

“no king but King Jesus”

The beginning of the end for Israel, the Northern Kingdom

King Hezekiah: one of the Southern Kingdom’s good kings

Isaiah’s proclamation of God’s purpose

Discussion questions:

1. Chapter 16 of The Story covers more than two hundred years. The Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC and was never heard from again. The Southern Kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC but had an amazing comeback 70 years later when they returned from captivity. How do you see God’s patience and commitment to bring his people back to himself woven through these two centuries of history?
2. God allowed a foreign army to invade and defeat Israel (the Northern Kingdom). Why did God bring this judgment on his own people and what do you learn from God’s response to the behavior of Israel (2 Kings 17:1-14)?
3. Hezekiah of Judah was one of the few kings deemed “good” in the eyes of God (2 Kings 18-19). What did Hezekiah do that pleased God and how can we learn from his example? How can Hezekiah’s prayer shape the way you pray when times are tough?
4. The Bible has a lot to say about pride. What do you learn about pride in the encounter between Assyria and Israel in this chapter of The Story?
5. Though the Southern Kingdom of Judah discovered they would one day end up prisoners of war under the fist of a foreign nation, God spoke words of hope through his prophet (Isaiah 14:1-5). What did God promise and how do you see him continuing to accomplish his plan to bring his people back to himself?
6. The final and greatest hope for all of God’s people, including you and me, is the promise of the Messiah who would come to deliver us (Isaiah 53). What do you learn about Jesus, the promised Savior, from this prophecy? How has Jesus been the One who brings your life hope and meaning?
7. Hezekiah pleased God when he spiritually cleaned house, got rid of idols, and smashed and cut down all the signs of spiritual compromise in the land. When you look at your spiritual life, what could you clean out, cut down, or smash so that you can walk more closely with God?
8. When Jerusalem was surrounded by the Assyrian army and the situation looked hopeless, Hezekiah prayed and things changed. What are you facing today that seems too big, overwhelming, or even hopeless?

Homework: Every morning when you wake up, for the next week, make this simple statement before you get out of bed: “No king but King Jesus!” Then seek to live out this truth each day.

For next week, please read Chapter 17 of The Story (2 Kings 21, 23-25; 2 Chronicles 33, 36; Jeremiah 1-2, 4-5, 13, 21; Lamentations 1-3, 5; Ezekiel 1-2, 6-7, 36-37)