

Is. 37:1 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

Is. 37:2 And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

Is. 37:3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

Is. 37:4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that is left.

Is. 37:5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

After hearing the report from his representatives, Hezekiah humbled himself and acknowledged his helplessness by tearing his clothes and covering himself with sackcloth. He immediately went to the house of the Lord and sent his men to report to the prophet of God, Isaiah, regarding the words of the Assyrians. The other Jewish leaders also clothed themselves in sackcloth to present themselves to Isaiah. Hezekiah had begun to have doubts. He basically wanted affirmation from Isaiah that God would defend His honor and punish the Assyrians for their mockery of Him. He asked Isaiah to pray for the remnant of Judah in Jerusalem.

It seems to be important to note that although Hezekiah sought counsel from the man of God, he also presented himself before God in humility and faith. He did not just depend on the prayers of a man in righteous standing before God; he also humbled himself before God.

Is. 37:6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

Is. 37:7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

Isaiah doesn't say much, but he does provide the answer from the LORD that Hezekiah is seeking. He even provides a prophecy about the death of Sennacherib. One of the purposes of prophecy is to affirm God's position as one above all others. Every prophecy fulfilled is an affirmation of God as the great I AM.

Isaiah 42:8-9 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from

ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure....

John 14:29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

Is. 37:8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

Is. 37:9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

Is. 37:10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.

Is. 37:11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

Is. 37:12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, *as* Gozan, and Haran, and Rezep, and the children of Eden which *were* in Telassar?

Is. 37:13 Where *is* the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

Rabshakeh and his forces were drawn away from Jerusalem when they got word that the king of Ethiopia was on the move against them. So he sends messengers with a letter to Hezekiah reiterating all that he had said before. God in whom you trust cannot deliver you from us. Just look at what we have done to the other nations. Their gods were useless to them and Israel's "God" would fare no better.

Is. 37:14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

Is. 37:15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,

Is. 37:16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubims, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

Is. 37:17 Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

Is. 37:18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries,

Is. 37:19 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.

Is. 37:20 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.

This time Hezekiah goes directly to the Lord in prayer. He takes the letter and spreads it open before God in the temple. He opens his prayer acknowledging God as the "Lord of hosts," God Almighty, and as the God of Israel. He

acknowledges God as the one true God over the whole universe, as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He approaches God on the basis of the honor of His name. He acknowledges the truth of Sennacherib's conquests, but realizes that the "gods" of the other nations were just the "work of men's hands"—powerless, impotent. Then Hezekiah asks for God's deliverance in order to prove to the nations that He alone is the one and only true God.

I think it is important to note that we are to desire God's glory and honor above our own desires and needs. I often ask God to protect His name in and through me, my loved ones who claim His name, my pastor and the ministry of my church.

Is. 37:21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

It would seem that the Lord responded immediately with a message to Hezekiah through His prophet Isaiah. 2Kings 19:20 says plainly that God has heard Hezekiah's prayer.

David Guzik made an important observation: "What if he would not have prayed?....How many blessings, how many victories, how many souls saved for Jesus' glory, lie unclaimed in heaven until the LORD can say, **because you have prayed to Me?**"

Is. 37:22 *This is the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.*

Is. 37:23 *Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.*

Is. 37:24 *By thy servants hast thou reproached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel.*

Is. 37:25 *I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.*

Now Isaiah expresses God's thoughts concerning the king of Assyria.

"the virgin, the daughter of Zion" – Whose daughter? God's; the people of Jerusalem are God's people. To this point the city of Jerusalem was unmolested.

Jerusalem has nothing to fear from Assyria. The Assyrians may think they are just taunting another powerless god, but they have blasphemed God Almighty, "the Holy One of Israel." Sennacherib sent his servants to boast with great pride of their victories to this point, victories which they claim were theirs because of

the great numbers in their armies. He claims to have accomplished all his victories through his own strength and resources.

Is. 37:26 Hast thou not heard long ago, *how* I have done it; *and* of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.

Is. 37:27 Therefore their inhabitants *were* of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the housetops, and *as* corn blasted before it be grown up.

Is. 37:28 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

Is. 37:29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

God is declaring that the Assyrians have just been instruments of judgment in His hand as declared by Isaiah in previous oracles. God has decided it is now time to put an end to the Assyrian empire. Because his pride has so angered God, God is going to see that the king is caused to turn back to his own country (where he will meet his death as prophesied in verse 7 above).

Is. 37:30 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat *this* year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.

Is. 37:31 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

Is. 37:32 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

Reminder--God is giving Hezekiah a message concerning Sennacherib and the Assyrians. The sign being spoken of is for Hezekiah. The Assyrians have prevented the people of Judah from being able to farm their land. According to Archbishop Ussher, the second year was a Jubilee year, which is why they couldn't sow or reap that year. In the third year the people of Judah would be able to plant and experience a good harvest. Not only will the harvest be good, but the people of Judah will again begin to flourish and grow strong. God is going to deliver a remnant, including some who had sought safety behind the walls of Jerusalem. The important point being—God will be the deliverer.

Is. 37:33 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

Is. 37:34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

Is. 37:35 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

The Lord now tells Hezekiah through Isaiah that the king of Assyria will not step foot in the city of Jerusalem; he won't even approach it with weapons of war or

be able to establish a siege around it. Again he assures Hezekiah that Sennacherib will be caused to turn around and go home. God states that this will happen in defense of His holy name and in honor of His servant David. God had made a promise to David.

*1Kings 2:1-4 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, **there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.***

This section of scripture used to bother me, because obviously there were many years in which there was no nation of Israel, and obviously that precluded a king ruling on its throne. Somewhere along the way I learned that the throne of Israel was representative of a position authorized by God Almighty. The physical throne may have disappeared for a while, but the position of king of Israel is legitimate and will again be physically occupied when Jesus, the Son of David, comes to reign on planet earth.

I ran across an interesting point made by Ernest L. Martin, PhD., at <http://askelm.com/doctrine/d020802.htm>. He pointed out that Jeremiah also noted God's promise to David as not lacking a man/son to sit on his throne.

*Jeremiah 33:20 Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, **that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne....***

The promise from God was that David would never lack a direct descendant qualified for the throne of Israel. The promise didn't establish the throne forever—just that David would have a qualified descendant ready to occupy that throne at any time. Jesus was the last man born in the direct line of David that qualifies for this throne, and He will assume His position on the reestablished throne of David as King—not just of Israel, but of the whole earth—in the millennium.

Is. 37:36 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

Is. 37:37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

Is. 37:38 And it came to pass, as he 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.

According to the account in 2Kings 19, that very night the angel of the Lord single-handedly killed 185,000 men in the Assyrian army. Sennacharib immediately turned tail to go back home to Nineveh.

Just as God had prophesied through Isaiah, Sennacherib was killed by the sword—by his own sons! Joe Focht notes that this murder occurred 20 years later.