

Isaiah 37:1-38

“The Day Of Deliverance”

Every now & then God will step *miraculously* into the tide of human *history*. Among other reasons, it may be to deliver the righteous, it may be to judge the wicked. Many times, it will serve both purposes *simultaneously*, but every time it serves to bring Him *glory*. Ch 37 of the book of Isaiah certainly brings into focus for us one of the most incredible victories ever experienced by the people of God.

We last left off exposing various devices of the enemy as we considered the way that the Assyrian king (via his field commander) sought to demoralize & discourage king Hezekiah & the people of Jerusalem. Essentially what he did was systematically latch on to everything that the people of Jerusalem might hope *in* or hold on *to* & dismantle it in front of them. Demonstrate why it was worthless to *hope in* it, or why it wouldn't work if they *held to* it. It was propaganda at its best.

When he'd finished his rant of communication/intimidation & demoralization, none of the delegates or people on the wall answered him a word. They just held their peace & went back inside.

But make no mistake, this was weighing heavily (understandably) upon them. They felt hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted... They tore their clothes, came to the king & reported the words of the field commander...

Vs 1-5

As our time came to a close last week, I presented the question, “What do we do when the enemy comes against us? How are we to handle it when we feel overwhelmed on every side?” I think Hezekiah becomes a wonderful example for us (in this Ch) when we find ourselves in such a situation. One thing that becomes instantly apparent is the difference in the disposition/character of the 2 kings.

Sennacherib (as represented by his field commander) acts in *arrogance* & *pride*. What does Hezekiah do? He *instantly* responds in *lowliness* & *humility*. You're already moving in the right direction when rather than respond to the enemy, you turn to the Lord & clothe yourself in humility & utter dependency upon Him. The Bible is clear, “God resists (or sets Himself against) *the proud, But gives grace to the humble.*”¹ It's kind of a “no brainer”. Would you rather have God positioning Himself *against* you, or extending the arm of grace *to* you?

¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). [Jas 4:6]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

So Hezekiah immediately tears his clothes, covers himself w/sackcloth (a sign of mourning & repentance). The idea here is, “God I humble myself *before* You, whatever sin may be in my life, I turn from it. I repent from the way I’ve sought to handle this *outside* of You & I acknowledge my utter dependency *upon* You.” He knows the desperation of his situation & he allows it to move him in the right direction.

& This is a big key. We need to see the desperation of our situation! Often, when we find ourselves in a difficulty, we don’t handle it properly because we won’t allow ourselves to see it accurately. If you don’t assess your situation accurately, you’re probably going to handle it poorly. Hezekiah is wide awake to this, & *he knows* that they’re where they are *because of him!* He’s the one who *didn’t* seek the Lord initially, who *didn’t listen* to Isaiah’s prophecy, who sought to align himself w/Egypt militarily... & This is where it’s gotten them. He’s lost 46 cities & over 200,000 people have been deported as slaves...

But * I want to encourage you w/something & that is this. Even when we’ve messed up *royally*, we’ve erred *exceedingly*, things have collapsed on every side & it’s our fault *entirely*... If we will find it in our heart to humble ourselves & repent, God will always find it in *His* heart to graciously forgive & to restore. Restoration & repentance go together... There they are, Peter & John in Acts Ch 3. **They’re preaching to the people of the crucifixion & resurrection of J.C. How that *they* (the people) had delivered Him up, denied Him & demanded that He be crucified even though Pilate was determined to let Him go... He said, “But I know that you did this in ignorance” (kind of like Paul told the Corinthians, how that they rulers of didn’t truly know who Jesus was, had they known they’d have never crucified the Lord of glory).** –

But as he was wrapping up, he exhorted them, **“*Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,*”**² Repentance & refreshment (restoration) go hand in hand. When we *repent*, God *restores*.*

Notice what else Hezekiah does. He *went into* the house of the Lord. * **When things are looking bad, when things are coming down a great place to go is to the house of the Lord. The irony is that usually when things are going bad, our tendency is to stay away, to make excuses, to think we’ll just catch the study online. (Btw, you need to know that “church online” isn’t really church at all. – We’re grateful for it, glad to use it as a tool to reach out, to encourage others. But it *is not* the collective gathering of the corporate body to which we’ve been called.)**

² [The New King James Version](#). (1982). [Ac 3:19]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Hezekiah knew exactly where he needed to be. The house of the Lord. He didn't allow his mourning, his grief to spin him in a direction of the rejection of God's power & help. But rather he leaned *into* his need for God & determined to seek the Lord in this desperate situation. * & * There are so many benefits to being here & coming to the house of the Lord, seeking the Lord in the community of like-minded believers. We're able to bear one another's burdens & so fulfill the law of Christ (the law of love). There's a spiritual "cross-pollination" of sorts that takes place that aids us in bearing fruit for God's glory. There's a dynamic that takes place spiritually when we gather collectively in unity that we don't get when we're alone...

But it's also here that we're reminded of the eternal perspective. We're prone to measure things by how they affect us today. How will this impact me next week? But when I'm reminded of the *eternal perspective*, things that seem so *troubling* today, really bear no consequence when I consider them in light of eternity. I'm often reminded of Asaph (in the 73rd Ps). He was in that place. Trying to figure out *why* the wicked seemed to have it so easy & *he* (in trying to honor God) seemed to have it so bad... His health was bad, his body hurt & there they were out partying, not seeming to have any problems. He said, "When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me— Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end."³ "When I went to church I regained the *eternal perspective*." *

But this is one reason it can be difficult (if not impossible) for us to understand (at times) the way God works in our lives & some of the things He allows into the equation of our lives. Because we're always thinking in a temporal manner, but He's always working in us w/the eternal at heart. & To realign us, to get us where we need to be, there may be times that He allows us to find ourselves in a pretty big pinch...

* Hezekiah is (I say as a great understatement) in a pinch! So we take note of how he handles it. He humbles himself *before* God, he acknowledges his utter dependency *upon* God. He goes to the *house* of God (he's seeking after God). Now, notice what else he does, he sends his delegates (along w/the elders of the priests) to the prophet of God. He's seeking the *word* of God & intercessory prayer. Btw, this is another great thing to do when you're in that desperate place. It's what I recommend week after week at the end of every service. Seek the power of intercessory prayer!

³ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Ps 73:16-17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

When it comes to growing, & the building up of our faith, the word of God & prayer go together! – Family, look at what Hezekiah has done in the 1st 5 Vs of Ch 37. He’s given himself over to humility, repentance, prayer & the word of God. I would say that’s a pretty good example for us to follow, wouldn’t you? *

When they say to Isaiah, “The children have come to birth, but there’s no strength to bring them forth” they’re communicating a proverbial expression for disaster. They’re saying that they’re at the end of their rope, there’s no hope left, the situation is dire & it is desperate. (This is where you write down so you can read later, 2 Cor 12:9-10) God’s strength begins where our strength ends...

Vs 6-7

Allow me to make a simple observation here & we’ll move on. I want you to notice that Isaiah was completely aware of the fact that he spoke as a prophet of God & that what he was sharing w/Hezekiah was the infallible (inerrant) word of God.

When he said, “Thus says the Lord,” everything hinged on what came out of his mouth next. *The fate of the nation, plus his entire credibility as a prophet was riding on every word he said following that phrase. Just bear in mind that this wasn’t something that he was prophesying way into the future that the people would just have to “take his word” for it, this was happening in real time. ** What Isaiah said would either happen or it wouldn’t. His prophecy would be entirely provable. His status as a true prophet or a false prophet would quickly come into focus for the nation.

Now, I don’t know if you remember this or paid attention to it like I did (I’m sure some of you did), but there was a whole wave of “prophets” that came through back in 2020 saying that God told them that Trump was going to win the next presidential term. Does anyone remember that? I’m going to be honest, I’m not sure why anyone is still in their churches...

That may sound harsh (& maybe it is) but the Bible is very clear regarding how God’s feels about people who say, “Thus says the Lord” when the Lord hasn’t said... & It’s not good! – It’s an incredibly weighty thing to claim to have a word directly from God... Had they said, “I *think* that this will happen.” Or “I *believe* the Lord is telling me,” Something like that, I’d be much more gracious about it. It’s important to be true to the way you believe the Lord is leading you. But when you step out & say, “*God has said...*” friend, you better be right on the money, or we have to discount/discredit you & be done w/your credibility as it pertains to your ministry. *

I'll be glad to teach you what God's word says, how it applies in our lives... I'll be glad to share w/you what I believe I discern or think concerning the times to which God has called us. But I'm very careful to not use the words, "God said" concerning things that aren't established in His written word when it comes to directing people's lives &/or the decisions that they make. I'll at times tell people what I *believe* the Lord may be saying... But I could be wrong w/that. His ways are above my ways, beyond my finding out. I don't always know. That's why the Bible says, "Trust in the Lord w/all your heart, lean *not* on your own understanding..." It's not a bad thing to simply trust the Lord & lead your life w/the acknowledgment that He owns the editing rights to my life & I'm simply clay in the hands of the Master Potter.

The Lord (through Isaiah) says to these guys, "I've heard how these servant boys have blasphemed Me, you've got nothing to worry about."

Vs 8-13

The field commander returns to Sennacherib & finds that he's moved in closer (about 5 miles) to Jerusalem. Now he's warring against the city of Libnah. It would seem he's trying to hurry up and convince Hezekiah to capitulate to his demands because he's heard that Egypt is beginning to rally... But Isaiah already told Hezekiah that Egypt's help wouldn't amount to anything (in fact the Assyrians defeated them).

But Sennacherib (again through Rabshakeh) doubles down on his threat. Sends him a letter, "Don't let your God in whom you trust deceive you..." The enemy is always trying to defeat you through fear, intimidation, discouragement, despair & blasphemy. "Nothing that anyone else has trusted in has delivered them yet, & you're not going to be any different."

Vs 14-20

Wow... There's all kinds of theology packed in Hezekiah's prayer. But I don't know that his prayer was intentionally *theological* so much as it is *worshipful & relational*. He acknowledges who God is, what God can do, his utter dependency upon Him & essentially his inability to survive apart from Him.

He's literally laying everything about before the Lord. He takes this letter up to the house of the Lord, lays it out (which is to say, "God, look at what he said. His utter blasphemy, his denial of Your ability, of who You are truly... Look at what he's said, listen to what he's said, the pride/arrogance w/which he has exalted himself & save us for the glory of Your name.")

The application may seem obvious but I'm just gonna state it anyway.

* Tell God *everything*. W/hold *nothing*. When you're confronted w/a problem (bills are mounting up, job no longer exists, marriage is falling apart, child has gone astray) you're in a bad way... You just have to lay it all out before the Lord. Pray, pour out your heart, leave it all w/Him. The psalmist said it this way, *"Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us."*⁴ Peter put it like this, *"...humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."*⁵

His prayer places things in their proper perspective. Many times we need to be reminded, or we need to remind ourselves to whom it is that we are praying to! Hezekiah begins, "O Lord of hosts" meaning the military commander of the heavenly hosts. God has an "army" (if you will), heavenly hosts & He is their Commander-in-Chief. Hezekiah finds himself in a military crisis so it makes sense for him to address the Lord in the manner most needful for Him. God could easily erase their problem...

For you (maybe you're in a financial crises) it may be, "God, You are the One who owns the cattle of 1,000 hillsides, who placed the ore in the earth, who's streets are paved w/gold..." Or you're ailing, you're afflicted, "God, You are the Great Physician, Our Healer, the One who formed our inmost parts when we were yet unseen..." You get the idea, He addresses God according to his greatest need. It has a way of helping us see the problem for what it is, not a problem for God at all... *

Hudson Taylor said this, "Many Christians estimate difficulty in the light of their own resources, and thus they attempt very little, and they always fail. All giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on *His power* and *His presence to be with them.*"

"God of Israel", this identifies God's connection w/His chosen people. He's not the God of the Assyrians, He's the God of Israel. The idea being, "Don't forsake your people."

He says, "You are God, You alone of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven & earth." Look at the power & the sovereignty that he accurately ascribes to God exclusively. * *"You are God."* It's a simple title, but perhaps the most powerful! If you are God, there's nothing you can't do! For w/God, *nothing will be impossible!* Sennacherib isn't God, you & me, we aren't God. He *alone* is God. God *alone* exercises universal dominion & absolute sovereignty.

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ps 62:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (1 Pe 5:6-7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

“You have made heaven & earth.” It’s perhaps the most powerful Vs in all of scripture. *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*⁶ It’s how the book begins! & If you can get past the very 1st Vs of the very 1st Ch, then anything else it says bears no problem to believe. This world, this universe belongs to God (who is all powerful). *He created it & He maintains the rights over all of it.* * (We get the feeling Hezekiah’s faith is rising as he prays.)

He says, “Look at these words, listen to what Sennacherib has said, how he’s reproached the living God. He thinks that because he’s driven all these kingdoms to the ground & cast their gods in the fire that he will do the same w/You. But those nations weren’t serving gods at all. *Their gods were the work of men’s hands, therefore they couldn’t save them from the Assyrians. But all creation is the work of Your hands O God. Therefore save us. Not because we’re so great, but because You’re so great, for Your glory. That all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord, You alone.*”

Love, love, love this prayer. & Notice it’s not long. * The strength of prayer isn’t in the length of prayer. In fact, the Bible says, *“Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few.”*⁷ It would seem that God would prefer that we just pray to the point, rather than seeking to belabor & be flowery & lengthy. From our heart, to God’s heart, that’s it. *

Vs 21

Stop right there. Everything that follows in God’s response comes as the result of these words right here, “Because you have prayed to Me.” Question, what if Hezekiah hadn’t found it in his heart to pray? It makes us wonder how many works, how many blessings, how many victories, how many souls saved to the glory of J.C. lie unclaimed in heaven until the Lord can say, “Because you have prayed to Me”? I want you to see how powerful, how important prayer is...

One more quick observation. How was it that God answered Hezekiah? *Through* Isaiah. There are times that God may speak to your heart. Other times He may speak through a friend, He may speak through His written word. It’s on us to have ears to hear.

Let’s read God’s response in its entirety, through Vs 35.

Vs 22-35

⁶ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ge 1:1]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ec 5:2]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Just FYI, David died some 300 yrs prior to this. How important is your relationship w/God, even as it pertains to your lineage? * The Bible says, *"The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him."*⁸ It is not uncommon for God to bless someone on behalf of another who has loved Him & served Him w/integrity. One of the best things you can do for your children is to love & honor the Lord w/all your heart, w/all your mind, all your soul & all your strength. *

Back in Vs 22 (in speaking of the virgin daughter of Zion) He says, "She hasn't been ravished by you yet, & she never will be. In fact, she will laugh you to scorn. Why? Because you bit off more than you could chew when you started talking trash against the Holy One of Israel. You don't know who you're dealing with."

& God rebukes the king of Assyria's pride. 7x's in Vs 24-25 we read the thoughts of Sennacherib's heart, "My, I, I, I, I, my, I, I". (Reminds us of Lucifers words in Ch 14). Reminds of Prov 16, "Pride goes before destruction." & God says, "You got it twisted fella. I'm the One formed it all. I'm the One who raised you up & allowed you to be a means of judgment upon the nations & caused them to fall easily before you."

Then we see some terrifying words in Vs 28. "But I know your dwelling place. Your going out & your coming in & your rage against Me..." God says, "I know where you live & I know your every thought & every move you make." & He essentially tells him that his sin against Him has reached its limit & the time for judgment has found him... The Assyrians would string their captives together via a hook through their nose & forcibly march them into captivity... God says, "Now you're going to know what that's like."

Then He turns to Hezekiah & says, "The next 2 yrs you're going to have to eat what grows naturally, but the 3rd yr you'll sow & reap. You'll take root downward & bear fruit upward for the glory of God. (That's where we want to be, taking root downward & bearing fruit upward for the glory of God.)

& Again, Vs 33-34 are extremely detailed. Had 1 of the 200,000ish soldiers fired so much as a single arrow toward the city, Isaiah's entire ministry would be discredited. But God said, "It's not going to happen. Not because you don't deserve it, but for the glory of My name & for the sake of My servant David."

& We do well to realize that God has delivered us, not because we deserve it. But for the sake of His own glory & for the sake of the Son of David, the greater than David, J.C.

⁸ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Vs 36

One of the most dramatic deliverances in all of the word of God, summed up in a single sentence. Remember when the field commander said that one of the smallest of Sennacherib's captains could have taken out 2,000 of Judah's horsemen? It just took 1 angel to eliminate/eradicate 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in a single night.

Vs 37-38. (Close)

What do you know, it came to pass just like God said it would. & Guess what else, Sennacherib was worshiping in the house of his god... but his god couldn't save him.

1 Angel, 185,000 men. Before Jesus went to the cross He told Peter, "I could pray to My Father right now & He would provide Me w/more than *12 legions* of angels." No one took His life, He laid it down, out of His great love for you & for me...

Prayer Points:

Thank You Lord for Your great love. Help us to emulate the example that Hezekiah has given us here. To cast our cares upon You, to humble ourselves before You, to trust in Your word. You are our Deliverer, our Savior, & we give You praise.

There is no other God who can deliver you, who can save you. Christ alone offers forgiveness of sin & newness of life. Turn from your sin, trust in Him today.