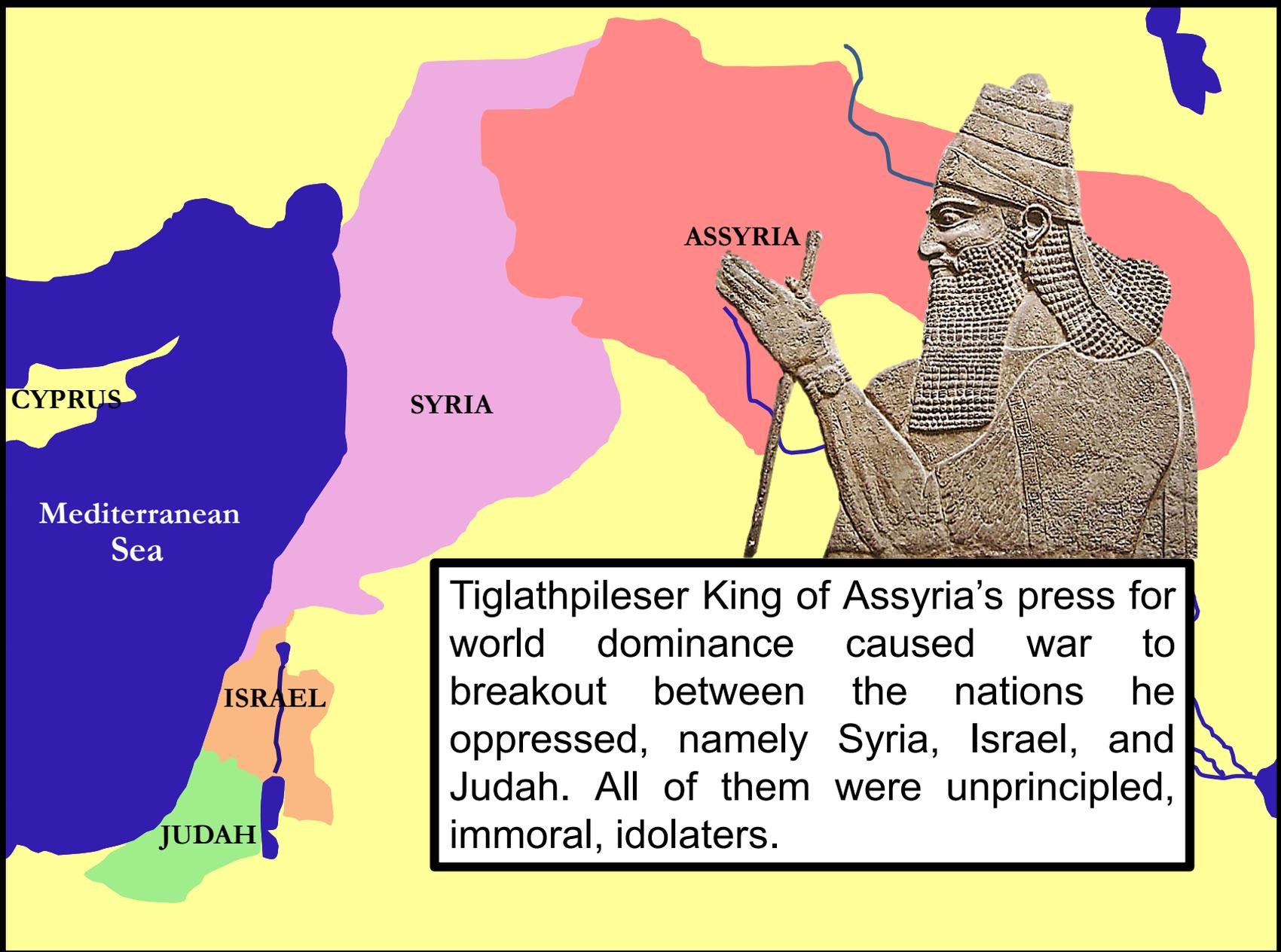
The background features two large, solid yellow shapes. One is a triangle in the top-left corner, and the other is a larger shape in the bottom half of the page, both pointing towards the center. The text is centered in the white space between them.

Lesson 10

The Story of Hezekiah

**CONTEXT FOR
THIS STORY:**



ASSYRIA

SYRIA

CYPRUS

Mediterranean
Sea

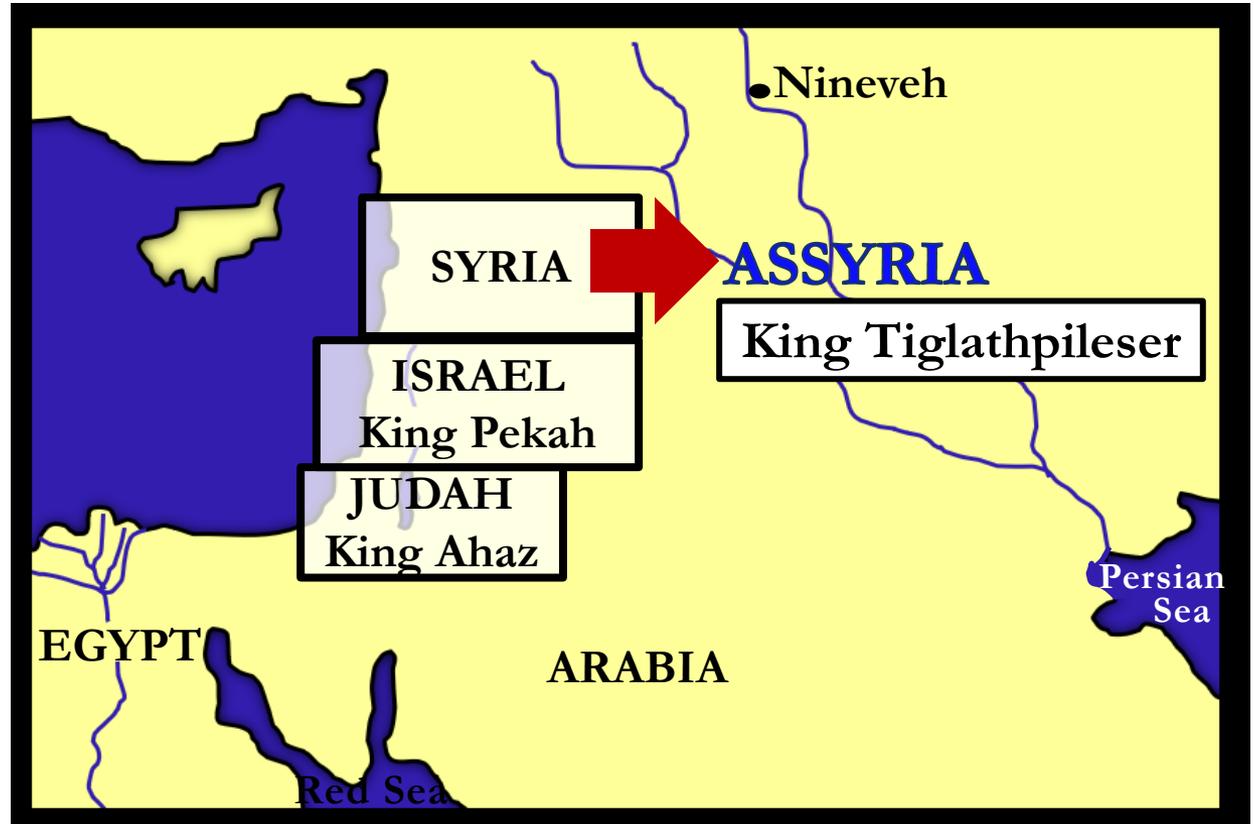
ISRAEL

JUDAH

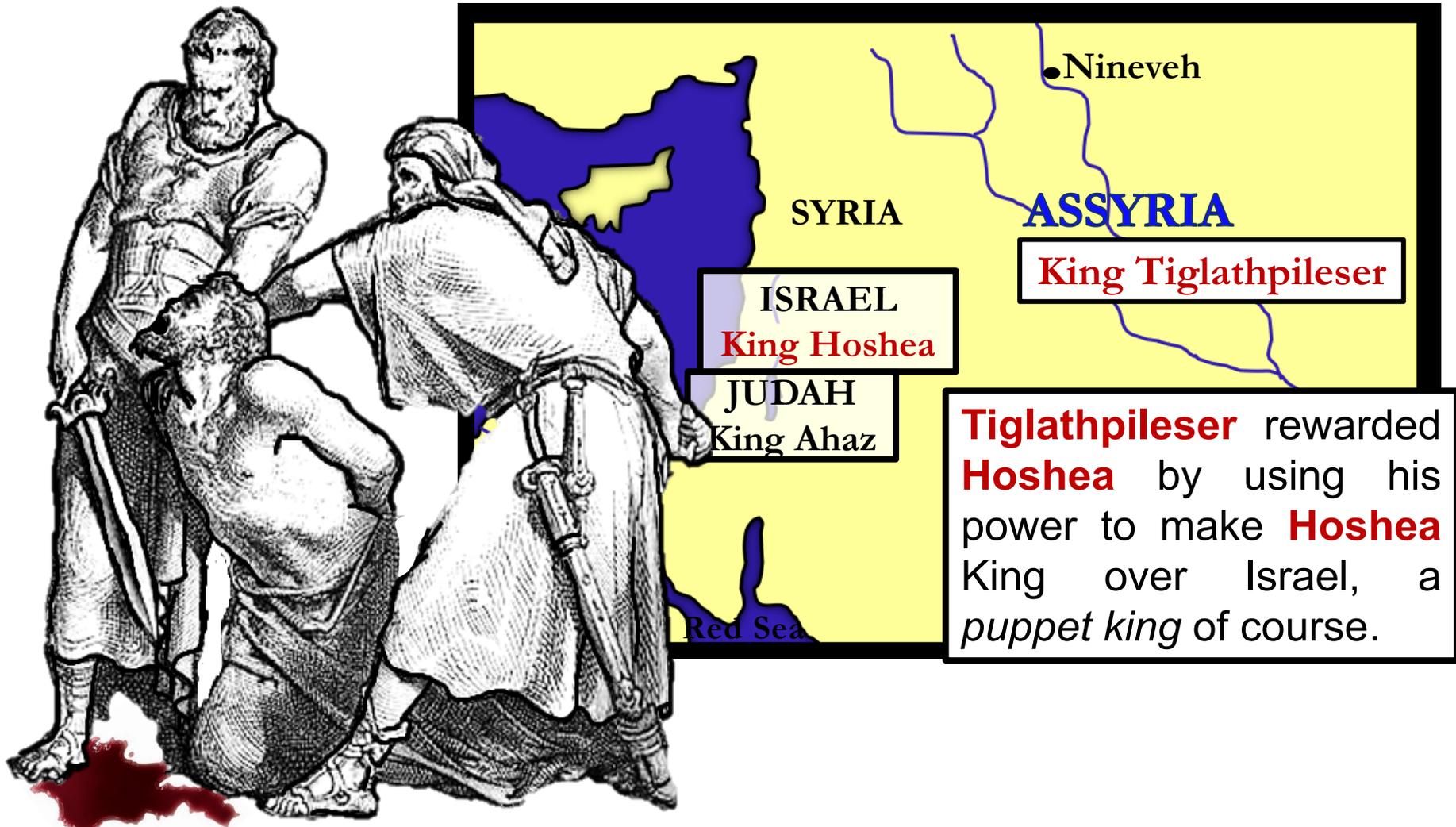
Tiglathpileser King of Assyria's press for world dominance caused war to breakout between the nations he oppressed, namely Syria, Israel, and Judah. All of them were unprincipled, immoral, idolaters.

Syria was the first to fall to the power hungry Tiglathpileser

Even though **Syria** and **Israel** had formed an alliance to resist Tiglathpileser they were no match for his powerful army.

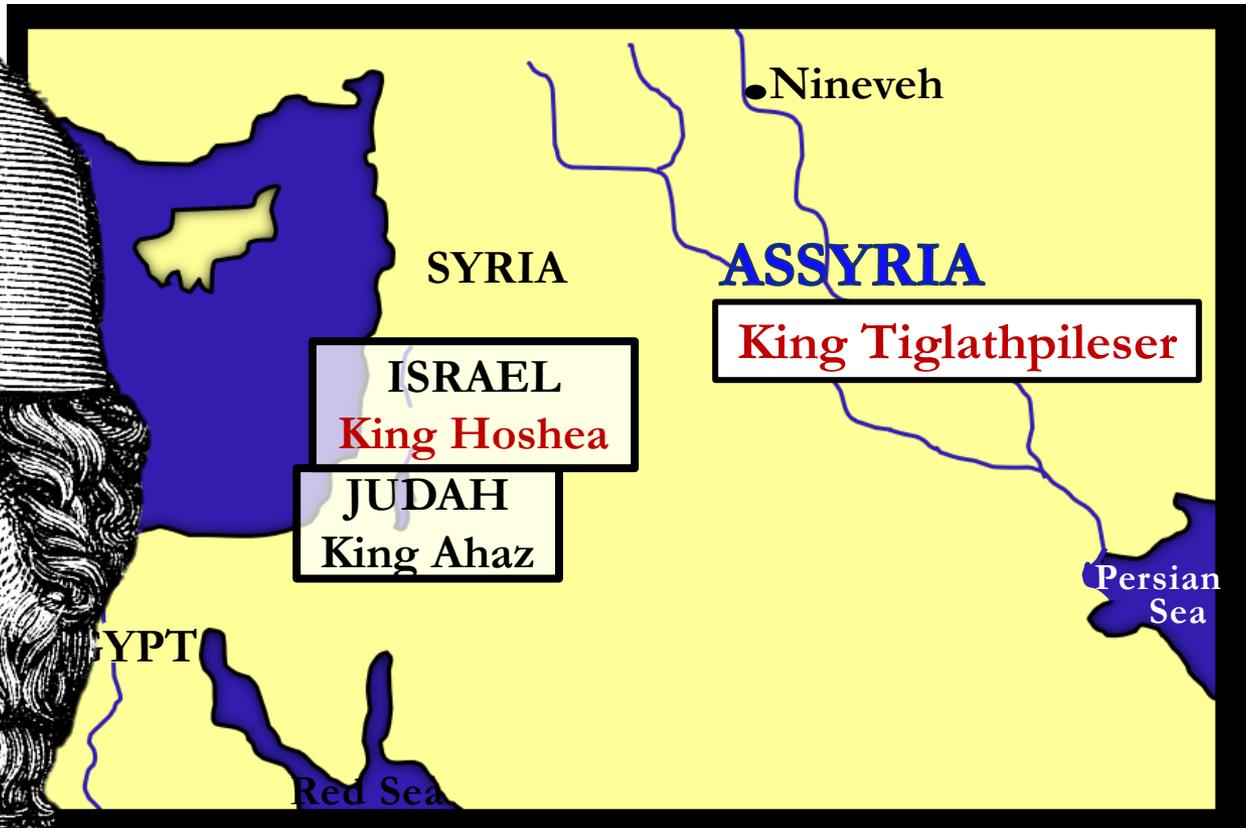
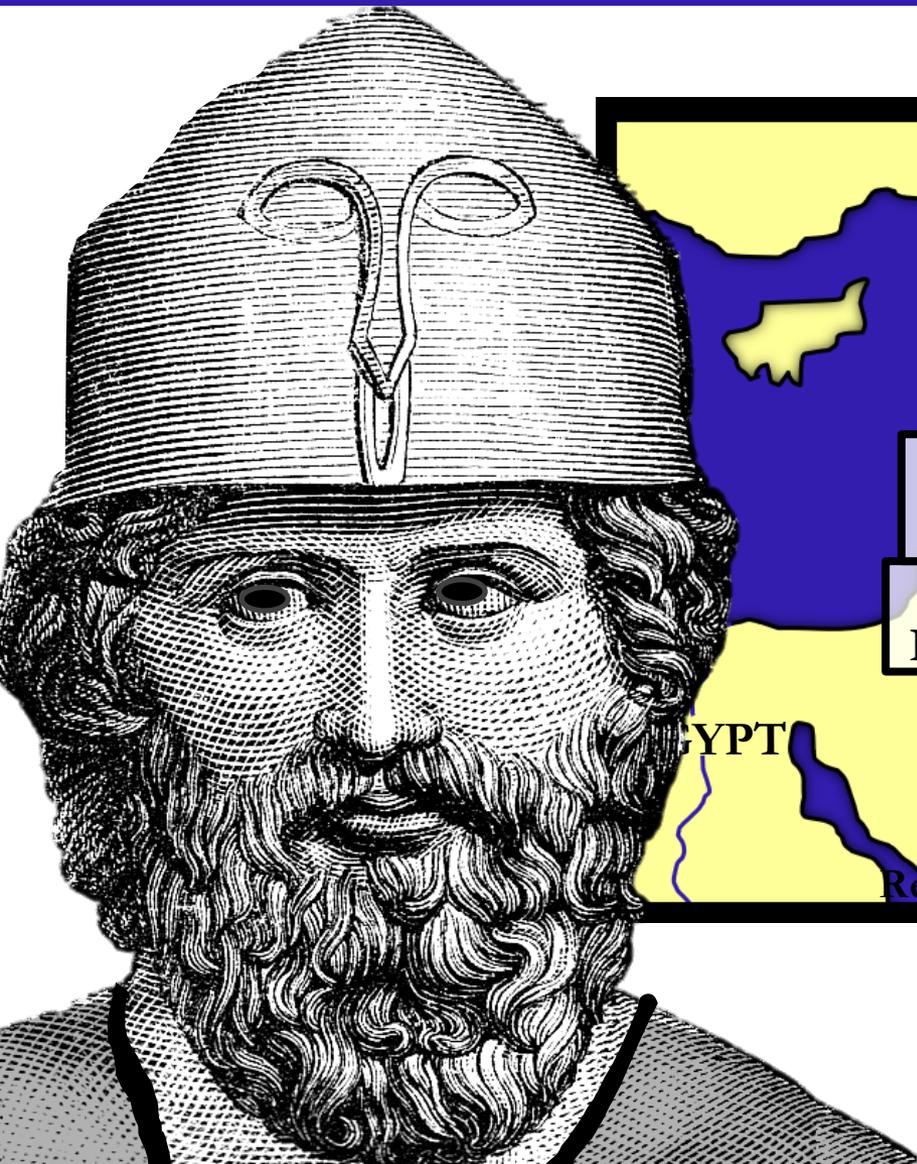


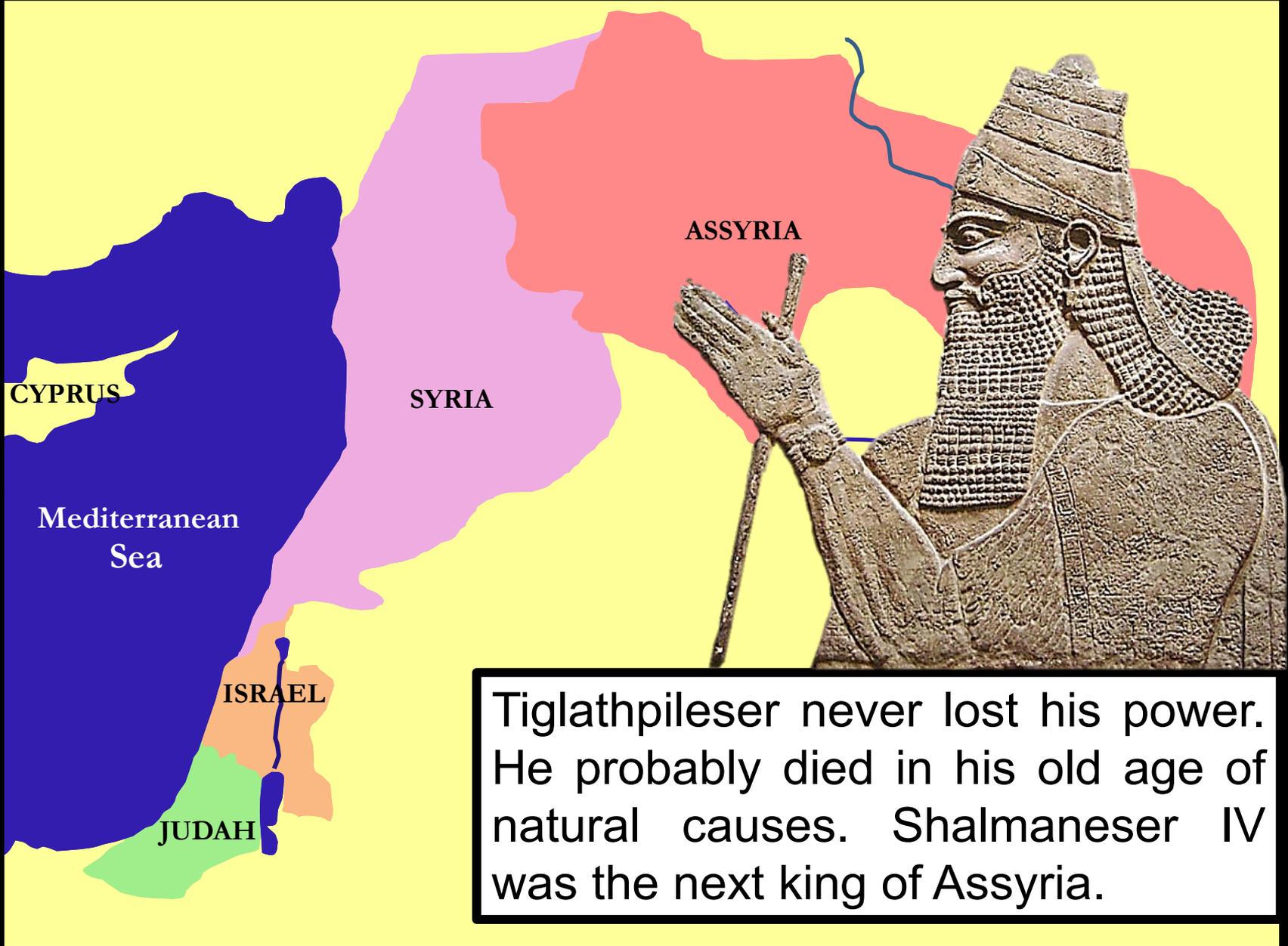
Hoshea, a captain in Israel's army assassinated his King, Pekah.



Tiglathpileser rewarded **Hoshea** by using his power to make **Hoshea** King over Israel, a *puppet king* of course.

Hoshea was subordinate to Tiglathpileser and governed essentially in name only.





ASSYRIA

SYRIA

CYPRUS

Mediterranean
Sea

ISRAEL

JUDAH

Tiglathpileser never lost his power. He probably died in his old age of natural causes. Shalmaneser IV was the next king of Assyria.

Shalmaneser IV immediately demanded tribute from Israel, but Hoshea refused to pay.

Hoshea hoped that So, the King of Egypt, would come to his aid, but no help came.



ISRAEL
King Hoshea

JUDAH
King Hezekiah

EGYPT
So King of Egypt

ASSYRIA
Shalmaneser IV

Ahaz died and Hezekiah became King of Judah.

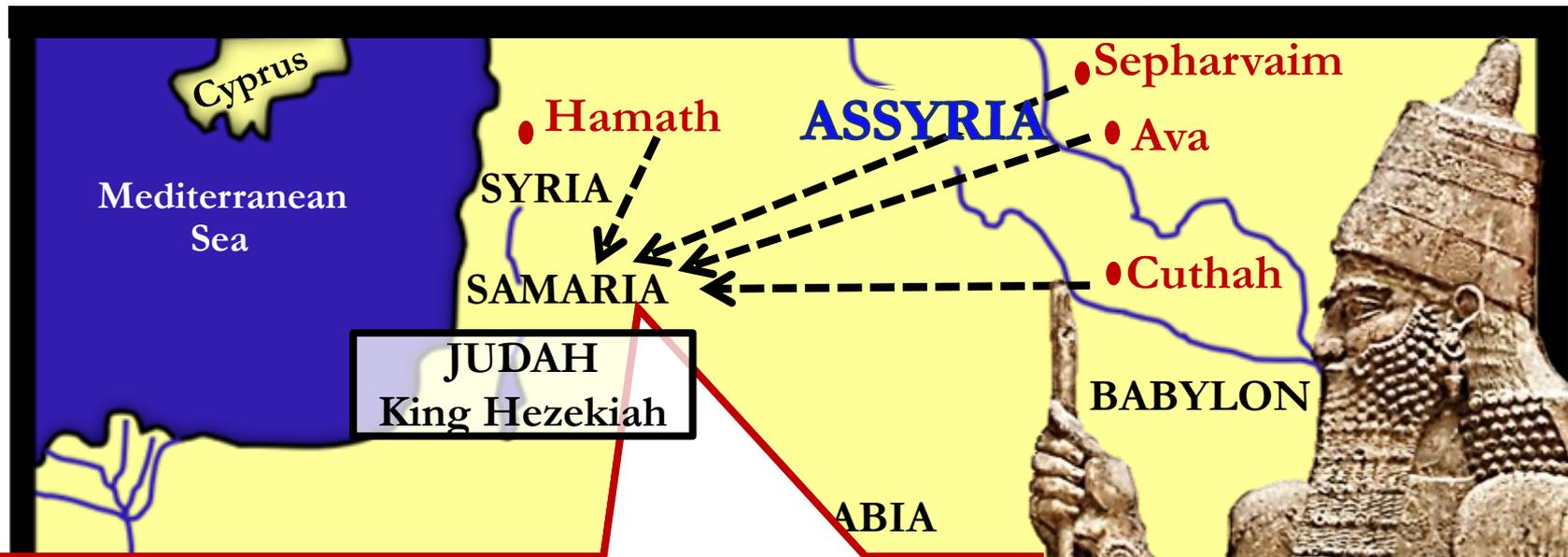
Shalmaneser IV and Hoshea warred for three years.

Upon the death of Shalmaneser IV
Sargon II took the throne.



There is an interesting story about Sargon II.

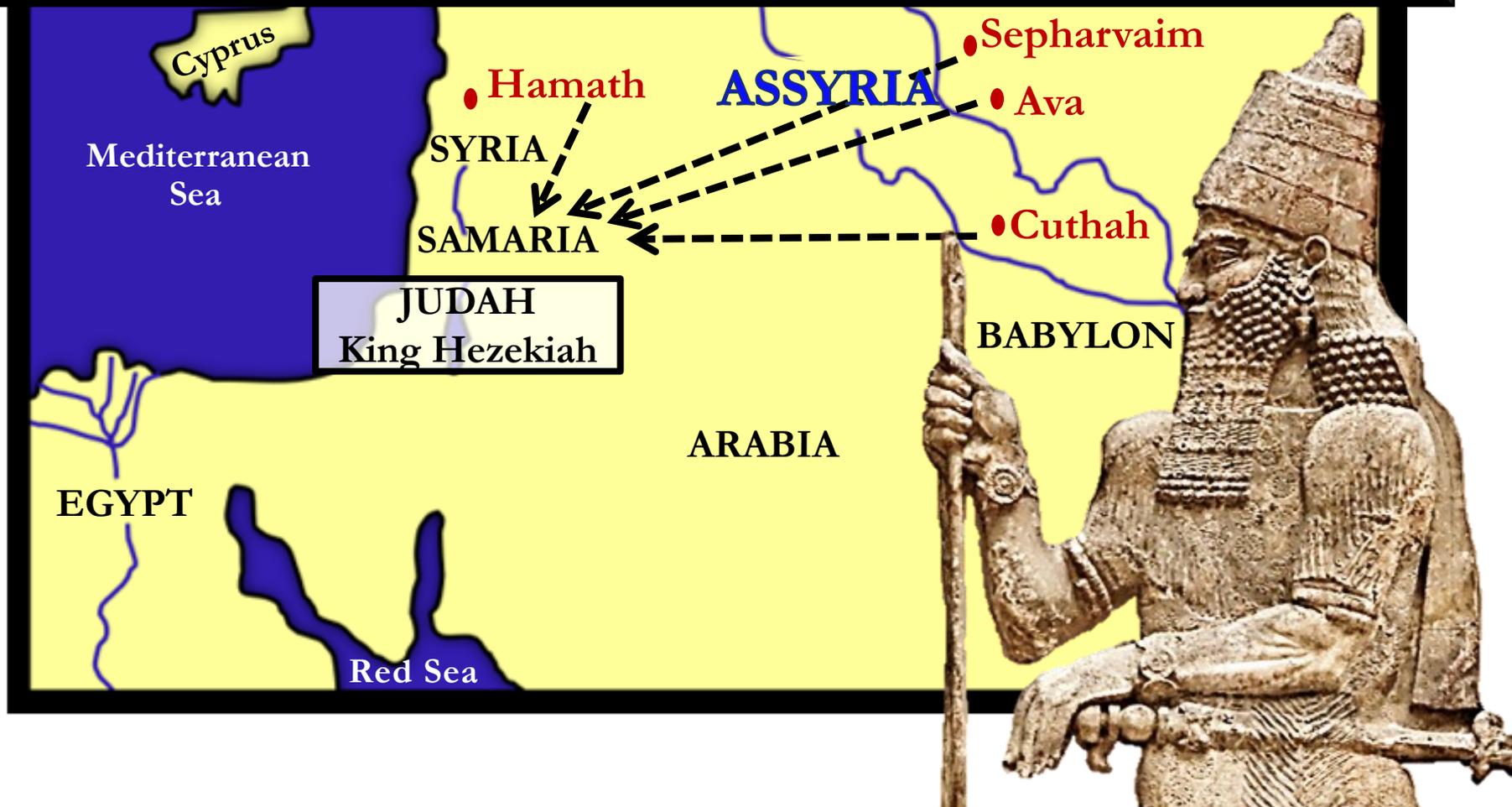
II Kings 17 says he was not content to let the ravaged land of Samaria/Israel lie abandoned, and he sent people from Babylon and four cities around him to occupy the land.



NOTE: At this point in the Scriptures Israel began to be called Samaria after its capital city.

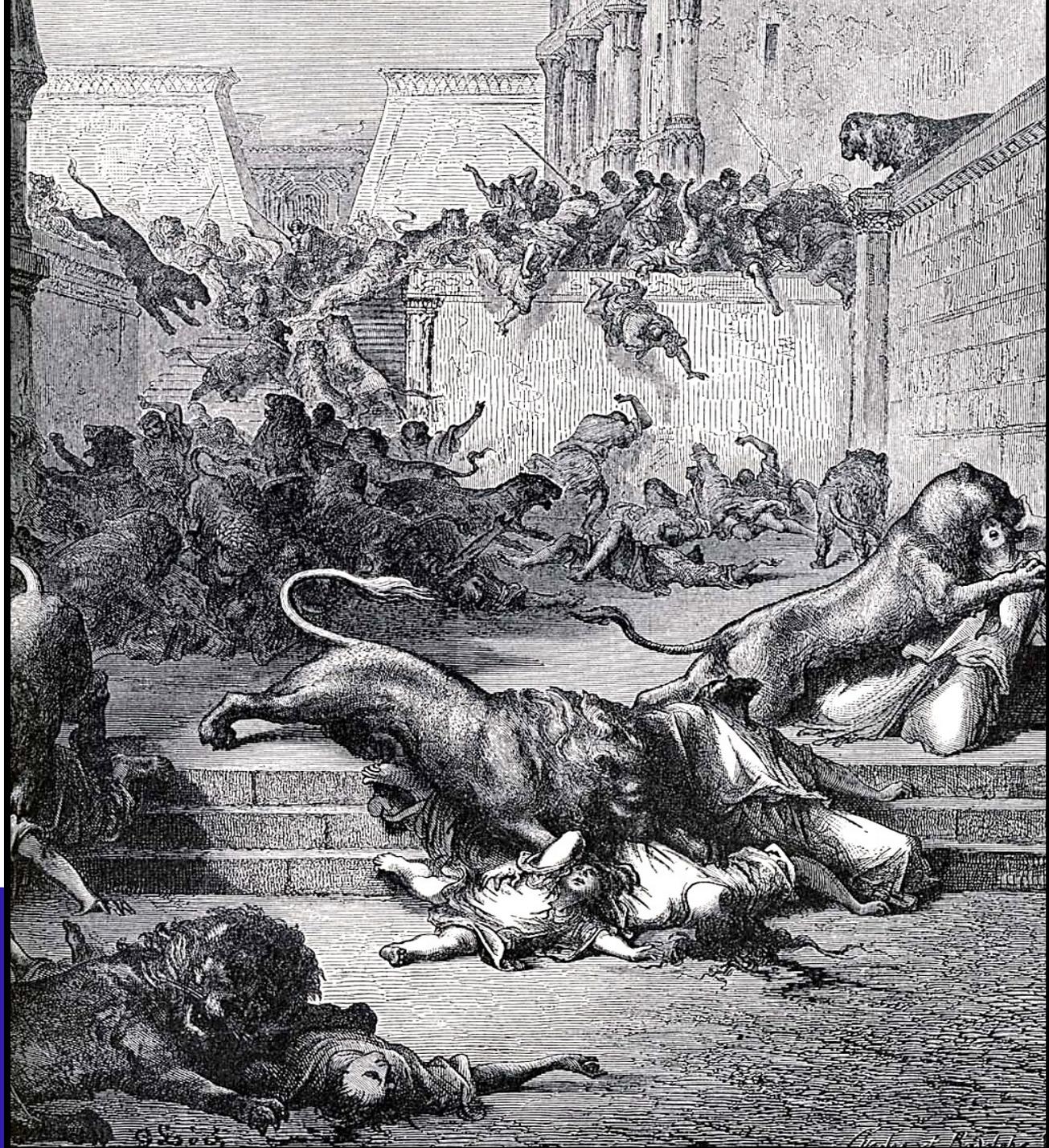
II Kings 17:24

“²⁴And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.”



II Kings 17

“²⁵And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them.”





**The land of Samaria
had sat uninhabited for
so long that the beasts
had taken over.**

Sargon King of Assyria sent one of the Israelite priests he had captured back to Samaria to teach the heathens there “the manner of the God of the land,” not out of any affection to God, but to save them from the lions.



The priest dwelt in the city of Bethel and taught them how they should fear the Lord.

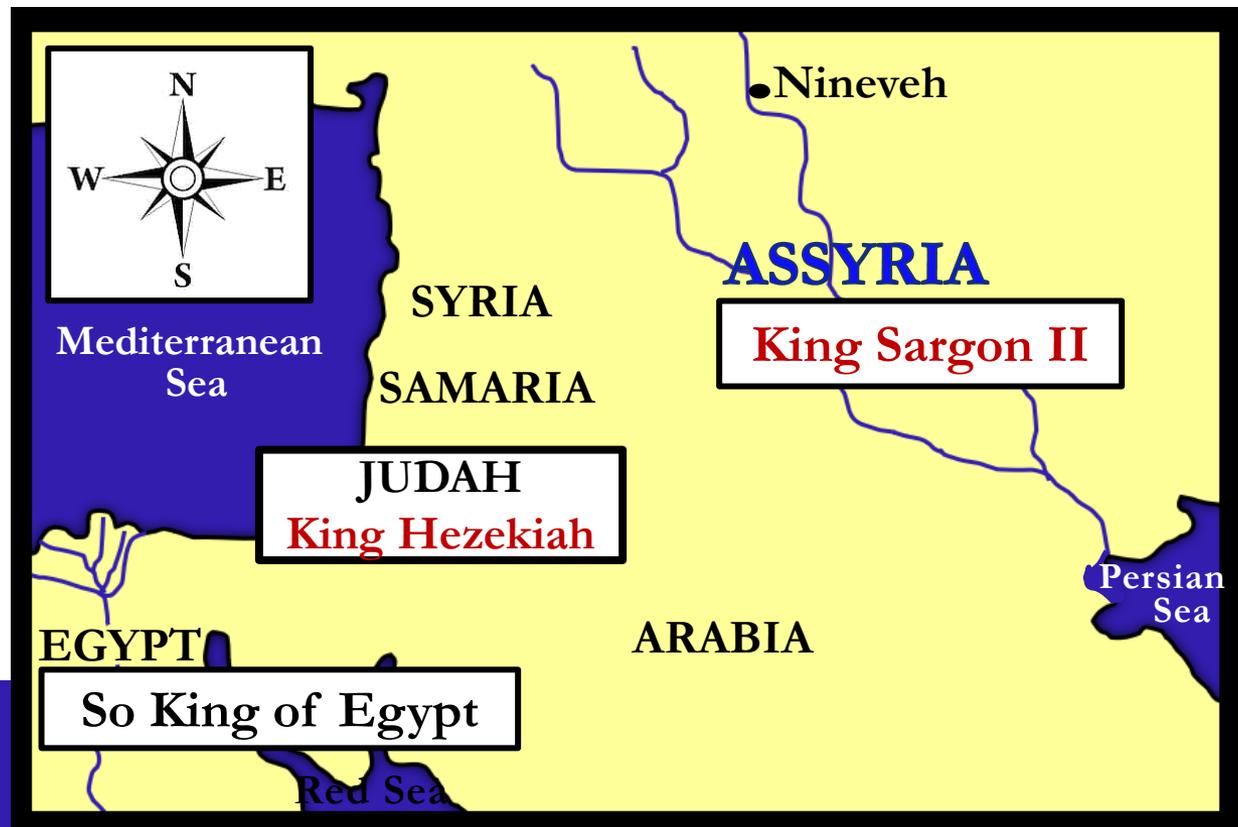
**But the people made
gods of their own and
worshipped them
instead.**

They were totally devoted to idolatry. They even sacrificed their own children to the gods of Sepharvaim by burning them in the fire.

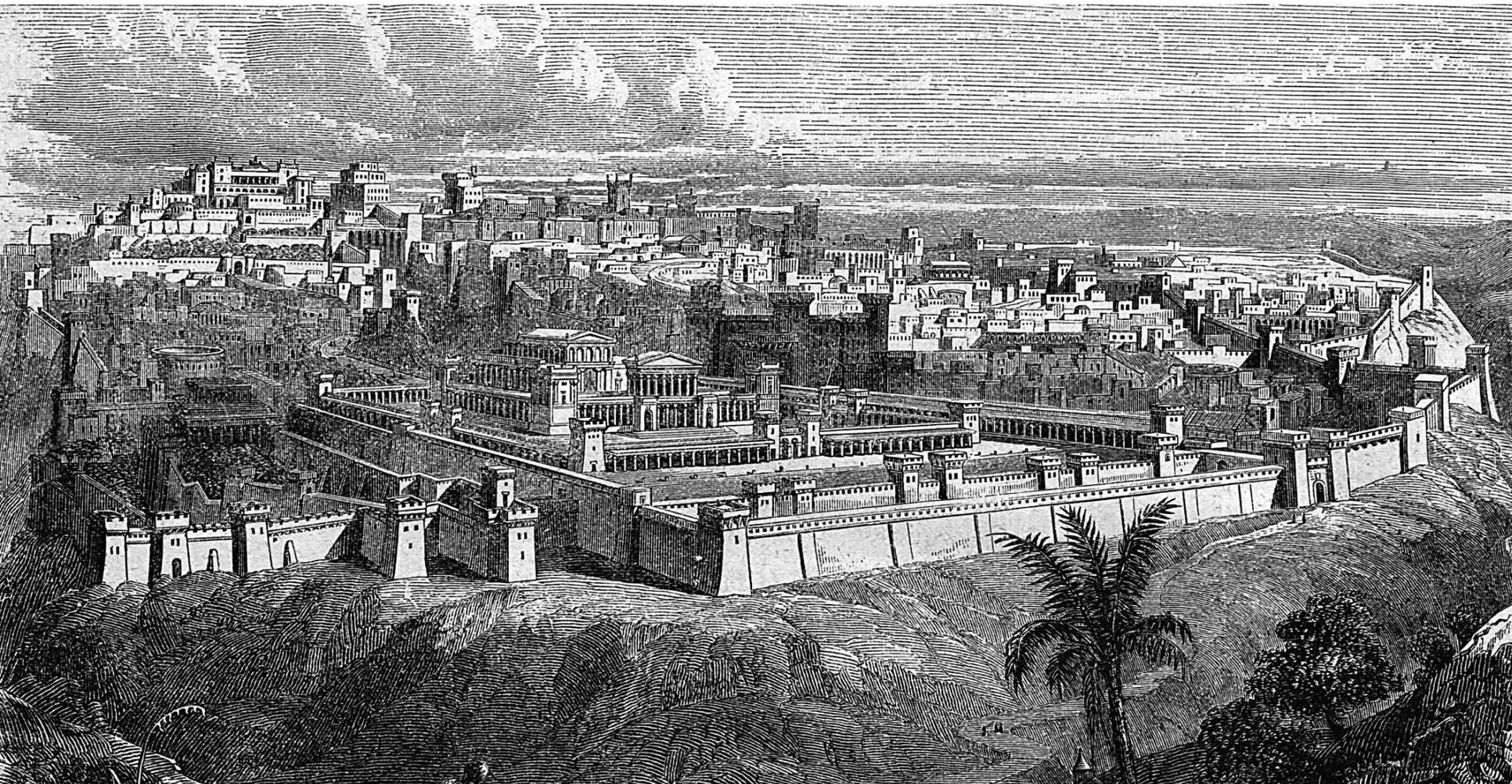


Sargon II destroyed the land west of him so completely that the text says, “There was none left but the tribe of Judah only” (II Kings 17:18).

Judah’s King, **Hezekiah**, had to pay heavy tribute to avoid the same fate.



Hezekiah knew Assyria would be a continual threat. In preparation to withstand a siege he improved Jerusalem's access to water from Gihon Spring which was located outside the city.

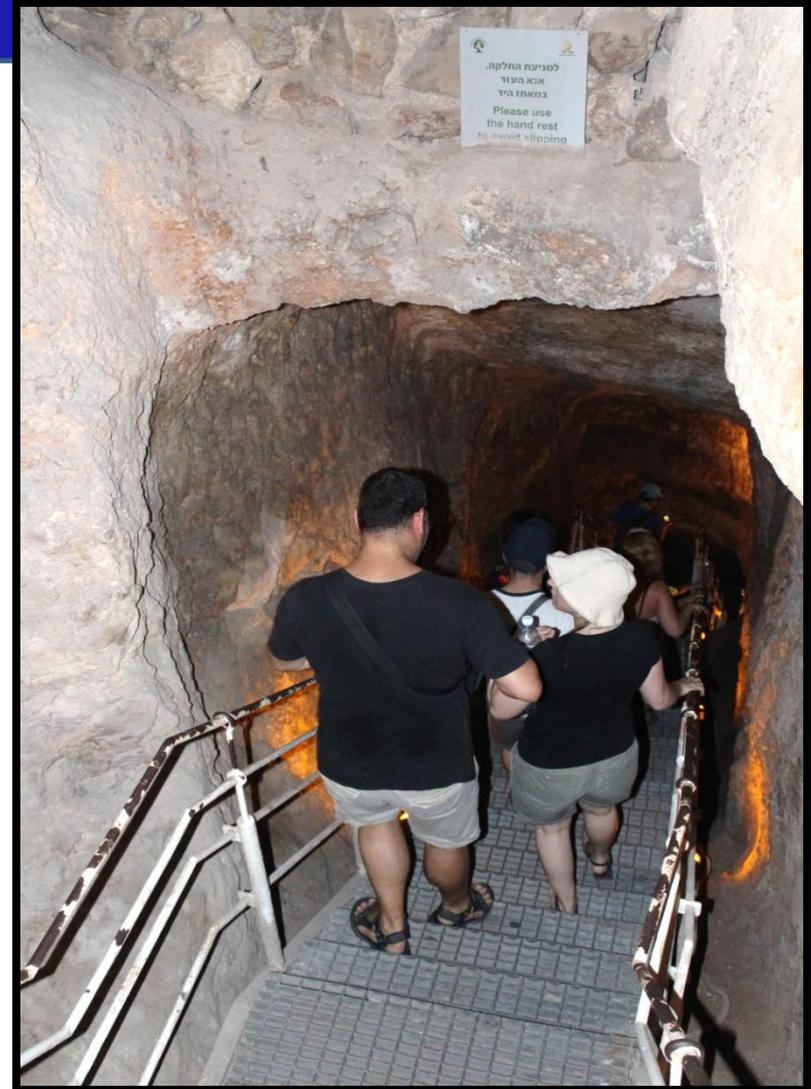


JERUSALEM'S WATER SHAFT

The water shaft King Hezekiah improved upon was in existence before the time of King David.

The water was accessed through a tunnel which can still be seen today and is in fact a tourist attraction in Jerusalem.

**Today it is referred to as
*Warren's Shaft.***



JERUSALEM'S WATER SHAFT

Warren's Shaft was discovered in 1867 by British engineer Sir Charles Warren.

Warren's Shaft



**Sir Charles Warren
(1840–1927)**

Hezekiah's improvement upon Jerusalem's water supply from Gihon Springs and the existing shaft was to divert it through a channel to the Pool of Siloam inside the city wall.

This construction must have been quite significant because of the many references to the accomplishment.



Pool of Siloam

TEXTUAL REFERENCES

II Kings 20:20 -- “²⁰And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?”

II Chronicles 32:2-4 -- “²And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, ³He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. ⁴So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?”

II Chronicles 32:30 -- “³⁰This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.”

Isaiah 22:11 -- “¹¹Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.”

Hezekiah had been the king of Judah for four years when Assyria began campaigning against Israel, and he had already proven himself to be faithful to God.

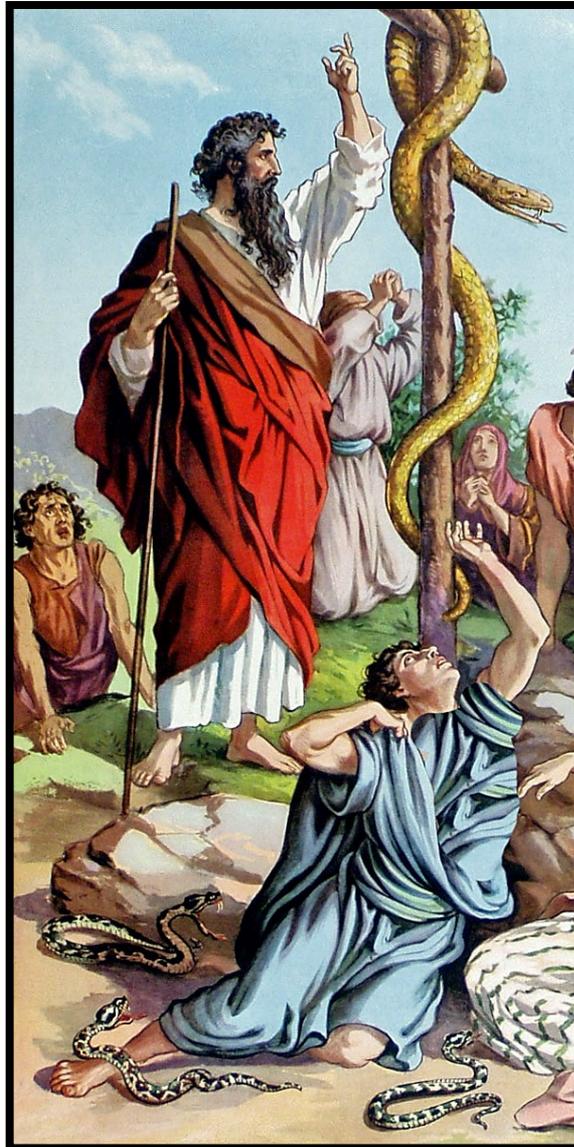
II Kings 18:9-10

“⁹ And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. ¹⁰ And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is in the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.”

Hezekiah destroyed the idols, restored the temple, and observed the Passover.

II Kings 18:4

“⁴He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.”



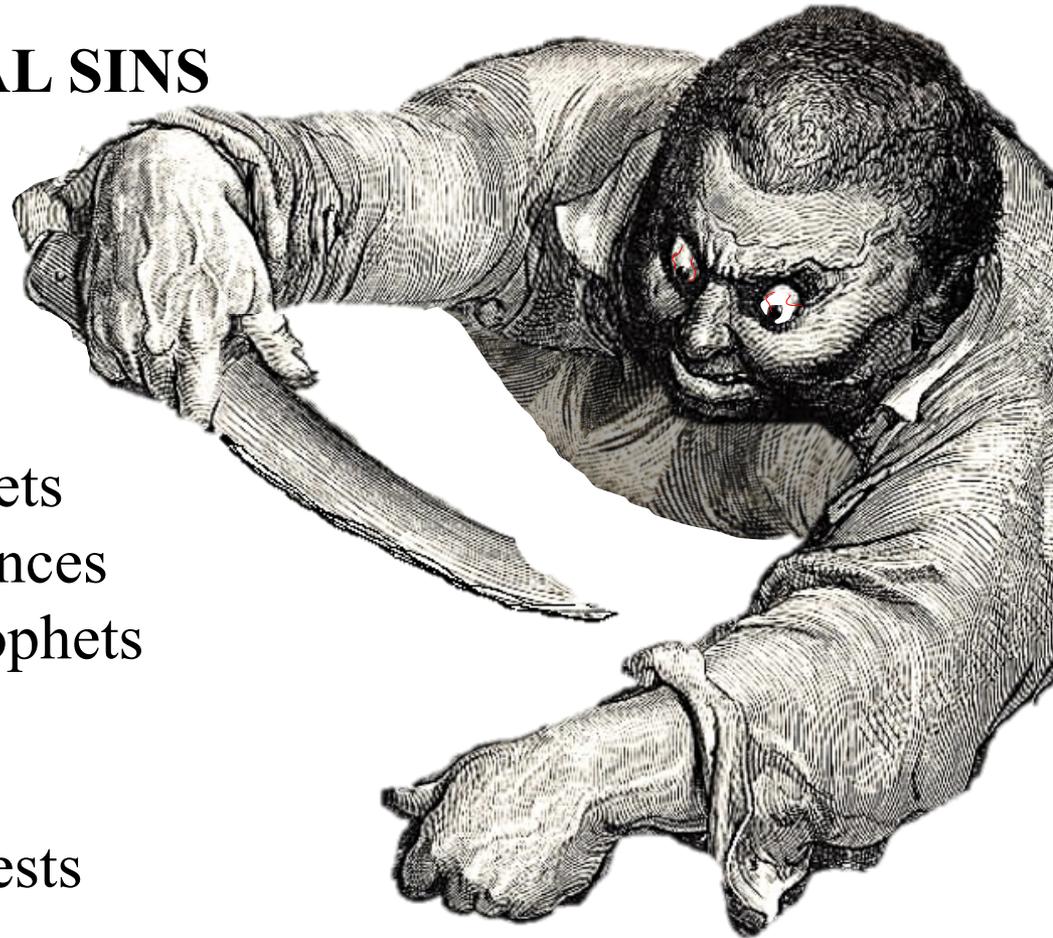
Adam
Noah
Abraham
Isaac
Jacob & Esau
Job
Joseph
Moses
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
Saul
David
Solomon
Divided Kingdom
Elijah
Elisha
Jonah

Assyrian Captivity

Yet, the people of Judah did not willingly
part with their idols but kept them in their hearts.
Micah recorded their sins:

A CATALOG OF NATIONAL SINS

- Micah 1:7 Idolatry
- Micah 2:2 Covetousness
- Micah 2:2 Oppression
- Micah 2:6 Encouraging
false prophets
- Micah 3:1-3 Corruption of princes
- Micah 3:5-7 Corruption of prophets
- Micah 3:9 Bribery
- Micah 3:10 Violence
- Micah 3:11 Corruption of priests
- Micah 6:10 Dishonesty



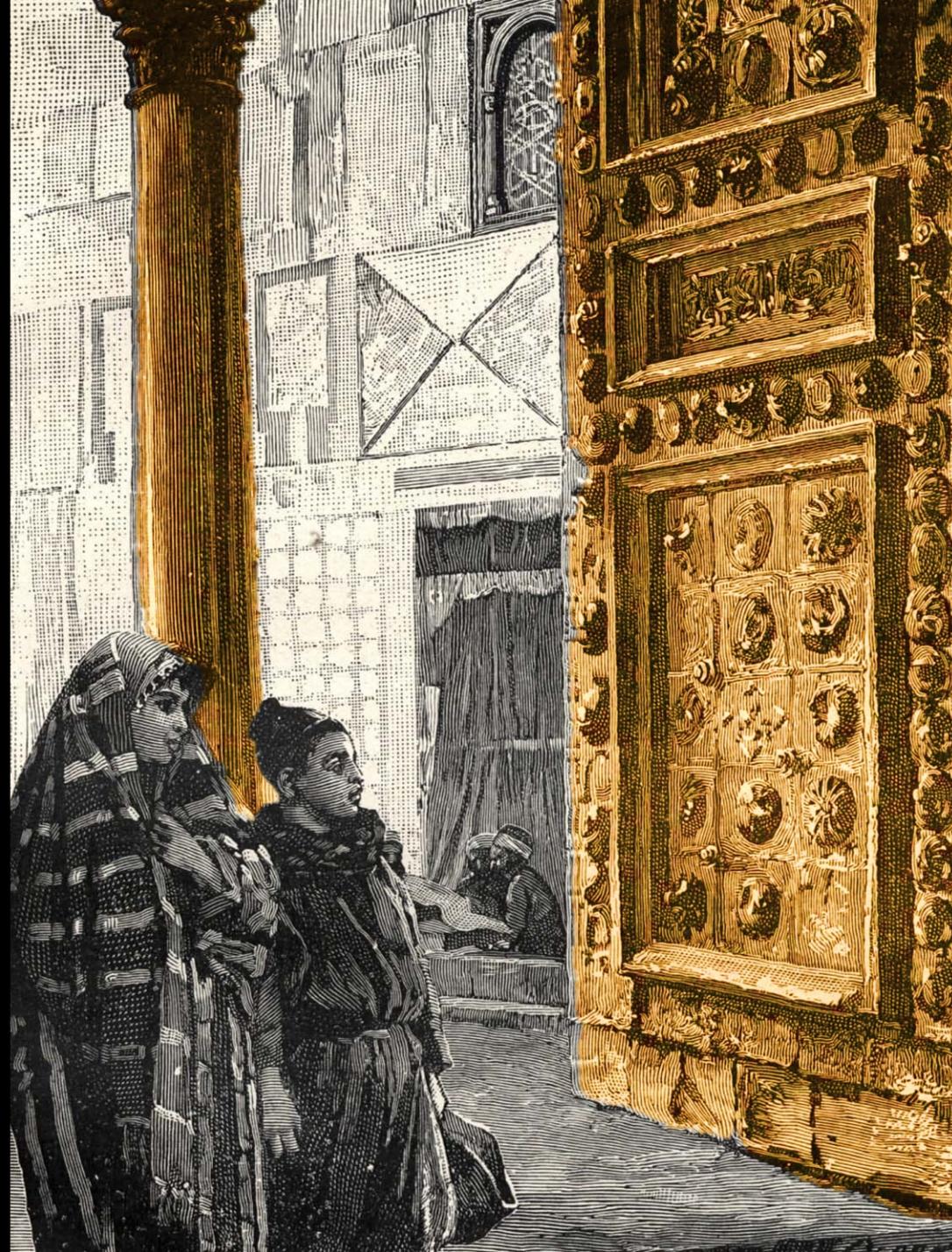
Sennacherib ascended the throne of Assyria after the death of his father Sargon II.

God chastised Judah by allowing Sennacherib to descend upon them. Most of the fenced cities were taken, and Sennacherib demanded ransom from King Hezekiah to spare Jerusalem.



To raise the huge ransom King Hezekiah was forced to empty the public treasures and take the golden plates off the doors and pillars of the temple (II Kings 18:17).

Sennacherib took the costly gifts of Hezekiah and advanced against Jerusalem anyway. He sent three of his generals and thousands of soldiers against the city.



II Kings 18

“¹⁷And the king of Assyria sent **Tartan** and **Rabsaris** and **Rabshakeh** from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller’s field.”



Rabshakeh was the chief speaker of the three Assyrian generals. His message was that King Hezekiah must surrender, and if he refused the Assyrian army would destroy Jerusalem.



Rabshakeh demanded that King Hezekiah himself should meet him outside the wall of Jerusalem at the conduit of the upper pool. Instead Hezekiah sent three commissioners and this is what Rabshakeh had to say to them:



He mocked Hezekiah and his army.

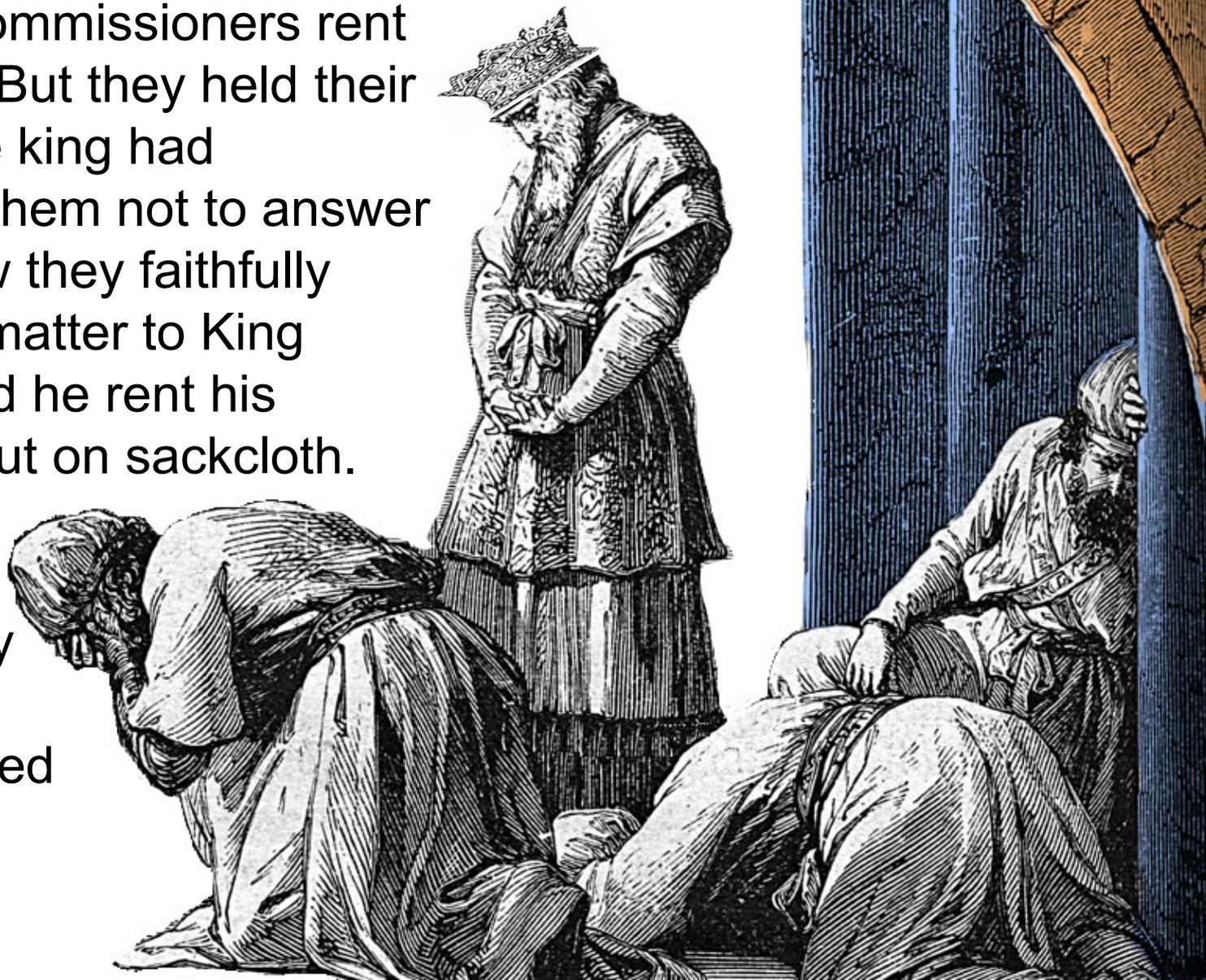
He falsely accused Hezekiah of looking to Egypt for help.

He insulted Hezekiah's reliance upon God.

He insinuated God was against them.

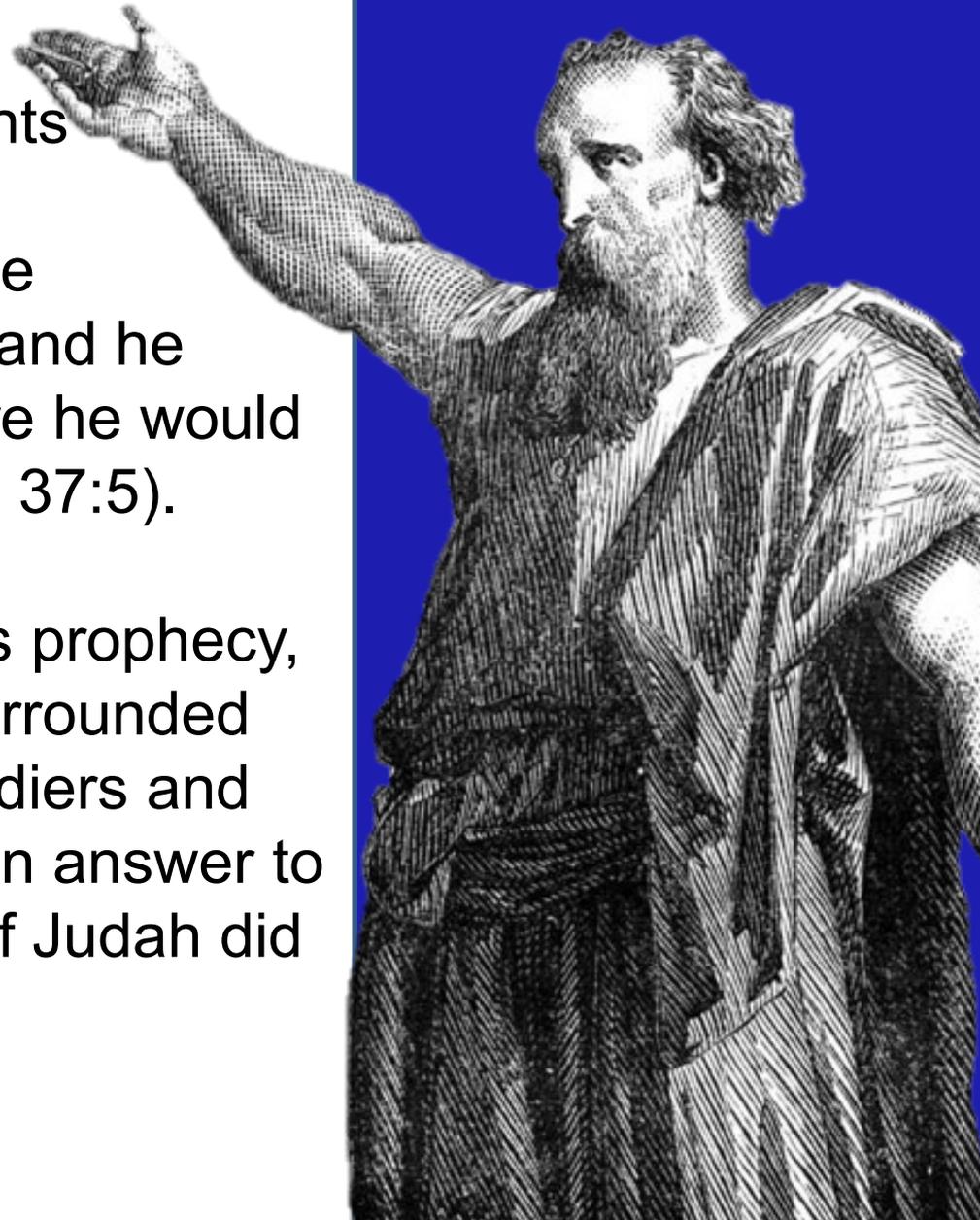
He said God was not able to protect them from Assyria.

With this blasphemy Rabshakeh concluded his speech, and Hezekiah's commissioners rent their clothes. But they held their peace, for the king had commanded them not to answer him. In sorrow they faithfully reported the matter to King Hezekiah, and he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth. Then he went up to the temple to pray and sent for Isaiah who lived in Jerusalem.



Isaiah did not go meet Hezekiah at the temple, but he told Hezekiah's servants to tell the king he should not be afraid for God would cause Rabshakeh to hear a rumor, and he would return to his land where he would be killed with a sword (Isaiah 37:5).

Hezekiah had faith in Isaiah's prophecy, for though Jerusalem was surrounded by thousands of Assyrian soldiers and Rabshakeh was waiting for an answer to his demand Hezekiah King of Judah did not respond.



Rabshakeh heard the rumor and it convinced him that he was immediately needed in Assyria. He returned to Assyria before getting a response from King Hezekiah. He instructed his army to remain in Judah under the command of the other two generals, and they were to wait for word from Rabshakeh.

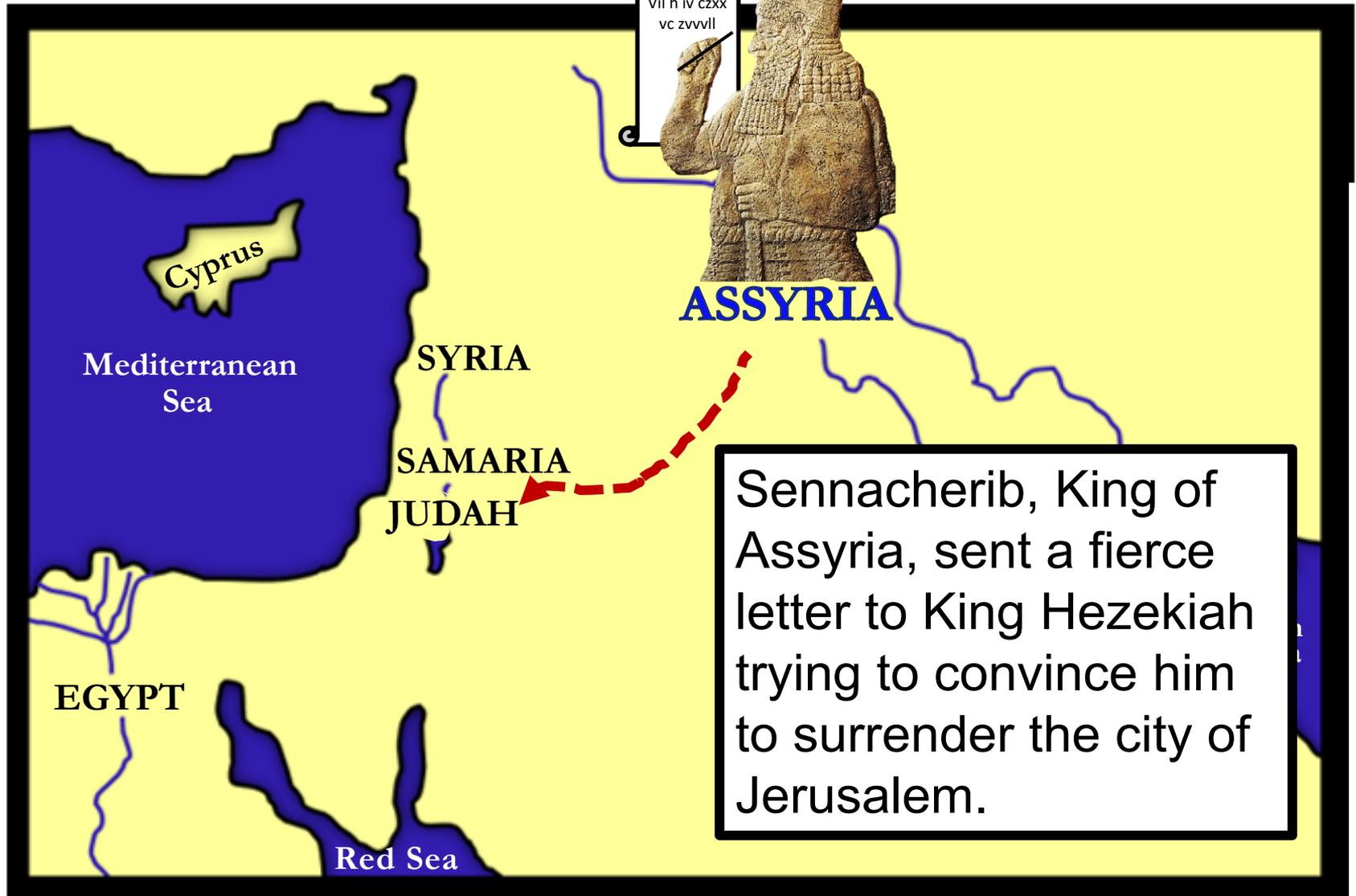


In Assyria
Rabshakeh was
indeed needed
for King
Sennacherib
was at war with
Libnah and
then Ethiopia.
Rabshakeh was
killed in battle
(II Kings 19:7).



We are not told how much time lapsed as Jerusalem waited, held captive by thousands of Assyrian soldiers. How terrified King Hezekiah and the citizens of Jerusalem must have been!





Vil h iv czxx
vc zvvvll

ASSYRIA

Mediterranean
Sea

SYRIA

SAMARIA

JUDAH

EGYPT

Red Sea

Sennacherib, King of Assyria, sent a fierce letter to King Hezekiah trying to convince him to surrender the city of Jerusalem.

As soon as King Hezekiah received the letter from Sennacherib's messengers, he took it to the temple and spread it before the Lord.

His prayer is recorded for us in II Kings 19.



II Kings 19:15-19

“¹⁵ And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. ¹⁶ LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.”



II Kings 19:15-19

“¹⁷ Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,

¹⁸ And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

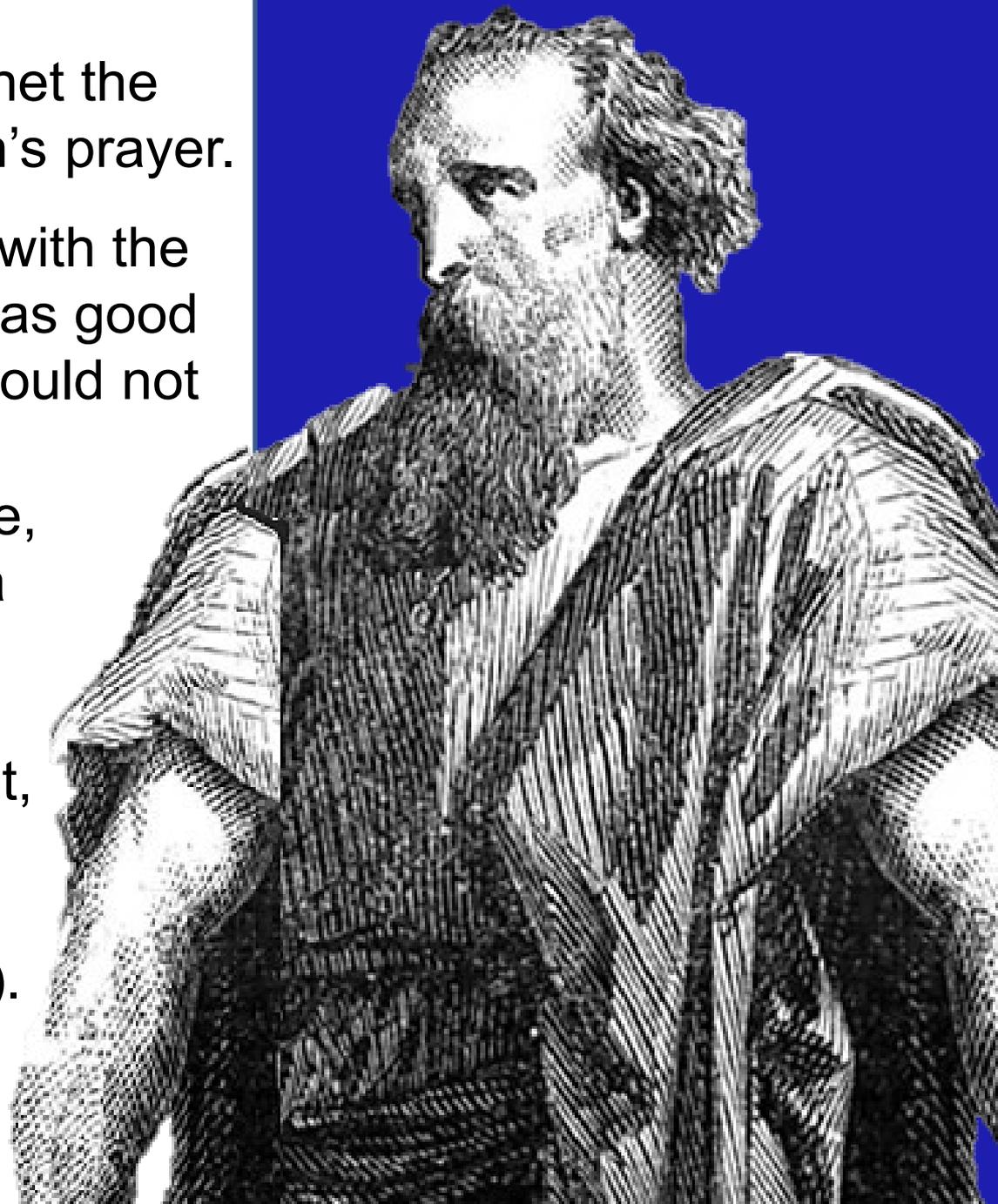
¹⁹ Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.”



God told Isaiah the prophet the answer to King Hezekiah's prayer.

Isaiah sent messengers with the answer to Hezekiah. It was good news . . . Sennacherib would not come into Jerusalem

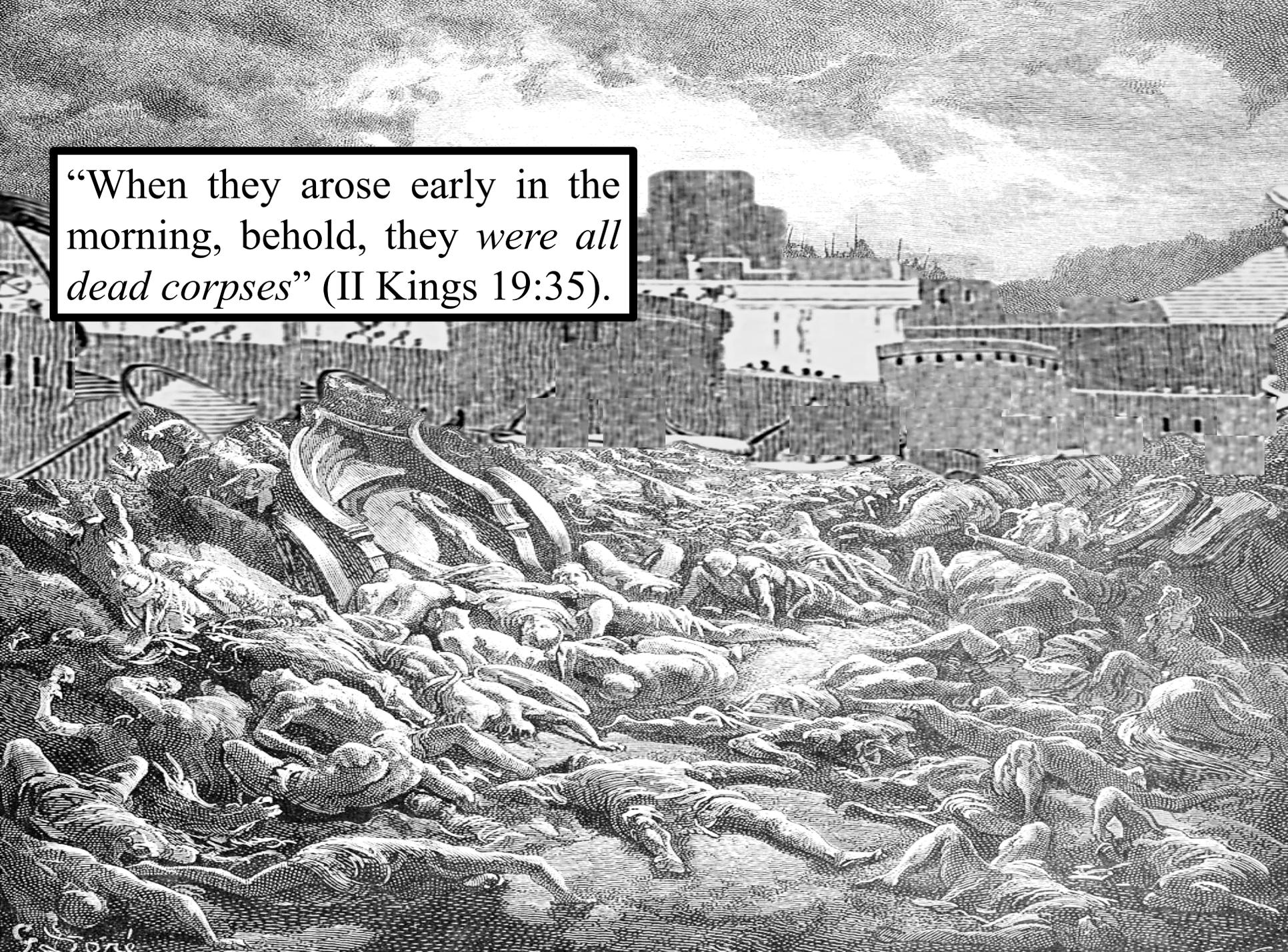
“nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with a shield, nor cast a bank against it . . . for I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake” (II Kings 19:32-34).





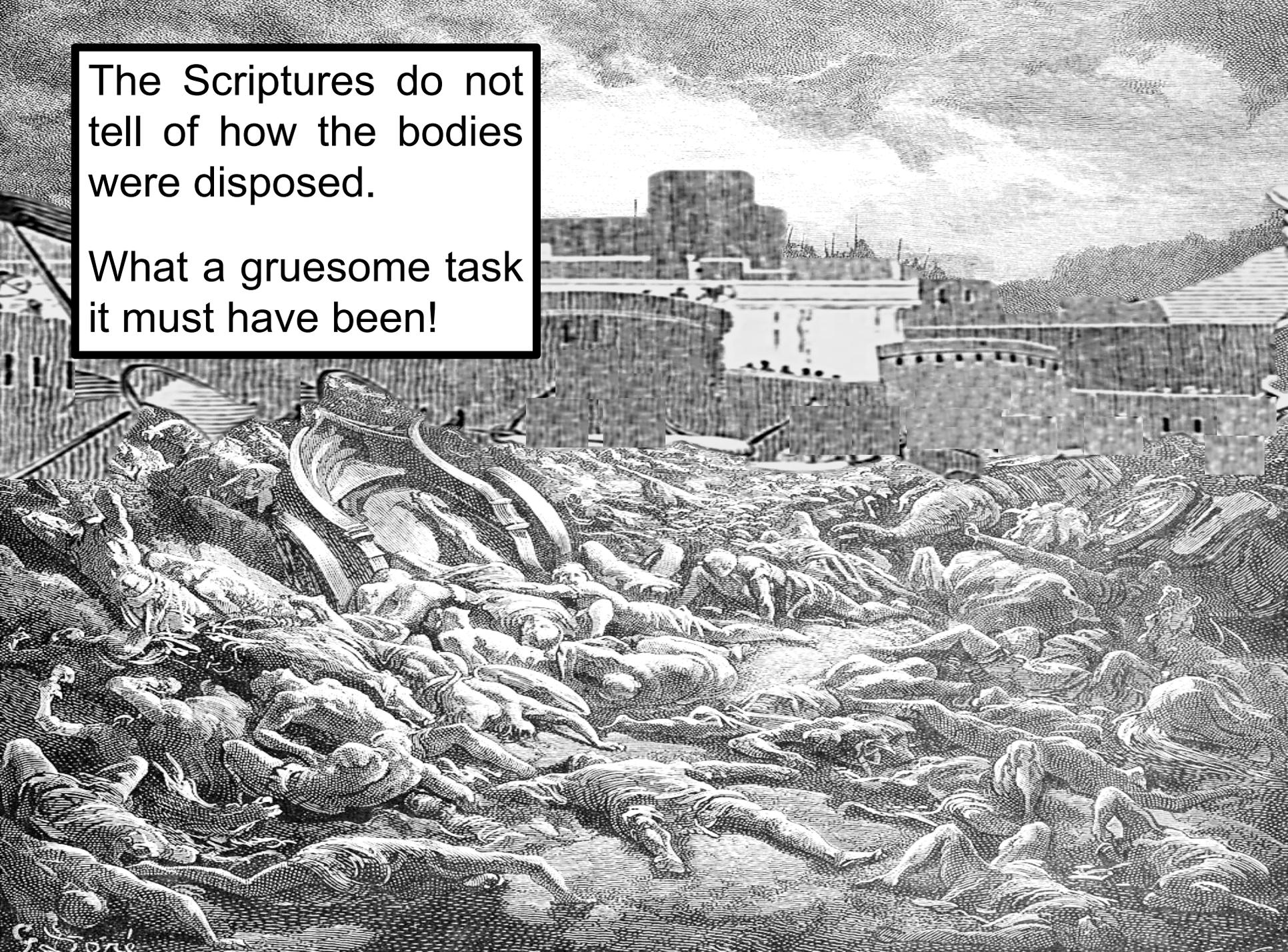
God literally defended Jerusalem, for he sent an angel that night who killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers.

“When they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were all dead corpses*” (II Kings 19:35).



The Scriptures do not tell of how the bodies were disposed.

What a gruesome task it must have been!



A sign was included in Isaiah's prophecy which confirmed the victory was from God: For that year and the next Judah would eat that which they did not sow. Provisions were scarce, but God would cause food to grow of itself, abundantly for their benefit (II Kings 19:29).



Archeology And The Bible

The text does not indicate that Sennacherib ever again oppressed Hezekiah King of Judah after the massacre of 185,000 of his soldiers outside the walls of Jerusalem.

He did although continue to conduct military campaigns against other nations of which he boasted and recorded in cuneiform writing on prisms, three of which have been found and preserved.

**Taylor
Prism**



Photo— Wikimedia / Public Domain /
Author: David Castor

**Sennacherib's
Prism**



Photo— Wikimedia / Public
Domain / Author Daderot

**Jerusalem
Prism**



Photo— Wikimedia / CC 3.0
unported license / Author: Hanay

Archeology And The Bible

The deciphered cuneiform writing on the prisms reveal that they have almost identical inscriptions with only minor variants.

The dates on the prisms show that they were written sixteen months apart.

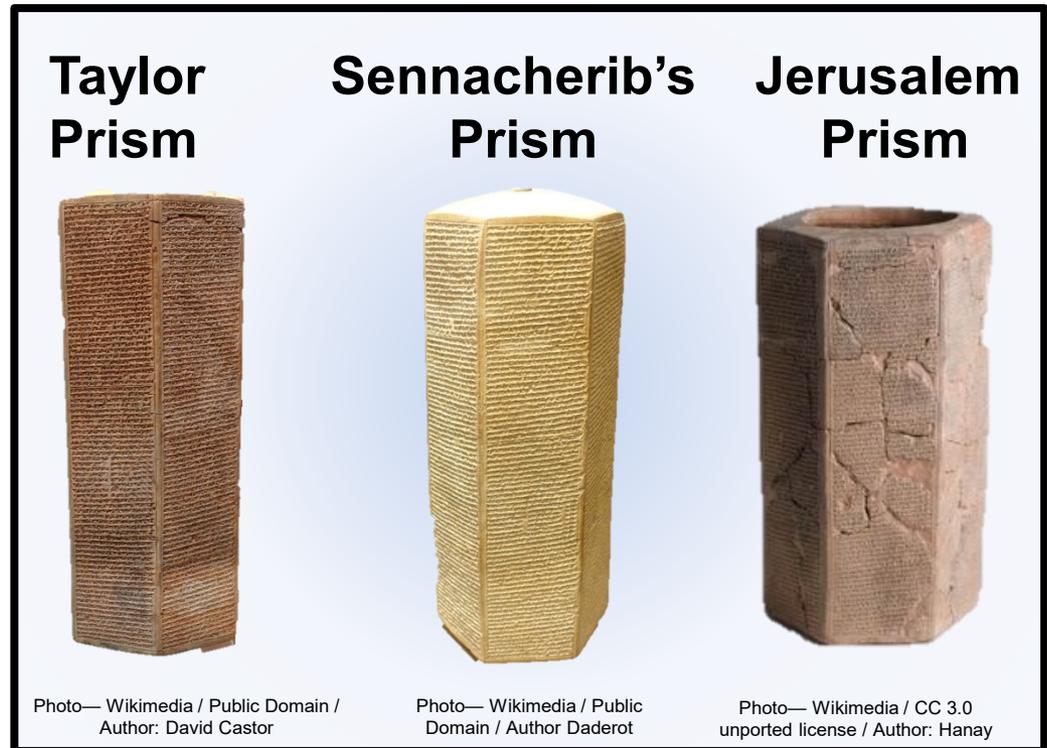


Archeology And The Bible

The Taylor Prism is now in the British Museum. It was found by Colonel Robert Taylor in 1830 at Nineveh the capital of the Assyrian Empire.

The Sennacherib Prism is in the Oriental Institute. It was found at Kuyunjik in Iraq. It was purchased by James Henry Breasted from a Baghdad antiques dealer in 1919.

The Jerusalem Prism was acquired by the Israel Museum at a Sotheby's auction in 1970. There is no documentation as to who or when it was discovered.



Archeology And The Bible

On these clay prisms King Sennacherib recorded eight military campaigns undertaken against various peoples who refused to submit to Assyrian domination. In all instances, he claims to have been victorious.



Archeology And The Bible

Sennacherib recorded that in his third campaign he encircled Jerusalem and imposed heavy tribute. This is a description of Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem during the reign of King Hezekiah (II Kings 18:17; II Chronicles 32:9; Isaiah 33 & 36).



Archeology And The Bible

The boastful words of Sennacherib say that he shut up “Hezekiah the Judahite” within Jerusalem his own royal city “like a caged bird.” The ancient words of Sennacherib illustrate how archeological discoveries can throw much light on biblical narratives.



Sennacherib's life ended when he was assassinated by two of his own sons.

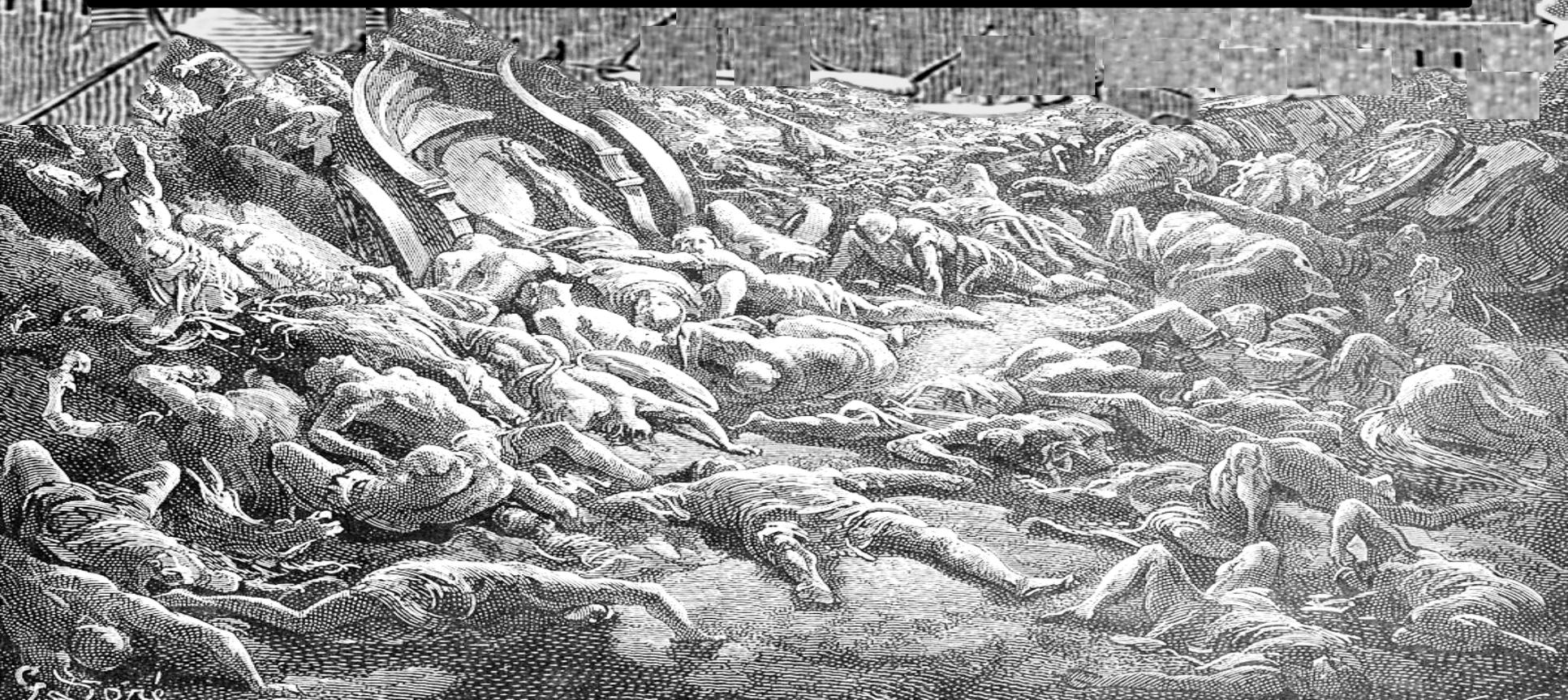


II Kings 19:37

“³⁷And it came to pass, as he [Sennacherib] was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.”



It was obvious that Isaiah's prophecy was TRUE when an angel killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night. Yet, Isaiah told King Hezekiah that a sign would follow to confirm the slaughter of the Assyrian army was from God . . . the people of Judah would "eat that which they did not sow."

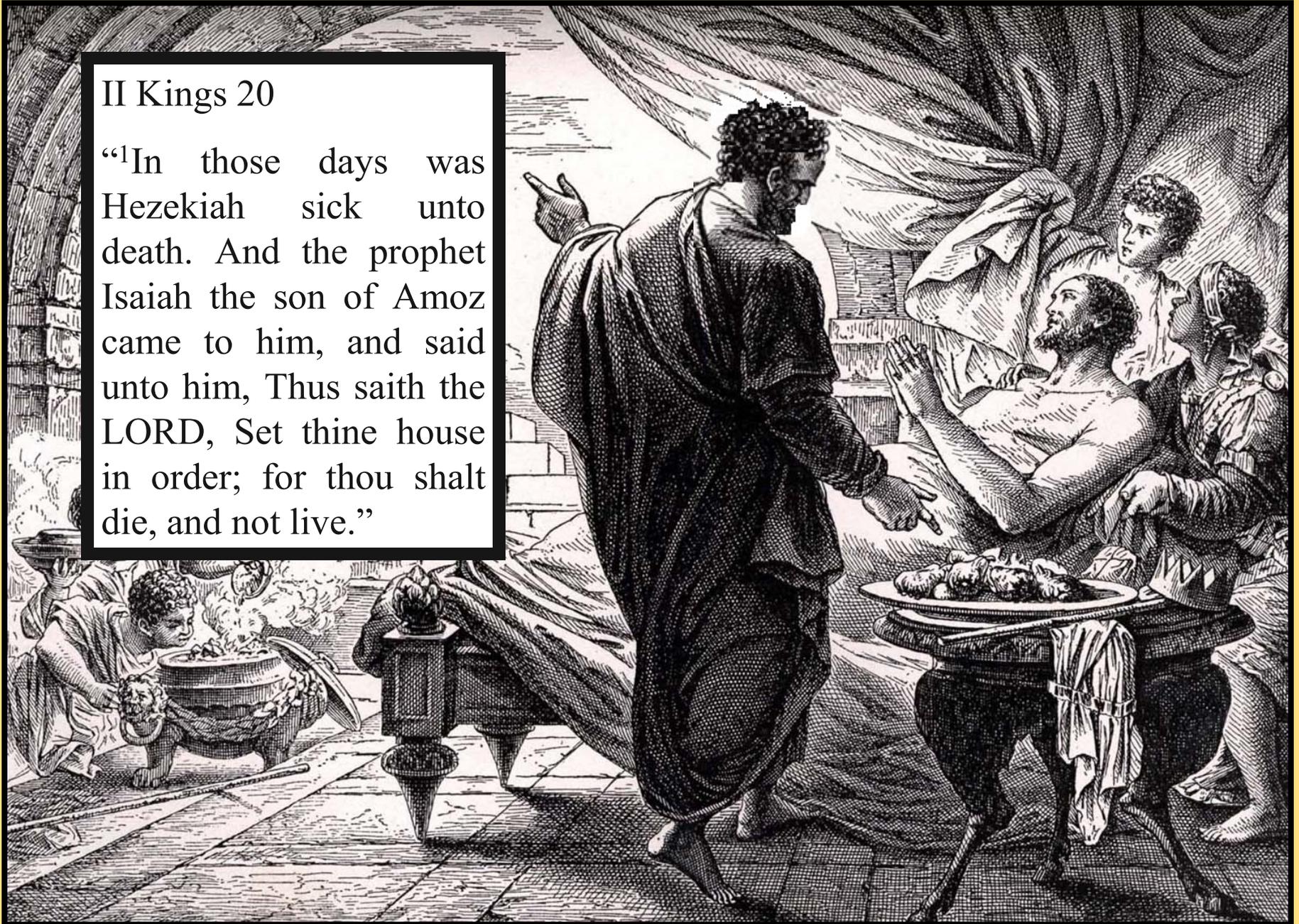


In the abundant days which confirmed Isaiah's prophecy; days where *the people ate that which they did not sow*, King Hezekiah became ill and Isaiah came to him and told him, "Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live" (II Kings 20:1).



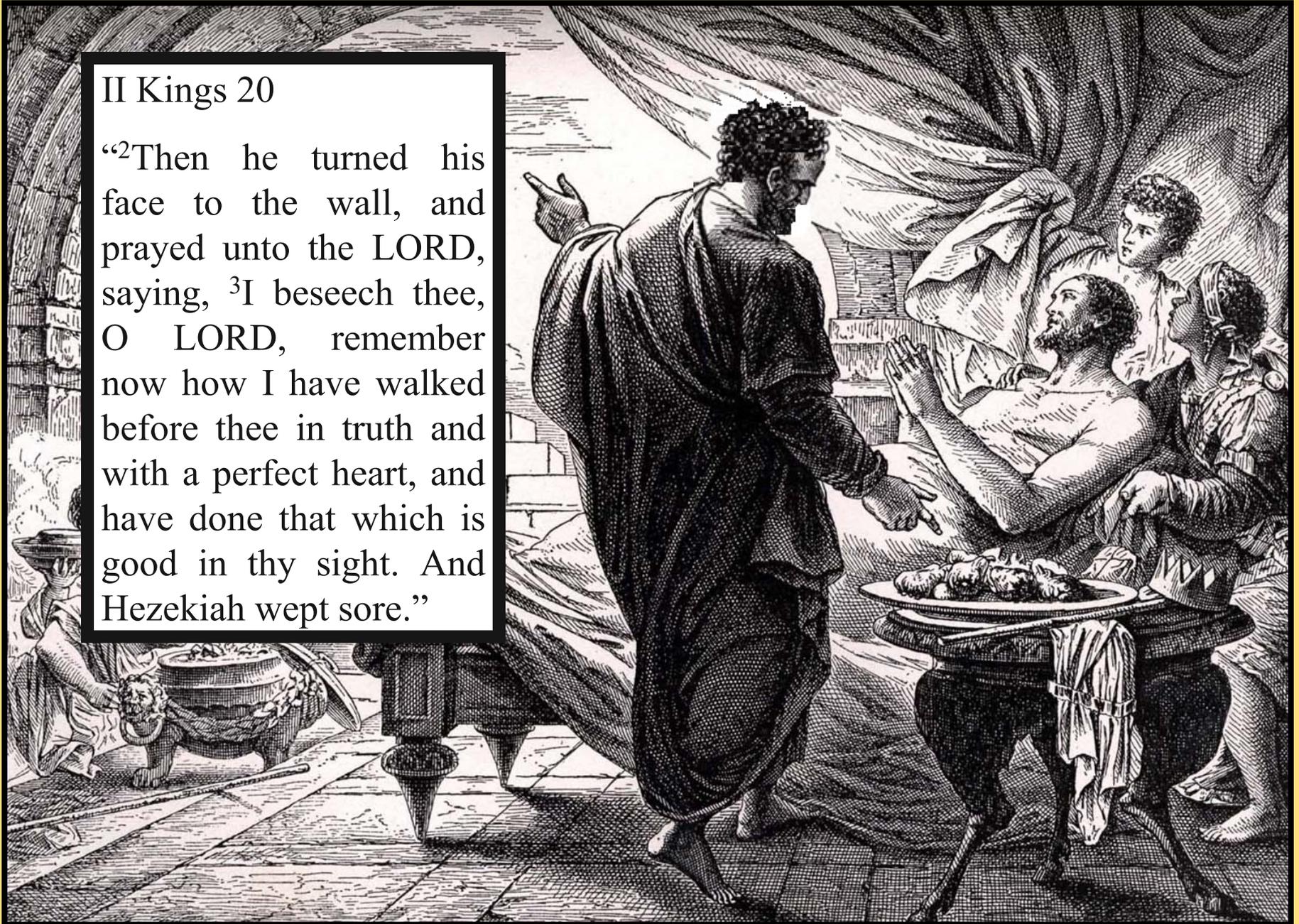
II Kings 20

“¹In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.”



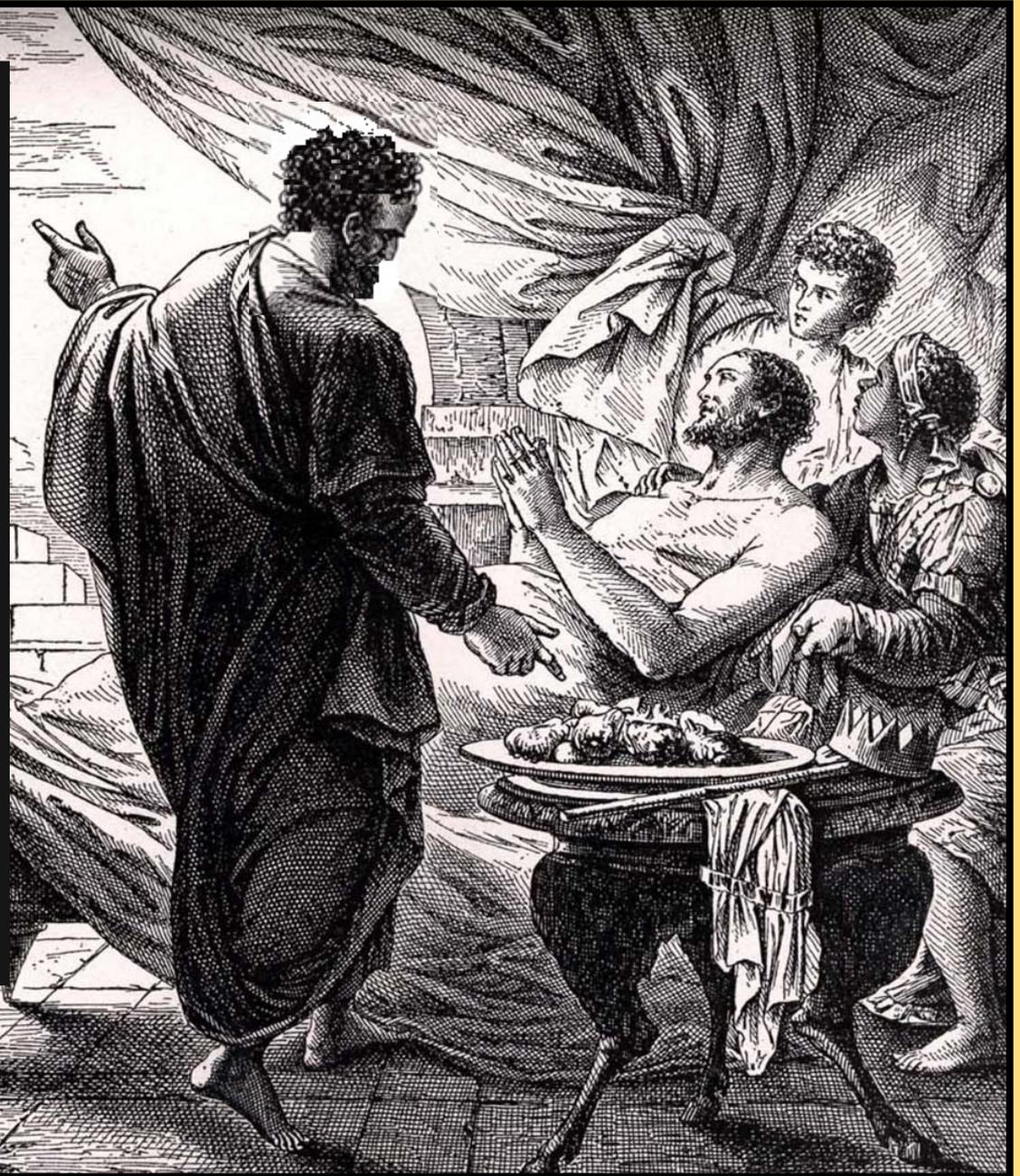
II Kings 20

“²Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, ³I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.”



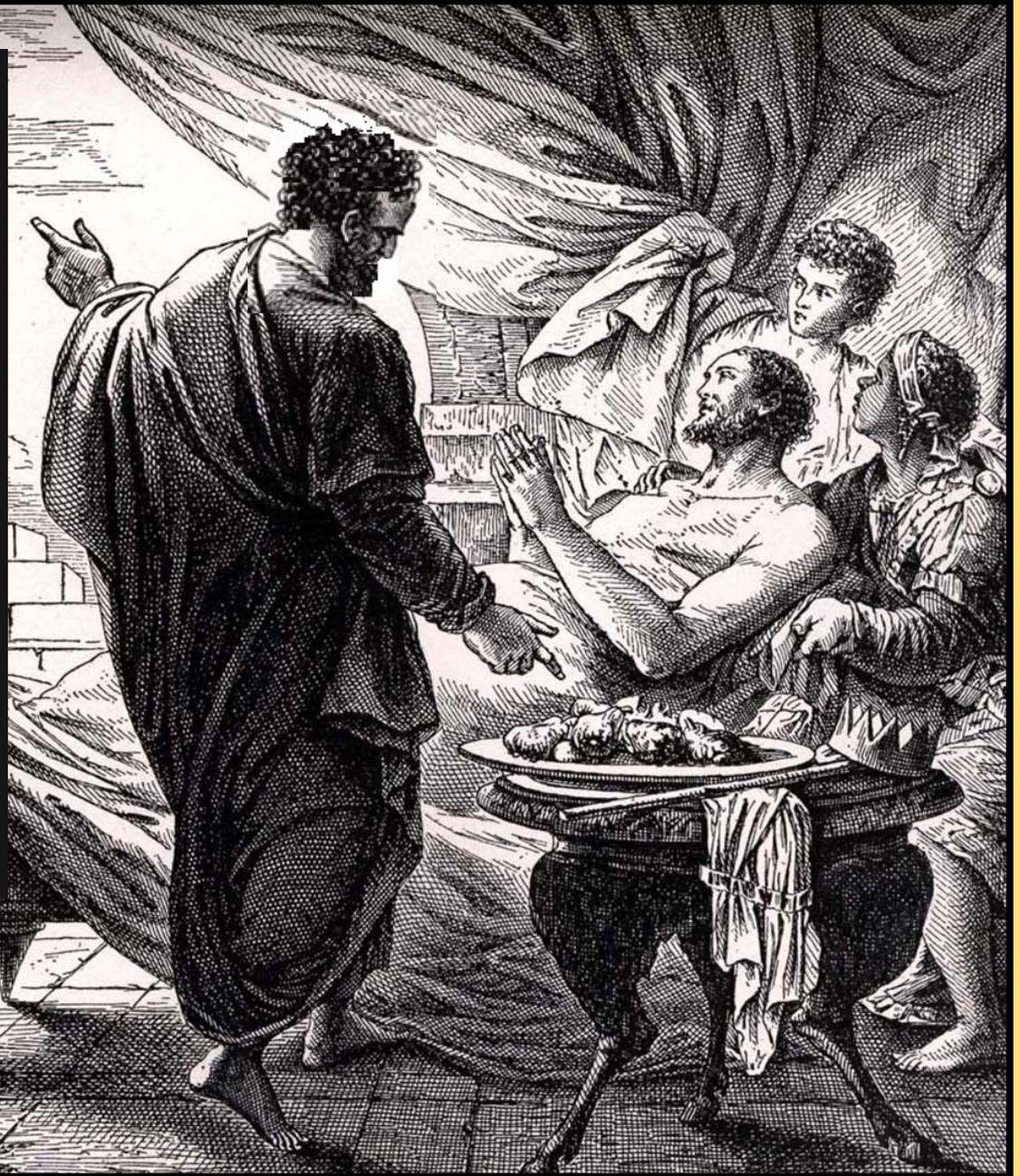
II Kings 20

“⁴And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ⁵Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee . . .”



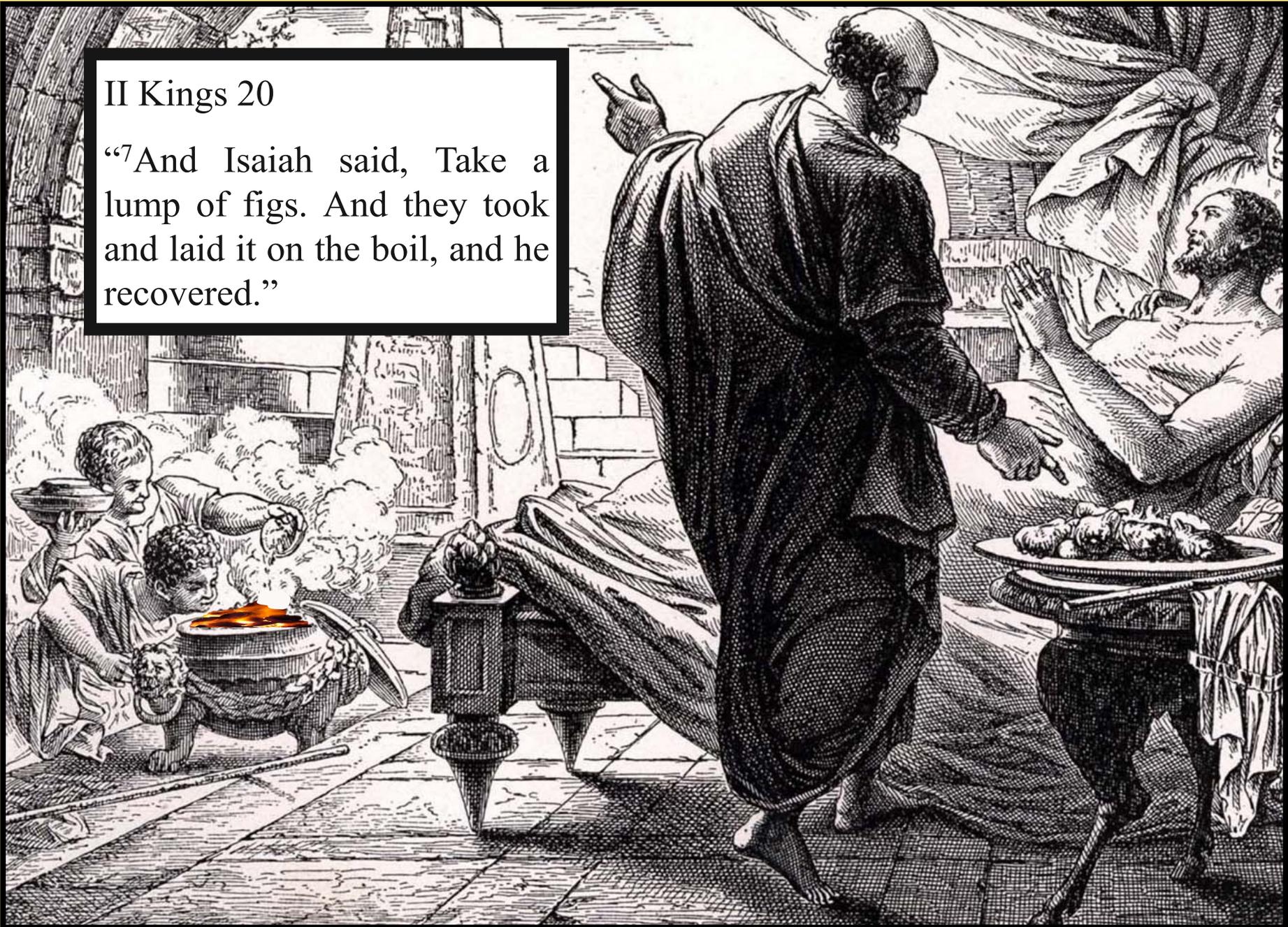
II Kings 20

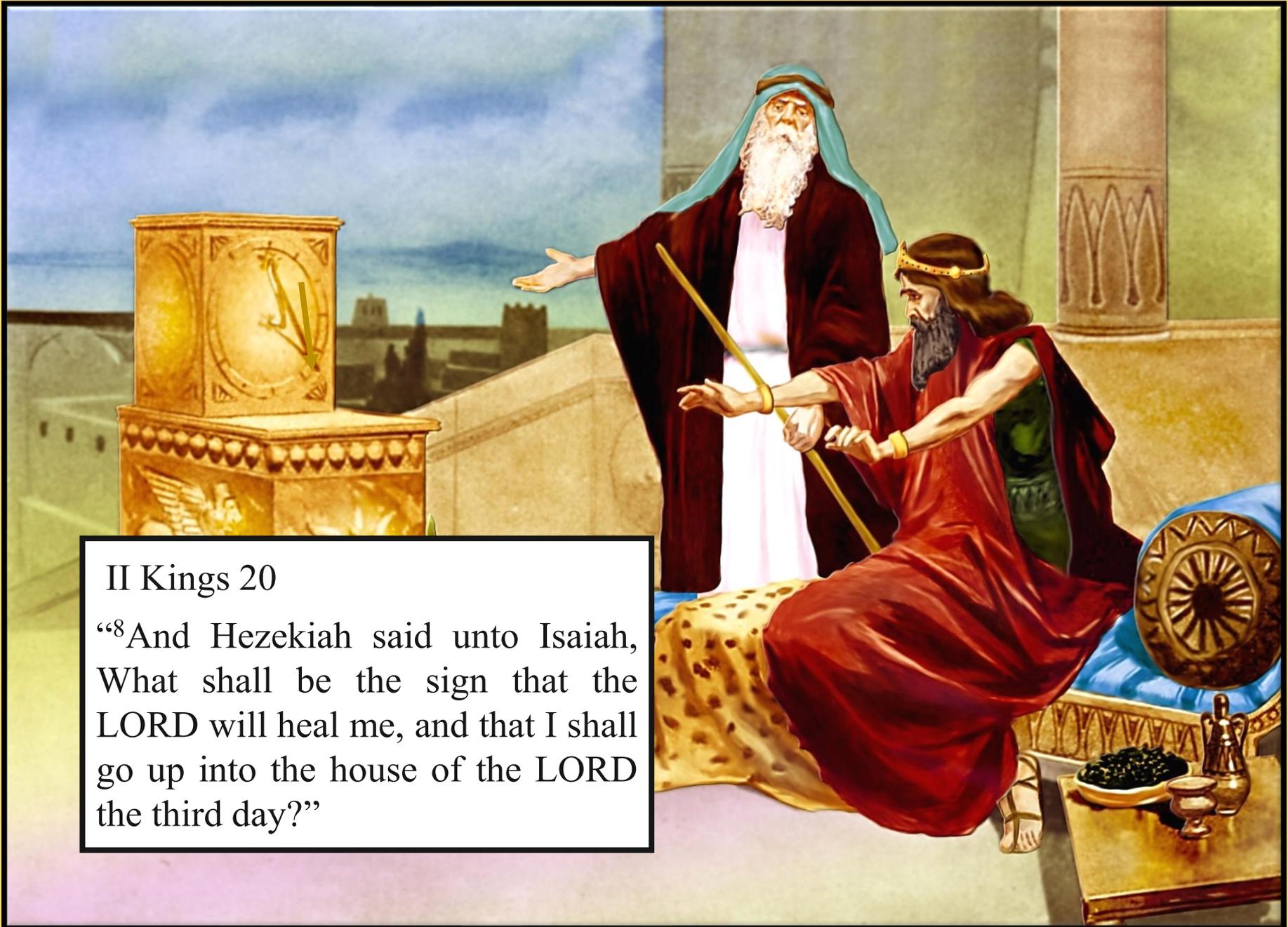
“5. . . on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.
6And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.”



II Kings 20

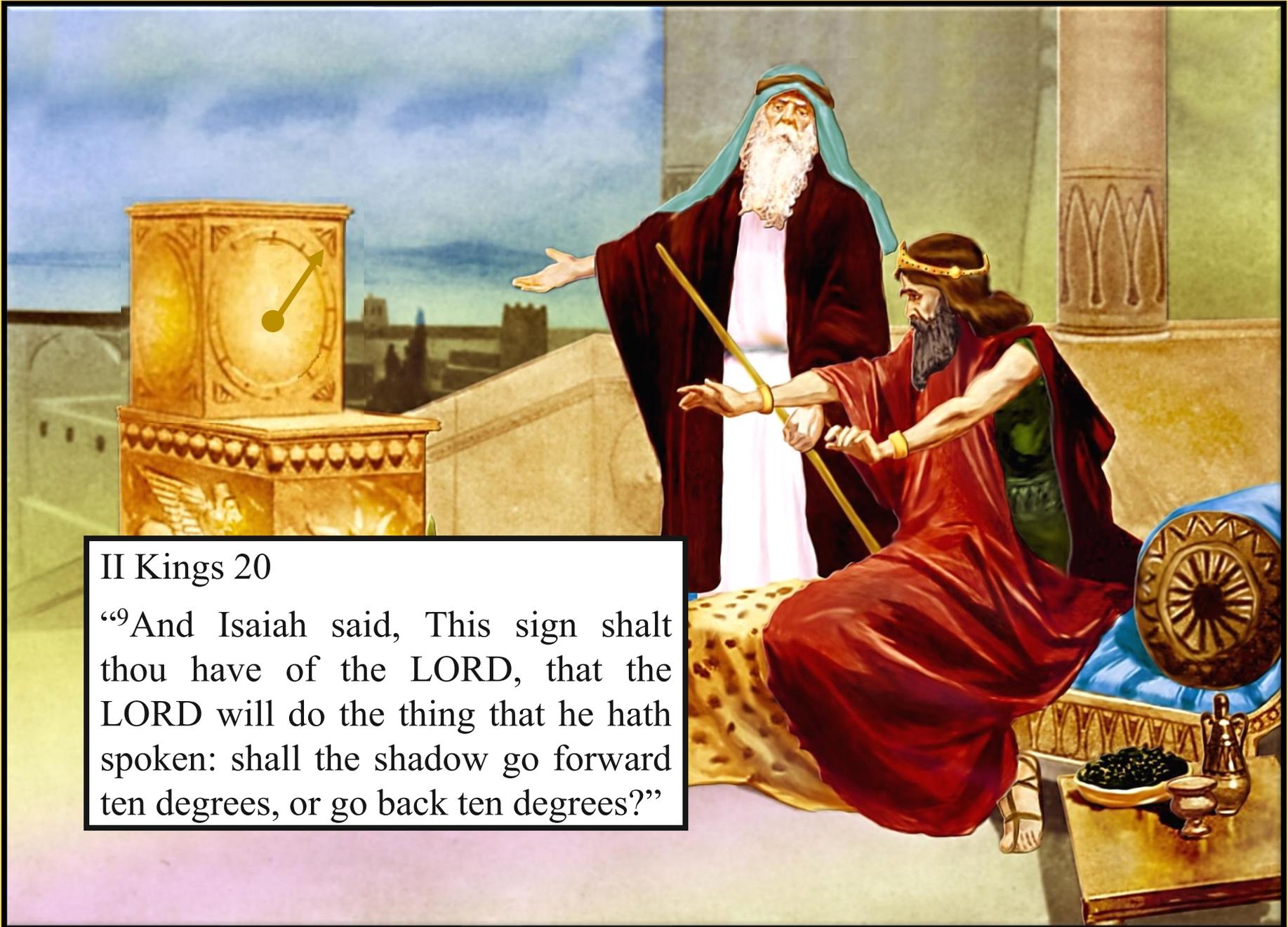
“⁷And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.”





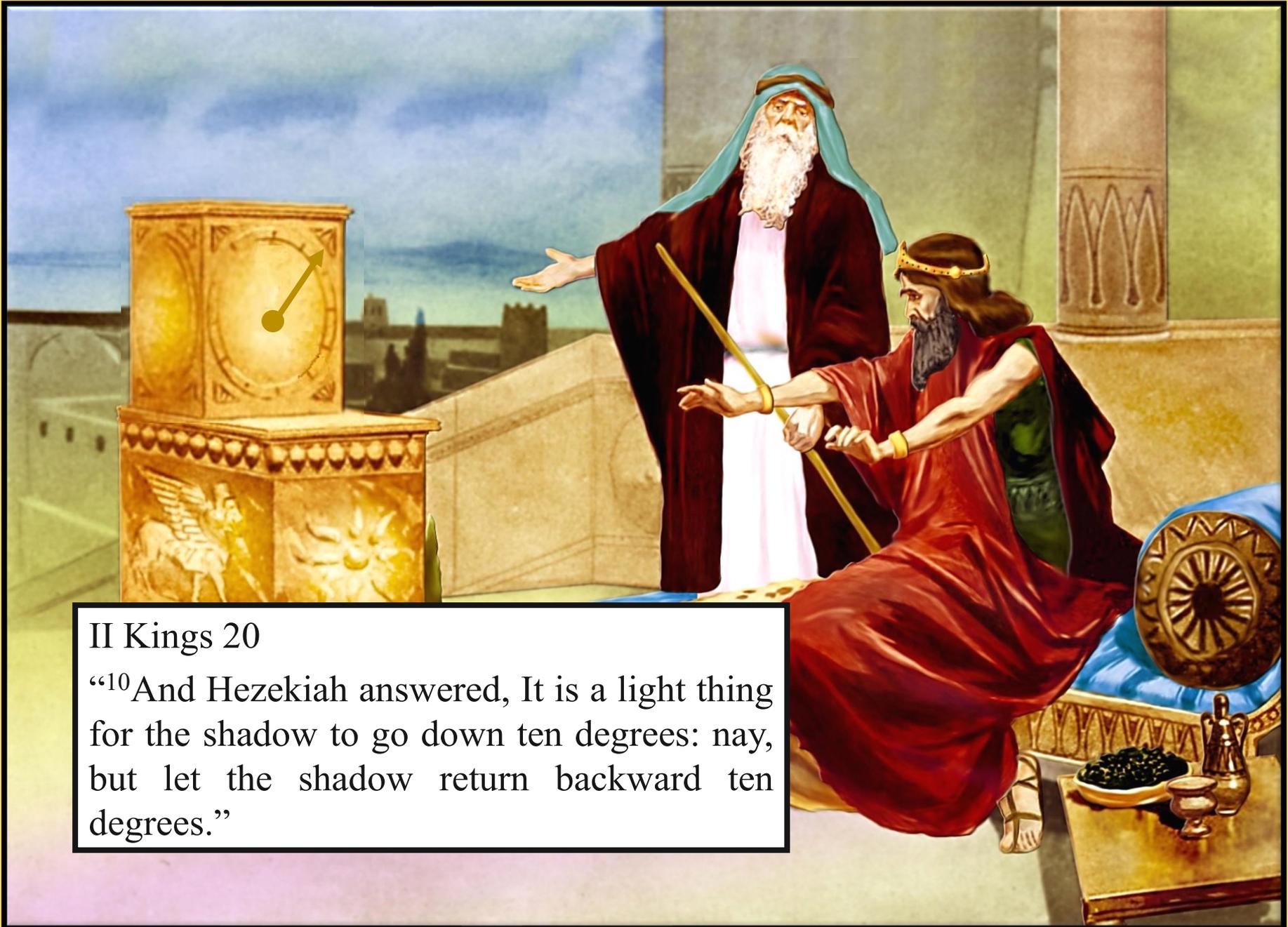
II Kings 20

“⁸And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?”



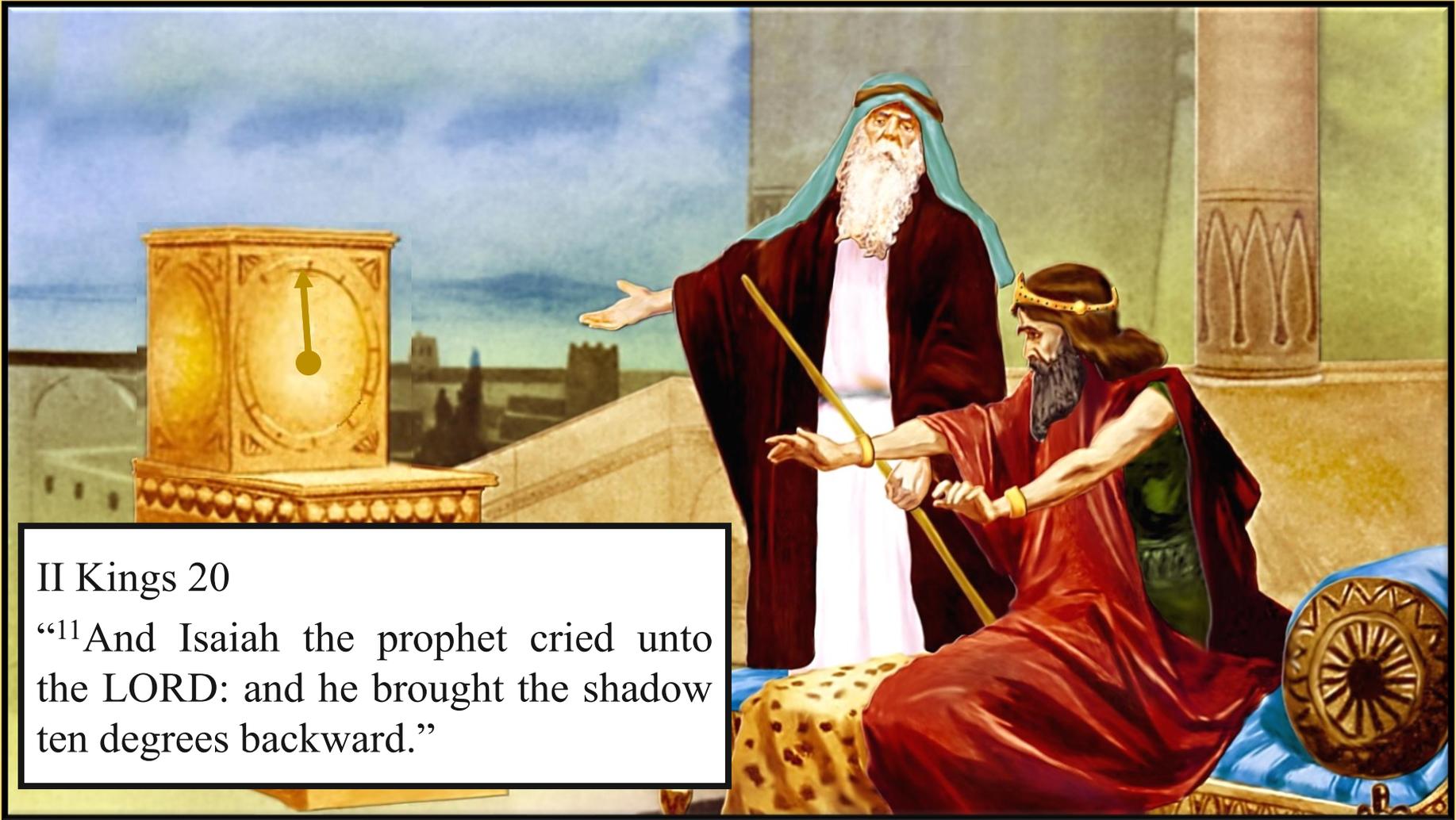
II Kings 20

“⁹And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?”



II Kings 20

“¹⁰And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.”

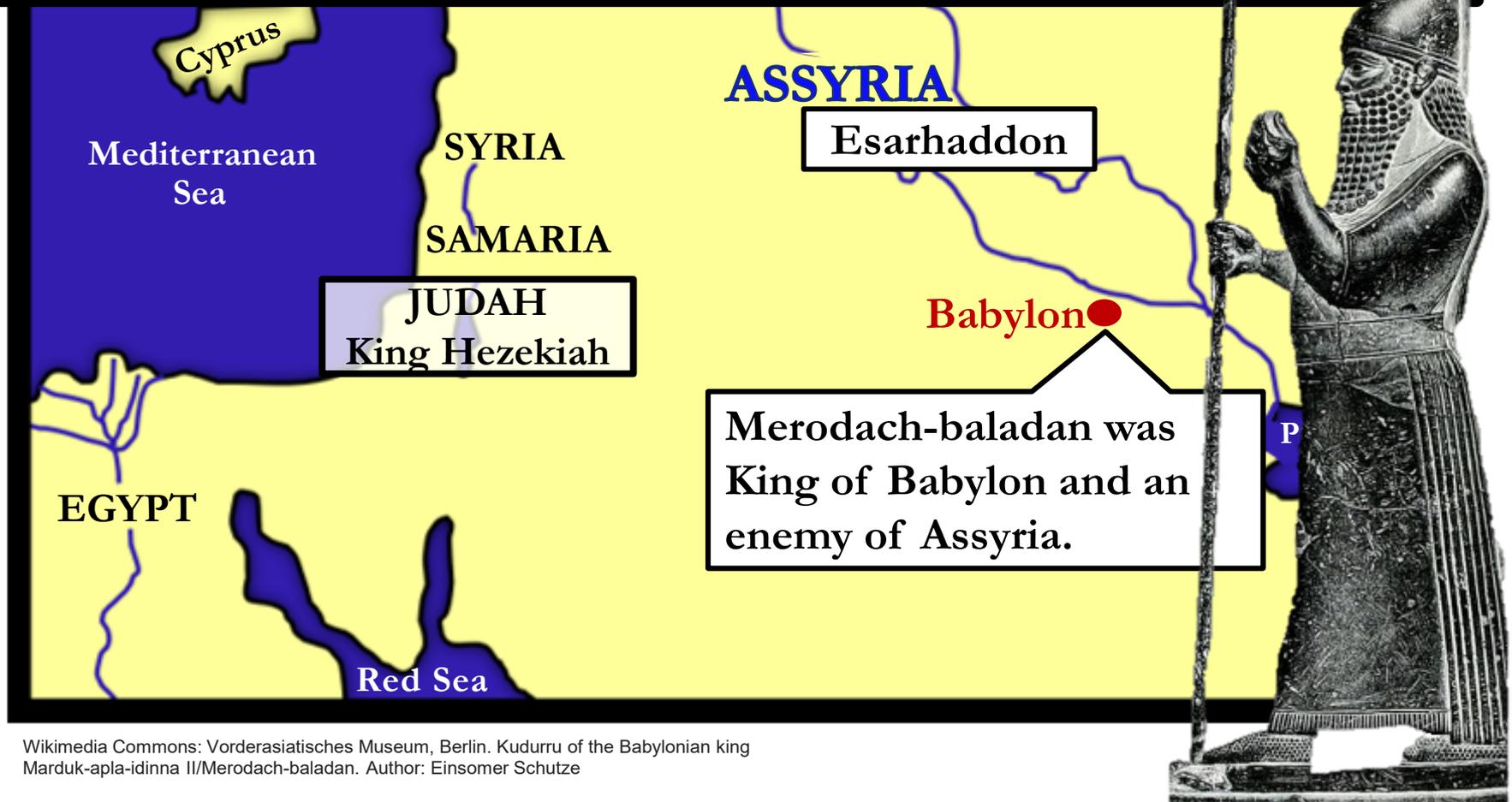


II Kings 20

“¹¹And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward.”

Hezekiah would live fifteen more years.

When Sennacherib's son, **Esarhaddon**, took the throne **Hezekiah** was still reigning over Judah. **Esarhaddon's** enemy **Merodach-baladan** King of the city of Babylon sought to make **Hezekiah** an ally.



Hezekiah's Sin

Merodach-baladan sent an ambassador to Hezekiah with letters to congratulate him on his miraculous physical recovery. Hezekiah was flattered by the attention of such a powerful king.

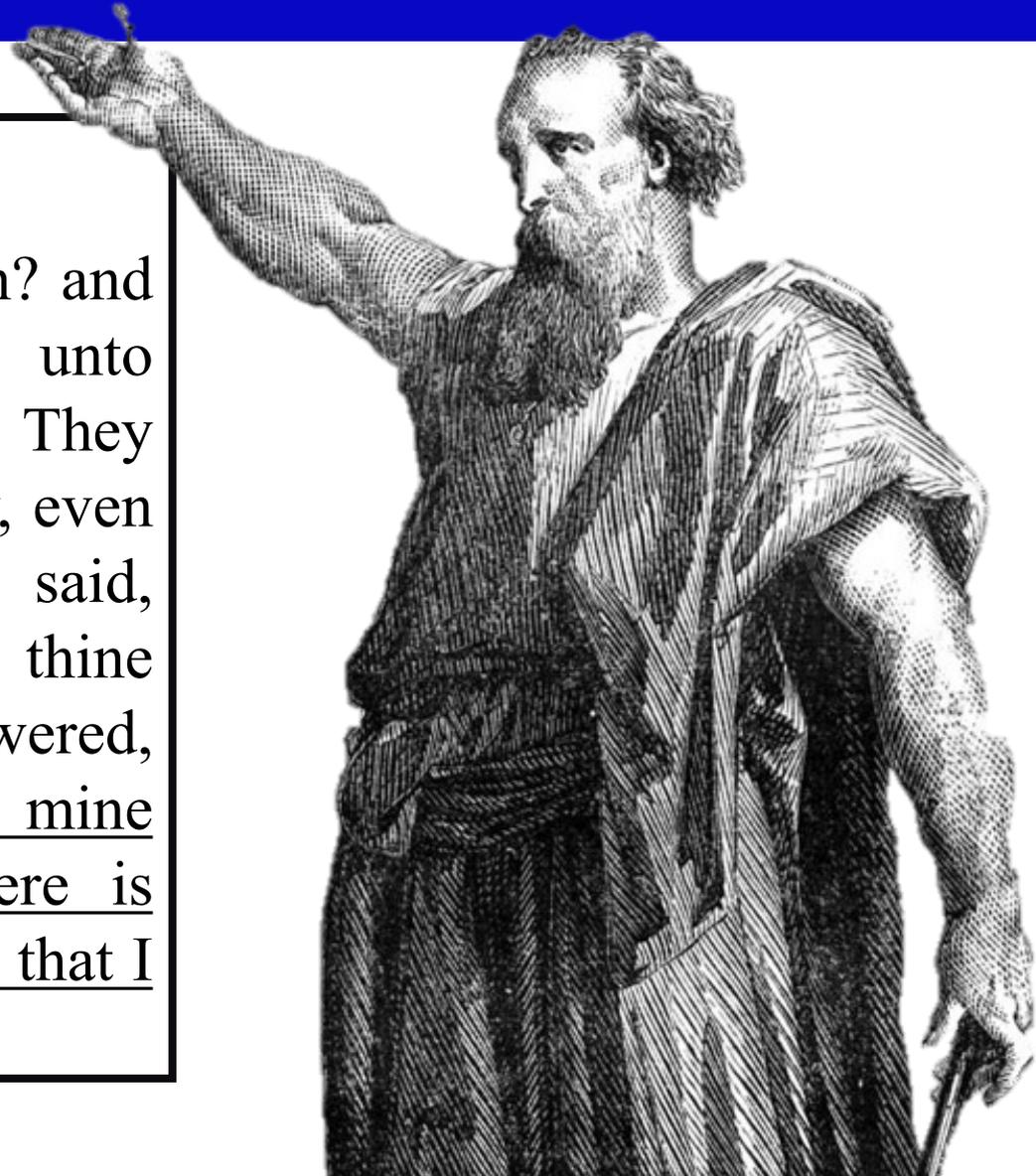
Pride raised its ugly head and Hezekiah compromised by associating too closely with this idolater from Babylon. He sought Merodach-baladan's admiration so he showed him the treasures of his people.



Isaiah confronted King Hezekiah.

II Kings 20

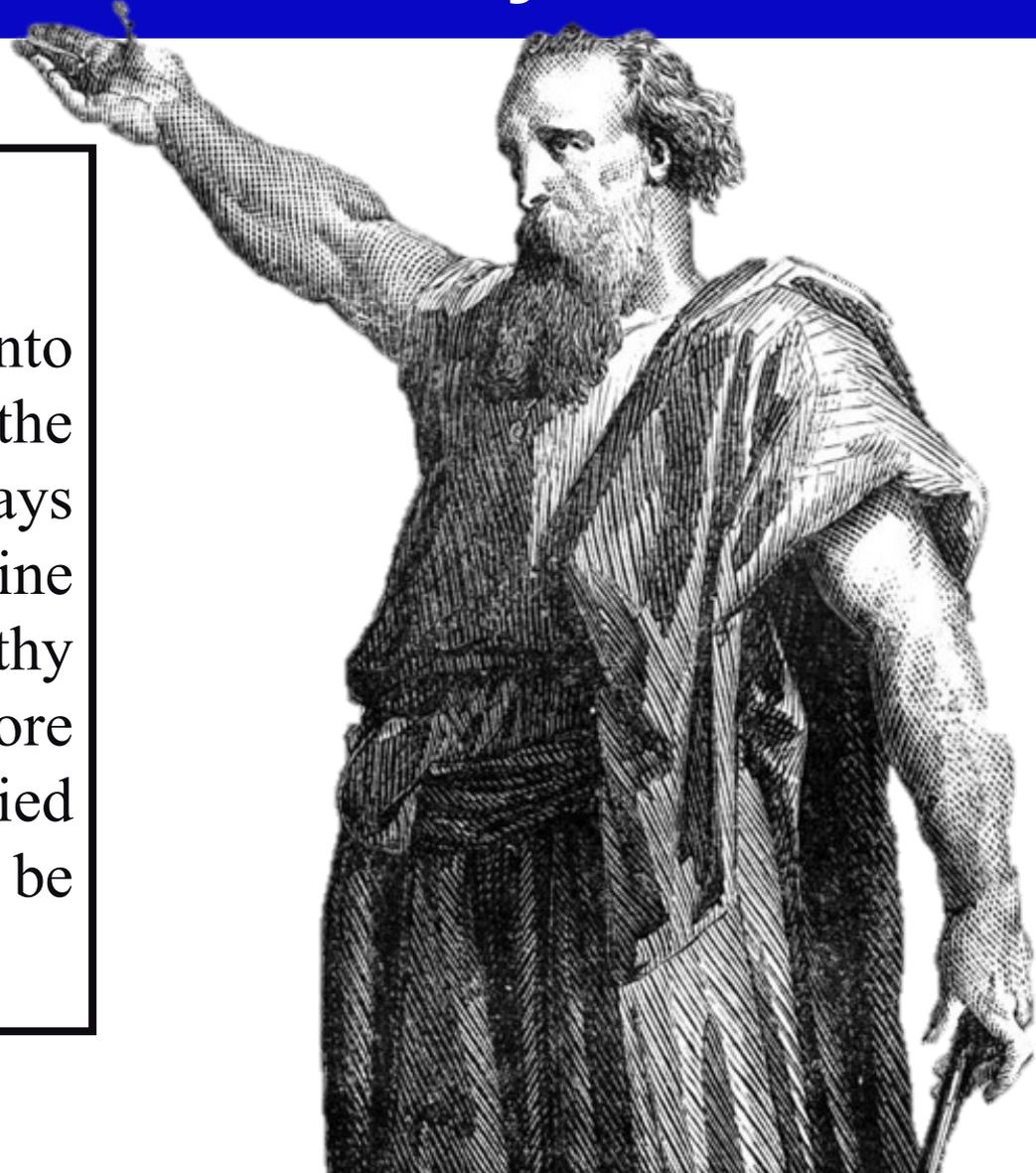
“¹⁴ . . . What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. ¹⁵And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.”



Sentence was passed upon Hezekiah for his pride and vanity.

II Kings 20

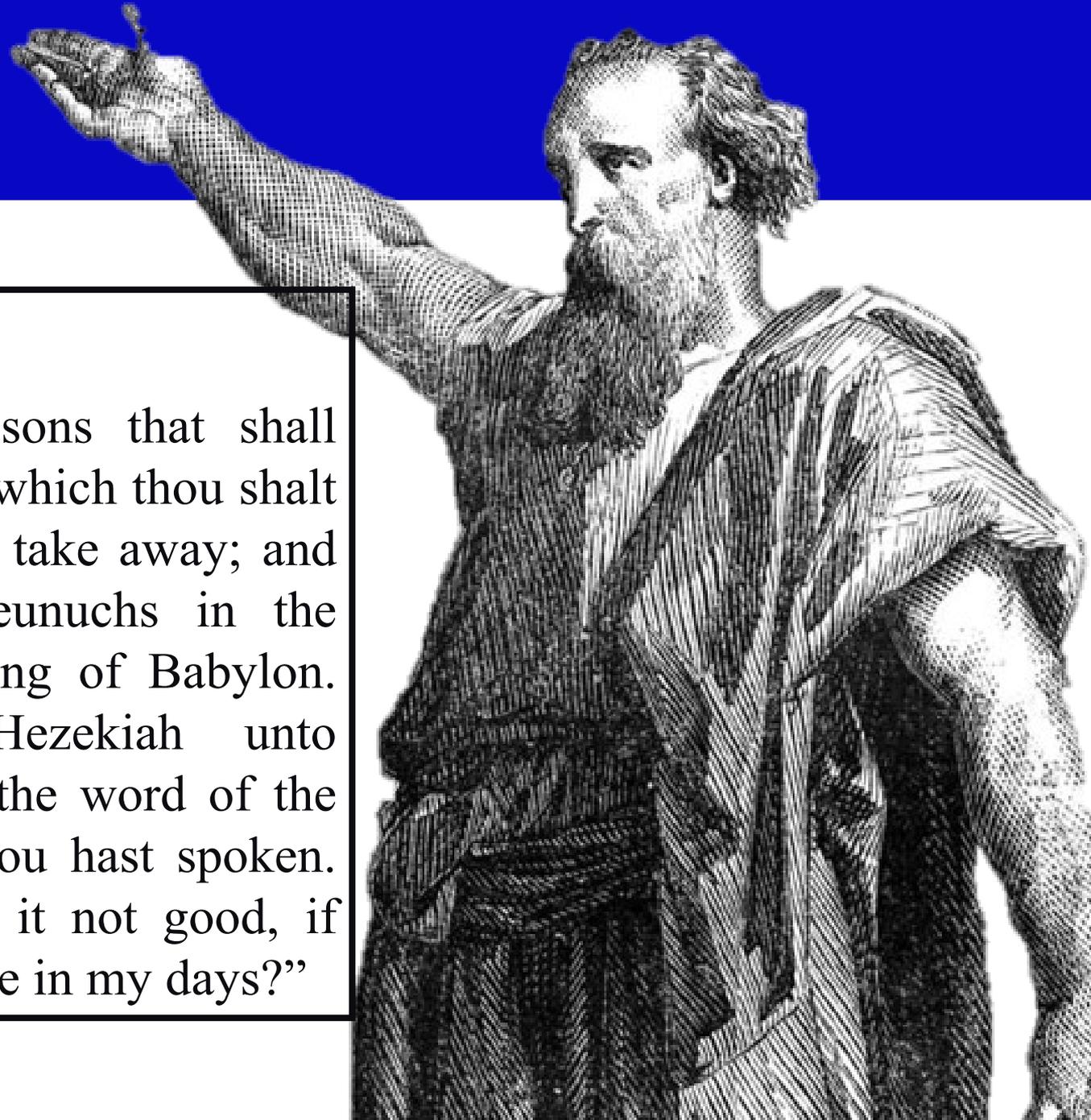
“¹⁶And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. ¹⁷Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.”



II Kings 20

“¹⁸And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

¹⁹Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?”



The Death of Hezekiah King of Judah

II Kings 20

“²⁰ And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

²¹ And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.”



The Death Of Isaiah

There is nothing recorded about the death of Isaiah in the Scriptures. It is thought his death occurred under King Manasseh.

Manasseh was a wicked king guilty of idolatry and murder. There is a tradition from the 2nd century A.D. that Isaiah suffered martyrdom by the order of Manasseh. The Jewish Mishna explicitly states that Manasseh slew him. One tradition by Justin Martyr holds that Isaiah was sawn asunder.

It is possible that there is an allusion to his martyrdom in Hebrews 11:37, which reads, "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder," but this is by no means certain.

KINGS OF JUDAH

Rehoboam
Abijah
Asa
Jehoshaphat
Jehoram
Ahaziah
Athaliah
Joash
Amaziah
Uzziah
Jotham
Ahaz
Hezekiah
Manasseh
Amon
Josiah
Jehoahaz
Jehoiakim
Jehoiachin
Zedekiah



Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 & 2 Samuel
1 & 2 Kings
1 & 2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

II Chronicles 32:32 says Isaiah wrote a book of the kings of Judah and Israel. This is of course a reference to the book of Isaiah.

His prophetic ministry lasted more than 40 years.



THE END