

Let's Worship God

29th April - 4th May 2024

Isaiah



Isaiah

Isaiah

Monday - Isaiah 36:1-10 - Threats From The Wicked

This is a pivotal time in Judah's history. We read about this as well in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. King Sennacherib of Assyria finally bursts into Judah like an overwhelming flood. He has a great, fearsome, and seemingly invincible host with him. The word translated Rabshakeh is a military official, he's similar to a military chief of staff. He said, 'nobody can stop us'. And he had been correct so far. Neither men, nor idols, had been able to stop Assyria's onslaught. A few years ago, he had gobbled up the northern kingdom. And when he burst into Judah, he overwhelmed nearly everything.

Sennacherib is trying to take Jerusalem the easy way. So his emissaries try persuasion and threats. The Rabshakeh basically says, 'What in the world do you think you're doing? You think Egypt's going to come to help you? Egypt is like a cane that a man tries to lean on to support himself, but it has this jagged edge and it goes right up through his hand.' And you know what? The Assyrians were right. Egypt couldn't help.

Rabshakeh says, 'You know, Hezekiah is going to say to you, trust in Jehovah. Don't trust in Jehovah. For, isn't He the One Whose altars Hezekiah has destroyed in the high place and said, you must come here to Jerusalem. Jehovah is angry at you.' Well, this was at least partly true. After all, haven't we been seeing, God speaking of His disgust with the sins of Judah and Jerusalem? Surely the emissaries of King Hezekiah were getting nervous hearing this, and the people, perhaps, started to wonder and waver a wee bit, because the godly already knew this was at least partly true. Now, obviously, the king of Assyria and his military chief didn't understand why it was that Hezekiah had gotten rid of the high places and the altars. It was because God himself had said so. Hezekiah was being faithful here. So that part was false, but the rest had a worrisome ring of truth about it.

Rabshakeh points out that they surely couldn't take on the Assyrians themselves militarily. They were just too weak. In fact, in contempt, he says, 'I've been authorized to make at this time a special offer. I'll spot you 2,000 horses, if you can come up with enough men to ride them. You can't even do that. If I supply you with the horses, you can't even use them. You can't deliver yourselves.' And guess what? This was true.

Questions

1. How is Egypt described?
2. What is the Rabshakeh trying to accomplish?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God is sovereign over the threats of the wicked.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 37:32

Praise: Psalm 32 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Tuesday - Isaiah 36:11-20 - Preparing the Defences

After all these sticks, Rabshakeh holds out a sweet, tasty carrot. 'Give up. Give up and we'll be nice to you. Throw open the gates, come on out, and everything will be fine. We'll leave you alone for a while. And then we will move you to someplace that's even better. Come on. It'll be nice.'

He says, 'Even if Jehovah were inclined to help you out, He can't. I mean, look at these other lands. We've rolled right over them. Their gods couldn't stop us.' Well, here was the huge error that the Assyrians held to, for the so-called gods of these different places didn't exist.

When Hezekiah came to the throne, he was a believer. He was diligent to be rid of idolatry, and there were covenant renewal and all kinds of good things. Consistent godliness often brings trouble, trouble from the wicked. And that's exactly what happened here. It can be very tempting to the godly to say, as the psalmist in Psalm 73 starts out saying, 'I've washed my hands in vain', but by God's grace, we see no evidence of this here. Hezekiah faithfully prepared the defenses. You can see this in 2 Chronicles 32:1-8.

Someone might say, 'God has promised to defend it. You're not showing much faith by building walls and doing these big engineering projects to protect the land. Aren't you trusting in God?' Sure he was. He was avoiding presumption. He was avoiding putting God to the test. When we pray, as the Lord Jesus taught us, to give us this day our daily bread, we don't sit and wait for food magically to show up. God works normally through means. Thus, Hezekiah built up the walls and did what he could to get water into the city and deny water to the besieging armies. He prepared the weapons, he prepared all the stores that he would need. And most importantly of all, he prepared the people by pointing them to Jehovah.

Questions

1. What was Assyria trying to persuade the people to do?
2. What preparations did Hezekiah make?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would prepare ourselves for spiritual battle.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 37:32

Praise: Psalm 33 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Wednesday - Isaiah 36:21-22 - No Answer

The people, properly prepared, respond in general godliness. They trust Jehovah even when things looked hopeless in their eyes. And the Rabshakeh wasn't telling them anything that they didn't already know. They couldn't trust in Egypt. They had offended their God. They didn't have the power to take on the Assyrians, to defend against the Assyrians, themselves. Humanly speaking, things looked hopeless. When they heard in Hebrew from the Assyrian emissaries all these things, it probably shook them up, particularly when they heard him say, 'Jehovah sent me to come.' And they remembered prophecies uttered through Isaiah and others that God was sending judgment. God was going to use Assyria to do terrible things. He had already threatened this. The people knew it. They knew this was deserved.

However, as we see here in verse 21, not a peep came from them. They faithfully obeyed the Lord's anointed king. The people knew their God, and knew He was not the way Rabshakeh described. And so in faith they could go to Him and say, 'Look how your name is being sullied. See how your glory is being treated. Look at this, God, and act.'

By God's design the threats of the wicked can and do succeed to a point, to a point where the wicked will be brought to destruction, to a point where these hard things end up working together as God's design for good, for those who know Him, and who are the called according to his purpose, as Paul says in Romans 8:28. We shall see that God holds a leash onto the wicked, and all their wicked plots, all their hateful schemes, only end up glorifying Him and blessing the people of God.

Questions

1. How did the people respond?
2. How does God use the wicked?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God is in control of all things for His glory and His people's good.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 37:32

Praise: Psalm 34 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Thursday - Isaiah 37:1-13 - Relying on God's Word

In this chapter we see the people of God relying on Him. We see reliance upon His word in the first 13 verses. For when Hezekiah heard about what the Assyrians said, what did he do? He first went to the temple, but he also sent men to Isaiah to get the word from God. While he is sending these men, he is prayed, praying that God would have a word of encouragement, praying that God would have a word of comfort, praying that God would forgive. And what a good place to go at the time!

Hezekiah confesses that God's hand of rebuke was here. All of this had come upon them because they as a people had forsaken their God. He uses a vivid image of a woman in labour but without the strength to give birth. He appeals to God to act for His glory's sake. He is praying that God would vindicate Himself and would show forth his glory that's been dragged in the mud by this vicious heathen. And let me tell you, friends, this is always a good argument with God. It is a good reason for God to act when we appeal to His glory, when we cry out to Him to show forth that which will praise him.

Isaiah then sends the word of God for the exact situation that Hezekiah has prayed about. And God immediately began to work even as He'd promised in this word. The Rabshakeh left Jerusalem and went to where the king of Assyria and his armies had been at another strong city called Lachish. But the king of Assyria wasn't there. He had retreated to a town called Libnah. Why? Because there was a rumor that the people of Judah had made a deal with the people of Ethiopia, and the king of Ethiopia was coming to help with his vast army. And so Sennacherib was making a strategic withdrawal to be in a better place. But at the same time, his response to the Word of God was not belief, not repentance. Certainly it wasn't reliance. It was defiance. We see that in verses 10-13. He wrote a letter where he goes through all that he has done by the strength of his own hand. You see, he's saying, 'God is a weakling, and God is a liar. Don't be a fool and believe this God of yours.' But the people of God relied on God's Word.

Questions

1. What does Hezekiah do?
2. What does Hezekiah ask God to do?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that God would glorify Himself in our church and nation.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 37:32

Praise: Psalm 35 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Friday - Isaiah 37:14-20 - Relying on Prayer

We see in verses 14 through 20 a reliance on prayer. What Sennacherib had to say in his letter was truly horrific blasphemy. Hezekiah goes to the temple again. Again, he is the mediator for his people, acting as a type of Christ in both his royal and priestly offices. He basically says, 'You are the great God. You are the only living and true God.' As his descendant and his Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ would later say, the night in which He was betrayed, in His great high priestly prayer in John 17, 'This is life to know you, the only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.' He acknowledged God's nature, he acknowledged His attributes, relying upon this God and saying, 'He can brag about the fact that he defeated these nations who trusted in their gods. They were only carved up logs and rocks. But it is not so with you, God. So again, glorify yourself, vindicate your holiness.'

He is appealing to the God who is faithful to His people and to His covenant. The God who has made a covenant of grace with all those who are truly His people. The God who himself provides the head and the surety of the covenant in His only begotten son, who was pictured by the priests, the sacrifices of the very temple itself, and who was spoken of for thousands of years, since the day that Adam sinned.

And believe me, friends, in all your difficulties, and in all the sad things you may be seeing, and the declining things you may be seeing in various branches of the church of Jesus Christ, this too is a powerful argument to be using as you address the king of heaven; as you address Him, who is the head and king of Zion; as you address your God. Press the covenant! Here, among a number of other places, is an example for just such a thing. And in the midst of trouble, in the midst of difficulty, in the midst of hardship, that in an earthly way of seeing things appears impossible, you are authorized, you are encouraged to pray in this way.

Questions

1. What does Hezekiah appeal to?
2. What promises has God made to His church?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for God's faithfulness and covenant love.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 37:32

Praise: Psalm 36 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Saturday - Isaiah 37:21-38 - Relying on God

Ultimately Hezekiah and his people relied upon God, for He was, and He remains, and ever shall be, reliable. God answers the prayer, and He honors the faith that He had put into Hezekiah and his people. He begins by acknowledging His own people, not casting them off. What an encouragement to those who had heard with dismay the claims of Sennacherib. They knew that they had been great sinners, and they knew that they deserved a casting off. God rebukes Sennacherib for raising himself up over God. God reminds Sennacherib that the only reason they were able to do anything was because Jehovah had allowed them to do so. And they were being used by Jehovah as an instrument of discipline against His people.

Then in verses 30 through 35, God promises deliverance. He had preserved the remnant as we see in verses 30-32. And He promises in verses 33- 35 that no attack will come despite Sennacherib's boasting. That's immediately what happens. For the very next morning, the army is struck down. 185,000 men -- dead overnight! Sennacherib had bragged, 'nobody could stop me.' But God, in order to bless and care for His covenant people, in order to glorify His name, does it overnight. And the fearsome king must return with his tail between his legs, in a manner of speaking, and is murdered by a couple of his own sons, where his own god couldn't protect him.

The church of Jesus Christ always has trials of different sorts. And so very often the trials she faces are because of her own folly. And we can begin to be scared and worried. And the enemies may begin to gloat and say, nothing can stop us. But we still have His promises. We still have His Word. We still have prayer, and He still hears us. We still have the covenant God. Whether we are thinking of the trials and the difficulties before us as a congregation, as a denomination, for the true church of Jesus Christ as a whole within our society, we can fully rely on God. So let us go to His Word and take those promises in faith. Let us go to Him in prayer through our covenant head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us repent of our sin. In God's best timing and in His best way, He will deliver, and He will vindicate His name. He will show forth his glory. He will bring the abundant blessings of the covenant as we rely upon our God.

Questions

1. How did God answer Hezekiah's prayer?
2. What happened to Sennacherib?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

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Praise: Psalm 37 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced
by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

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