

The Wrong Side of History

History ebbs and flows, and sometimes it seems like history has passed God by. But we do not view history the same way God sees it.

“Do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, ‘The Lord will deliver us.’ Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and Ivah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?” (1 Kgs. 18:32-35).



The Assyrian army had swept through the Middle East, laying waste every city and nation that stood in its path. Now Jerusalem itself was surrounded, and a catastrophic defeat for Hezekiah and the Jews was all but certain. The Rabshakeh (the Assyrian king’s chief of staff) addressed the Jews with confident disdain. No nation, no army, no god, had yet been able to stand against the power and might of the Assyrian army. Who were the Jews to think their pitiful little city could escape the same fate? The only reasonable option available to them was to surrender and cast themselves upon the mercy of the Great King. Resistance was futile; why throw away their lives in defense of a God who was clearly incapable of defending his own people?

We hear echoes of the Rabshakeh’s argument today. Advocates of same-sex marriage, abortion on demand, transgender rights, and other amoral progressive positions point to the breathtaking advances their agenda has made in our culture over last few years as evidence of the righteousness of their cause. Their success has spawned a new talking point: These innovations are simply the latest milestones in a long march toward increasing freedom and “civil rights,” and those who continue to protest against them are “on the wrong side of history.” There is no point in resisting any longer. Give up! Accept the inevitable tide of history!

The Assyrians thought the Jews were on the wrong side of history, too—and they had ample evidence from recent events to back up that claim. But where are the Assyrians today? They are a minor footnote in the trash heap of history. Today we read their arrogant boast with a chuckle. The Assyrians’ view of history was based on the perspective of a single generation. Had they opened their eyes to a wider field of vision, they would have recognized that even the greatest empires eventually weaken and collapse. History was *not* on their side.

History was, however, on the side of the Jews. Their little nation survived the Assyrians, only to be swallowed up later by the Babylonians. Yet even in that dark time, they maintained their identity and eventually were restored to their homeland. Several centuries later, they gave the world the Messiah, whose legacy still shines bright today. The Assyrians couldn’t see it, but Jerusalem’s God was patiently making history, a history no one could foresee.

Like the Assyrians, the tide of immorality and godlessness that is sweeping our culture today will eventually face a divine judgment that will overwhelm it. Those who boast of the inevitability of their godless schemes will learn that it was *they* who were on the wrong side of history. Scholars many centuries in the future will look back on this period in our nation’s history with puzzlement, wondering how people could have been so misguided.

We should not worry ourselves about being on the “wrong” or “right” side of history. Rather, we should be concerned with staying on the right side of God. If we do that, history will take care of itself, regardless of what our critics may boast.

— David King