thought Sennacherib's insults were aimed at Almighty God. God's name was being defiled, not the Israelites. Again like David, as far as numbers of warriors, God is sovereign and does not need numbers to defeat an enemy or battle. Isaiah understood the battle was more spiritual than physical. As Hezekiah saw in 1 Chronicles 32, "there are more of them than there are of the enemy" because he saw the spirits of warfare.

7. In Exodus 12 we see the LORD actually slaying the 1st born in Egypt. In 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21, we witness the death angel striking 70,000 with a plague as a consequence of David taking the census. Finally, in Revelation 9:15, angels are released to kill 1/3 of inhabitants on earth during the coming end times.

8. The Lachish Frieze, Siloam Inscription, and Sennacharib prism all record the various battles the Assyrians fought in Israel and Judah, including Jerusalem. In them Sennacharib records that he captured 46 Judean cities, but never recorded that he took Jerusalem.

The Assyrian army that surrounded Jerusalem and King Hezekiah is thought to have perished due to a death wind, plague or poisoned drinking the water. Whatever “method” they died, it was from the hand of the LORD.

9. God is sovereign, patient, loving, merciful, kind, forgiving and always desiring to reconcile with sinful man. He listens to the faithful prayers of His saints. Hezekiah showed remarkable faith in the face of total annihilation. God showed remarkable patience.

10. Several life lessons can be gleaned from this story of Hezekiah and Isaiah’s faith. Some are:

- Always, in every circumstance, bring your concerns, stresses and fears to the Lord and lay them down before Him.
- Rely on the Lord, look to Him as your only source of strength.
- God is faithful, loving and kind. Even if you don’t see a pathway out, He makes one if you would only trust Him.

Additional Questions:

1. Answers will vary depending on personal experience.

2. Answers will vary depending on personal experience. Prayer should be an integral part of a believer’s life. Faithful prayer strengthens the patron and pleases the heart of God. Prayer builds upon that relationship one has with God. Prayer also moves the heart of God to respond to His children.

3. Answers will vary depending on personal experience.

