

引言 INTRODUCTION

What is in a name? Very often, founders of a company put their names on the products they sell. Those who like to eat spicy food should have tried the “Old Godmother” chili sauce before. A Guizhou lady called Huabi Tao created her own sauce for a cold noodle stall. People like it so much that some of them stopped by just to buy the condiment. They even suggested Ms. Tao to build a manufacturing plant to make the sauce. Therefore, Old Godmother began to sell her sauce in 1996. Today, she owns a multi-million-dollar business. She was even elected as a representative for the National People’s Congress. A brand name reminds people of the characteristics of the products. What comes to your mind when you think of God? Perhaps you think of a transcendent, all-powerful and all-knowing being. Besides those qualities, another attribute that is closely related to our story today is faithfulness. We can rely on God because He never changes. God remains the same even when we are in a difficult situation. King Hezekiah’s faith in God was under trial. He witnessed the destruction of the northern kingdom by Assyria. Would Judah be the next victim? Could God save his country? We may have similar worries when we face a crisis. Perhaps you are struggling with an issue at work, at home or with your health. God never promises us smooth-sailing. But He guarantees to be with His children under any circumstance. Your faith, as much as God’s reputation, is at stake. Hardship reveals our faith in God, and it also reveals God’s power in us.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 龐大的工程 Immense Feat

Hezekiah witnessed God using Assyria as a means to judge Israel for its long history of idolatry. He must turn the tide to prevent Judah from the same fate. Therefore, he started an immense feat of spiritual reform. We will read from **2 Kings 18:3-4: 3 He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David had done. 4 He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it.** Hezekiah imitated after David’s godly example. He removed idol statues and related worship facilities. It was unthinkable for the Israelites to pay tribute to Moses’ bronze snake. At that time the Israelites were still in the wilderness. God sent poisonous snakes to bite His people because they grumbled to Him. God asked Moses to make a bronze snake and raise it up on a pole. Those who looked up to the snake were healed. It was a prophecy that Jesus would be hung on a cross. Those who commit themselves to Jesus will be forgiven. It is easy for people to worship an object. Jesus said it clearly that God is a Spirit. We worship Him in our spirits. After getting rid of false gods, Hezekiah then restored the worship of Jehovah. It is like you must adopt a healthy diet after you stop eating junk food. Then your blood pressure and cholesterol will fall back to normal. 2 Chronicles chapters 29 to 31 give us

details about Hezekiah's efforts. First, Hezekiah reopened the temple and cleansed it. His dad king Ahaz shut the temple and forced people to make offerings on a pagan altar. Second, Hezekiah asked the priests to present sin offerings. Hezekiah asked God for forgiveness because his father defiled the temple. Third, Hezekiah encouraged people to bring their sacrifice to the Lord. And did they respond zealously! They brought a total of over 4,000 animals! Fourth, the king sent letters to all over Israel and invited people to come to the temple to celebrate the Passover. Hezekiah tells the people remaining in Israel in **30:9** – **"If you return to the Lord, then your brothers and your children will be shown compassion by their captors and will come back to this land, for the Lord your God is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn his face from you if you return to him."** The Passover is to remember God's rescue of their ancestors from Egypt. God would repeat the exodus and bring the Israelites back from exile if they returned to Him. God always welcome people to come to Him. Are we not grateful that God's grace does not have any expiration day? The Bible says TODAY is the day of salvation. Confess your sins and receive God's salvation grace today. The fifth thing Hezekiah did was to restore the Levitical ministry system. The priests handled the offerings and other Levites took care of other ceremonial duties. Worship of Jehovah was back to the way it should be. The author praises Hezekiah in **2 Kings 18:5-6** – **5 Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. 6 He held fast to the Lord and did not cease to follow him; he kept the commands the Lord had given Moses.** Think about that comment for a moment: there was no godly king like Hezekiah before or after him. Brothers and sisters: how would people remember you after the Lord calls you home? What will your children think of you after they grow up? You may have a successful career. There are some abbreviations on your business card that few people understand. You may be a handy person or an excellent cook at home. You may be a kind and compassion person. Those are all good qualities. But nothing compares to a simple comment: "My parents loved the Lord, and I want to be like them." Accepting Jesus is an instant decision. But following Jesus is a life-long pursuit. It does not only benefit you. It will also bless your future generations. Make up your mind to follow God wholeheartedly today!

2. 危急的威脅 Imminent Threat

Now Judah returned to the right track. Assyria came back just when everyone thought the future was bright. There was an imminent threat. After Assyria defeated Israel, the army returned home to fight with Babylon. Then Assyria conquered the neighboring nations one by one. Judah became the next target. Read Hezekiah's decision in **2 Kings 18:13-14**: **13 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. 14 So Hezekiah king of Judah sent this message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: "I have done wrong. Withdraw from me, and I will pay whatever you demand of me..."** The troop was now in Lachish, which was only 25 miles to the southwest of Jerusalem. Hezekiah used money to please his enemy. He emptied gold and silver from his treasury and temple. He even stripped off gold from the temple. However, Hezekiah also secretly directed an ingenious project. Look at **2 Chronicles 32:2-5**. Hezekiah sealed all the water sources from outside the city. He then diverted the water to an

underground channel to Jerusalem. The Assyrians would be forced to leave when they could not find enough water. Today, you can tour around this aqueduct when you visit the Holy City. It is quite an accomplishment. Hezekiah also built walls and towers, as well as prepared weapons to fight. Sennacherib was not satisfied with the treasure he got. He sent a few army officers to demand Hezekiah to surrender. Listen to their words in **2 Kings 18:20-22**. Judah was out-numbered by the Assyrian troop. Egypt was too weak to help. The commander also stated that Hezekiah did a wrong thing to remove the idols and compelled his people to worship Jehovah only. They thought many gods were better than one God. They continued their psychological tactic in **verses 31 and 33**. The civilians should not put their faith in their king or Jehovah. There would be a better outcome if they surrendered. Today, Satan bombards us with similar empty promises! He says: "I can give you greater blessings. Why trust God and suffer?" He advises us to cut corners, betray our conscience and even forsake our faith. But the Bible tells us to glorify God above all else. Those who honor God will be honored by Him. In this case, God would deliver Judah because of its godly king. Prophet Isaiah conveyed a comforting message from God that Assyria would fail in this campaign. The Assyrians soon retreated to fight with Egypt. Before they left, the commander sent another letter to reiterate that no deity could stand before his army. This time Hezekiah poured out his heart before God. We will read from **2 Kings 19:14-19**. Hezekiah addressed God as the One who enthroned between the cherubim. Hezekiah was referring to the cover of the Ark of the Covenant, on which there were two carved images of angels called cherubim. That was the place where God met His people. Hezekiah also acknowledged God as the Creator and sovereignty Lord. Sennacherib was but a man. He did not only slander against Judah and its king, he blasphemed the Almighty God too. Assyria had indeed conquered many nations. It was because the deities those countries worshipped were just man-made statues. Finally, Hezekiah pleaded to God for deliverance, so that people would know that only Jehovah was God. What can we learn from this earnest petition? We can lay out our specific requests before the Lord. It can be a doctor's report, an unexpected medical bill or a letter from the immigration. Moreover, we should hold onto God's attributes and promises. He hears and responds to our prayer. No issue is too trivial to Him. He has the mighty power to supply our needs. But it does not mean that He will do everything we wish. He is our Lord and we are only His servants. Sometimes, God resolves our issues in an unexpected way. Other times, God grants us transcendent peace. Regardless of the outcome, we can share with others how God is working in our lives.

3. 立時的敗仗 Immediate Defeat

God responded to Hezekiah's plea for help. God would give Assyria an immediate defeat. Once again, God spoke through prophet Isaiah. Let us pick a few verses to understand the message. **Verse 22** says: "Who is it you have insulted and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes in pride? Against the Holy One of Israel!" God would not allow anyone to offend Him. He would be like a father or a big brother who stands up and defend the young ones. Then God declared His judgment on the Assyrians in **verse 28**: "Because you rage against me and because your insolence has reached my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth, and I will make you return by the way you

came.” The “hook” and “bit” refer to the humiliation the Assyrians treated their war slaves when they dragged them like animals to exile. But that would not happen to Judah. Continue to read [verse 32-34](#). It was as if God surrounded the city with a shield. No enemy could cross the boundary. Not even an arrow would fly over the territory. God would preserve the covenant He made with king David. He would continue to call kings to succeed the throne if Judah stayed faithful to Him. The siege came to a dramatic ending in [verse 35-37](#). God slaughtered 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. Some people may conclude: “Nah! That’s just fairy tale.” If God could create the whole universe in six days, divided the Red Sea for the Israelites to cross over and raised Jesus from the dead, is there anything too hard for Him to do? He is a supernatural God. Sennacherib surely knew that it could only be the work of Jehovah. The God of Judah he mocked turned out to be a real deal. Sennacherib returned home in shame. Worse still, he was murdered by two of his own sons. Of all the places, the bloodshed happened when he was worshipping his god in its temple. Whose god was unable to save whose life? It was an utter humiliation to Assyria. God concerns about His glory more than we can imagine. He is ready to stand up to defend for His name. People scorn at God throughout history and even to this day. They misuse God’s name in their conversations. They treat God like any man-made idol. Churches are demolished, Bibles are burned and Christians are persecuted and even killed. God in His patience keeps waiting for people to repent. But the clock is ticking. One day, God will make things right. There will be an end to sin. Until then, there is still a lot of work for Christians to do. The world is in a mess. God is the only hope. He sends us out as His messengers. We preach the good news of peace. We invite people to make peace with God.

結論 CONCLUSION

Hardship reveals our faith in God, and it also reveals God’s power in us. Judah was saved from this crisis. Hezekiah experienced a spiritual victory. But he knew that enemies would keep coming. We will constantly be under the attack from our enemy too. Many of you like to eat at Chick-fil-A. Truett Cathy founded the restaurant sixty some years ago in Georgia. Mr. Cathy was a Southern Baptist who loved the Lord and his family. He understood that his business exists “To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us.” The restaurant chain closes on Sunday so that its employees can spend time with their family members or attend church. Chick-fil-A has been supporting some Christian organizations that uphold traditional family values. In 2012, some same-sex marriage activists proposed a boycott of the restaurant. In response, then Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, another devout Christian, called for a Chick-fil-A Appreciation Day. More than 600,000 people showed their support on Facebook. Each Chick-fil-A restaurant gained an average of 30% more sales on that day. Mr. Cathy passed away in 2014. In his will, he specified that his business can be sold to others, but it can never go public. Mr. Cathy was determined to preserve what he valued the most. How much difference would it make if we truly live for God’s glory? Our families, neighborhood, classrooms and offices would not be the same. We are facing a challenging time for our faith. We can either give up and lose in the battle. Or we can rely on God’s wisdom and strength to win.

引言 INTRODUCTION

名字代表什麼？很多時候，一家公司的創始人會把他的名字放在產品上。喜歡吃辣的人也許嚐都過「老乾媽」辣椒醬。貴州一位名叫陶華碧的女士為冷麵攤製作了自己的辣椒醬。人們非常喜歡它，甚至有些人只是為了買辣醬而去她的攤位。他們建議陶女士開製工廠來生產辣醬。於是，老乾媽從 1996 年就開始賣她的醬料。至今，她擁有了數百萬美元的生意。她甚至當選為全國人大代表。品牌名稱提醒顧客產品的特質。當你想到神時，你會想到什麼？也許你會想到一個超越、全能、無所不知的對象。除了這些特質之外，與我們今天的故事有密切相關的另一個屬性是信實。我們可以信靠神，因為祂不會改變。即使我們身處困境，神仍然是可靠的。希西家王對神的信心受到試驗。他親眼目睹亞述毀滅了北國以色列。猶大會是下一個受害者嗎？神能拯救他的國家嗎？當我們面臨危機時，我們可能會有類似的憂慮。也許你在工作、家庭或健康方面碰到掙扎。神從未應許我們一帆風順。但祂保證在任何情況下都與祂的兒女同在。你對神的信心和神的聲譽都受到考驗。困難驗證我們對神的信心，也顯明神在我們裡面的大能。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 龐大的工程 Immense Feat

希西家目睹神使用亞述作為審判以色列拜偶像的方式。他必須力挽狂瀾，以免猶大遭受同樣的命運。因此，他展開一項龐大的靈命復興工程。我們看列王紀下的 18:3-4：**3 希西家行耶和華眼中看為正的事，效法他祖大衛一切所行的。4 他廢去邱壇，毀壞柱像，砍下木偶，打碎摩西所造的銅蛇，因為到那時以色列人仍向銅蛇燒香。希西家叫銅蛇為銅塊。**希西家效法大衛的敬虔榜樣。他拆毀神像和相關的敬拜設施。以色列人敬奉摩西的銅蛇是不可思議的事。那時以色列人還在曠野。神讓毒蛇去咬祂的子民，因為他們向祂發怨言。神要摩西造一條銅蛇，掛在桿子上。那些仰望蛇的人便得以痊癒。那是預言耶穌將被掛在十字架上。那些接受耶穌的人將被赦免。人們很容易崇拜一些物品。耶穌清楚地說，神是個靈。我們要在靈裡敬拜祂。清除假神之後，希西家恢復了對耶和華的崇拜。這就像你停止吃垃圾零食後必須採納健康的飲食習慣。然後你的血壓和膽固醇便會恢復正常。歷代志下 29 至 31 章詳細記載希西家所付出的貢獻。首先，希西家重開聖殿並潔淨它。他的父親亞哈斯王關閉了聖殿，強迫人們在

異教祭壇上獻祭。其次，希西家要求祭司獻贖罪祭。希西家向神認罪，因為他的父親玷污了聖殿。第三，希西家鼓勵人們準備祭物獻給主。他們的反應非常熱烈！他們總共帶來了 4000 多只動物！第四，希西家寫信給住在以色列各地的居民，邀請他們來聖殿慶祝逾越節。希西家在 30:9 告訴留在北國的人：「你們若轉向耶和華，你們的弟兄和兒女必在擄掠他們的人面前蒙憐恤，得以歸回這地，因為耶和華你們的神有恩典、施憐憫。你們若轉向祂，祂必不轉臉不顧你們。」逾越節是為了紀念神從埃及拯救他們的祖先。如果以色列人回到神的身邊，祂會重演出埃及，並把他們從流放中帶回來。神總是歡迎人們來到祂面前。感謝神！祂的恩典從來不會過期。聖經說今天就是得救的日子。今天你可以向神認罪並接受祂的救恩。希西家所做的第五件事是恢復利未人的服事。祭司負責獻祭，其他利未人則負責禮儀的事務。經過一番努力後，敬拜耶和華恢復到原來的方式。作者在列王紀下 18 章 5-6 節中稱讚希西家：5 希西家倚靠耶和華以色列的神，在他前後的猶大列王中沒有一個及他的。6 因為他專靠耶和華，總不離開，謹守耶和華所吩咐摩西的誡命。思考一下這個評語：在他之前或之後，沒有任何的王像希西家那樣敬虔。弟兄姊妹：主召你回家之後，人們會如何記念你？你的孩子長大後會想到你的哪些事情？你可能有成功的事業。你的名片上有一些很少人能看懂的頭銜簡稱。你可能很會修東西，或是很會燒菜。你可能是一個善良和富有同情心的人。這些都是好的品質。但沒有什麼能比得上一句簡單的評語：「我的父母愛主，我希望像他們一樣。」接受耶穌是一時的決定。但跟隨耶穌是一生的追求。它不僅使你受益，也會祝福你的後代。今天就下定決心全心全意跟隨神！

2. 危急的威脅 Imminent Threat

現在猶大回到了正軌。就在每個人都以為前途會一片光明的時候，亞述回來了。猶大馬上要面對一個危急的威脅。亞述攻陷以色列後，軍隊要回家與巴比倫作戰。然後亞述一一征服了鄰近的國家。猶大成為下一個目標。請讀列王紀下 18:13-14 中希西家的決定：13 希西家王十四年，亞述王西拿基立上來攻擊猶大的一切堅固城，將城攻取。14 猶大王希西家差人往拉吉去見亞述王，說：「我有罪了，求你離開我；凡你罰我的，我必承當...。」這支部隊現在在距離耶路撒冷西南 25 英里的拉吉。希西家用金錢討好他的敵人。他從國庫和聖殿中取出金銀。他甚至把聖殿柱子上的金子都刮下來。不過，希西家還暗中統籌一個巧妙的工程。請看歷代志下 32:2-5。希西家從城外封鎖了所有的水源。然後他將水引到地下通道通往耶路撒冷。當亞述人找不到足夠的水時，他們將被迫離開。今天，當你參觀聖城時，你可以遊覽這條通道。這是一項偉大的成就。希西家還建造了城牆和城樓，並準備武器預備打仗。西拿基立對猶大給他的財寶並不滿意。他派了幾個軍官要求希西家投降。聽聽他們在列王紀下 18:20-22

中的話。猶大的軍隊是以寡敵眾。埃及也太弱，靠不住。那個軍官還說希西家清除偶像，並強迫他的人民只敬拜耶和華是錯誤的。亞述人認為多神勝過一位神。他們在**第 31 和 33 節**繼續他們的心理戰術。人民不應該相信他們的王或耶和華。如果他們投降，會有好結果。今天，撒但用類似的空洞承諾來騙我們！他說：「我可以給你更大的祝福。為什麼要信靠神而受苦？」他勸我們可以走捷徑，埋沒良心，甚至放棄我們的信仰。但是聖經告訴我們要榮耀神過於一切。尊重神的人會得到祂的尊重。在這一次情況下，神會因為猶大的敬虔君王而拯救猶大。先知以賽亞傳達了來自神的安慰信息，亞述這一次軍事行動將會失敗。亞述人很快撤退與埃及作戰。在他們離開之前，指揮官又發了一封信，重申沒有神能夠贏他的軍隊。這次希西家在神面前傾心吐意。我們將閱讀**列王紀下 19:14-19**。希西家稱神為坐在基路伯之間的那一位。希西家指的是約櫃的蓋子，上面刻有兩個名為基路伯的天使雕像。那是神與子民相遇的地方。希西家也承認神是創造主和萬有的主宰。西拿基立只是一個人。他不僅誹謗猶大及其君王，還褻瀆全能神。亞述確實征服了許多國家。因為那些國家所崇拜的神明只是人造雕像。最後，希西家懇求神拯救，讓人們知道只有耶和華是神。我們可以從這個懇切的禱告中學到什麼？我們可以在主面前展開我們的具體要求。它可以是醫生的報告、醫療賬單或移民局的來信。此外，我們應該抓緊神的屬性和應許。祂聆聽並回應我們的祈求。沒有什麼問題對祂來說是微不足道的。神有大能供應我們的需要。但這並不意味著祂會按照我們的想法成就一切。祂是我們的主，我們只是祂的僕人。有時，神會以意想不到的方式解決我們的問題。其他時候，神賜予我們出人意外的平安。無論結果如何，我們都可以與別人分享神在我們的生命中作為。

3. 立時的敗仗 Immediate Defeat

神回應希西家的懇求。神會讓亞述經歷立時的敗仗。神再一次通過先知以賽亞說話。讓我們挑選幾節經文來理解這段信息。22 節說：「**你辱罵誰？褻瀆誰？揚起聲來，高舉眼目攻擊誰呢？乃是攻擊以色列的聖者！**」神不會允許任何人冒犯祂。祂會像爸爸或長兄一樣站出來保護幼小的。然後神在第 28 節宣布祂對亞述人的審判：「**因你向我發烈怒，又因你狂傲的話達到我耳中，我就要用鉤子鉤上你的鼻子，把嚼環放在你口裡，使你從你來的路轉回去。**」「鉤」和「嚼環」是形容亞述人像動物一樣拖著他們的戰俘，送去流放。但這不會發生在猶大人身上。繼續閱讀**第 32-34 節**。神彷彿用盾牌圍護這座城市。沒有敵人可以越過邊界。連箭都不會飛過這片領土。神會持守祂與大衛王所立的約。如果猶大對神忠心，祂便會繼續選立君王繼位。亞述的圍攻在**第 35-37 節**戲劇性地結束。神消滅了 185,000 名亞述士兵。有些人可能會說：「怎可能？那只是童話故事。」如果神能在六天之內創造整個宇宙，將紅海分開，讓以色列人渡

過，讓耶穌從死裡復活，還有什麼是祂做不到的？祂是超自然的神。西拿基立當然知道這只能是耶和華的作為。事實證明，他所嘲笑的猶大神是一位真神。西拿基立羞愧地回家了。更糟糕的是，他被自己的兩個兒子謀殺了。而且血案是發生在他在寺廟中祭祀他的神明時。到底誰的神救不了誰的命？這對亞述來說是一個極大的羞辱。神比我們想像的更關心祂的榮耀。祂會挺身而出，保護祂的名。縱觀歷史，甚至直到今天，人們都蔑視神。他們在談話中濫用神的名。他們把神看為任何人造的偶像一樣。教堂被拆毀，聖經被焚毀，基督徒被迫害甚至殉道。神耐心地等待人們悔改。但是時日無多。最終有一天，神會平反一切。罪惡終於會結束。在那之前，基督徒還有很多工作要做。世界一片混亂。神是唯一的希望。祂差遣我們作為祂的使者。我們傳講和平的好消息。我們邀請人們與神和好。

結論 CONCLUSION

困難驗證我們對神的信心，也顯明神在我們裡面的大能。猶大從這場危機中得救。希西家經歷了屬靈的勝利。但他知道敵人會不斷湧來。我們也會不斷受到敵人的攻擊。我們中間許多人喜歡吃 **Chick-fil-A**。六十多年前，特魯特凱茜在喬治亞州創立了這家餐廳。凱茜先生是美南浸信會信徒，他愛主並他的家人。他明白他的事業是為了「忠心地管理神所託付給我們的一切來榮耀神。」這家連鎖餐廳在周日休息，以便其員工可以與家人共度時光或去教會聚會。**Chick-fil-A** 一直支持一些維護傳統家庭價值觀的基督徒機構。在 2012 年，一些同性婚姻積極分子提議抵制這家餐廳。作為回應，當時的阿肯色州州長、另一位虔誠的基督徒邁克·赫卡比呼籲民眾在特定的一天支持 **Chick-fil-A**。超過 60 萬人在臉書上表示支持。每家 **Chick-fil-A** 餐廳在當天的銷售額平均增加了百分之 30。凱西先生於 2014 年去世，他在遺囑中明確表示自己的企業可以賣給別人，但不能上市。凱茜先生堅決保留他最重視的核心價值。如果我們真的為了神的榮耀而活，會產生多大的影響力？我們的家庭、社區、課室和辦公室將會不一樣。我們的信仰正在面臨挑戰。我們可以選擇放棄投降。但是我們也可以選擇依靠神的智慧和力量來得勝。