

## They Were All Dead Corpses

Isaiah 36:1 – 37:38

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~ Our Spiritual Safari experiences a profound change in Isaiah's message beginning at chapter thirty-six. We leave a dark jungle of judgment and move into a historical savannah that continues from here through chapter thirty-nine. These four chapters comprise a *historical interlude* — which records King Hezekiah's dealings with Rabshakeh and Sennacherib in Jerusalem. Everything about the prophet Isaiah changes now; including linguistic form. The first thirty-five chapters of Isaiah have been poetic justice in the form of almost unspeakable judgment. Here, we briefly turn to four chapters of prose; and everything is purely historical-factual in this interlude. Then, when we begin in chapter forty, and running through the end of Isaiah, we return to the poetic writing form; but we shall see the grace of God in his message – not judgment again. There is no more judgment to consider after this section – it will be all about the free gift of salvation that Christ offers us. We will, however, speak of the consequences of rejecting salvation from the Lord Jesus Christ as atonement for our sins.

Sacred history and secular history are not the same history. Divine history is never merely history; not merely an accurate account of past events. There are profoundly deep spiritual truths couched into sacred history; and they are revealed *ONLY* from within Holy Writ, a tangible substance that can be seen, perceived, understood, and received *only* with the eye of faith; after prayer, asking God for wisdom, judgment, and discernment. The Holy Spirit must teach us all things by His divine intervention in our lives according to and for His plan and purpose of recording Scriptural history — or we will never know *ANYTHING* about God, friends. That's the way God does it. And that's what this safari is all about. I'm sure what I am doing seems positively trite, foolish, and pointless to the academic historian. Well, I don't see them doing anything *AND* I have warned everyone not to read the Spiritual Safari — at least ten times in the last three reports. I give that warning again now: do not read the Spiritual Safari – ever. I do not recommend this Bible study. Thank you; goodbye.

Isaiah's writing was very nationalistic in his day – in fact, it only pertained to the nation Israel – and at the time in which we are studying; yet it also necessarily concerns the involvement of God's chosen people in great distant future world events. What is recorded here in Isaiah denotes total historical world change at the time Isaiah wrote his prophecy. Assyria succumbs to complete Babylonian dominance at this time. This is where Gentiles were introduced into Jewish society; and Gentiles have been a menace to the Jews ever since – but we're not going to go there in this report that you aren't supposed to be reading, my beloved readers....

## **XXXVI**

***1 Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.***

~ Hezekiah was an outstanding king. Next to David and Solomon, he would have been number three in the list of good kings in Judah; kings that did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Revival was the defining marker of Hezekiah's rule and reign. Our Spiritual Safari has examined the account of Hezekiah several times previously – so we'll not be tedious here. Read this section of Scripture again carefully, however. This account appears in Scripture three times; so, apparently, God thinks it's pretty important.

Hezekiah was, naturally, very frightened at what was happening with Sennacherib, and the way Rabshakeh was talking to the Jews on the wall was unnerving. Hezekiah, was evaluated by the enemy as weak. His initial response had been a bribery attempt towards Sennacherib. Hezekiah stripped the gold and the silver from the temple to meet the exorbitant demands of this madman, you will recall. That's all recorded in second Kings. But these extortionists — a.k.a great armies — were camped around the gates of Jerusalem again. That which Hezekiah had paid in bribes didn't help now. They wanted more — or all. Our modern-day fraud and financial weaponization is nothing new in the world. Nations use the dollar to buy friends throughout the world; and the result is no loyalty to anyone. No one trusts each other on the world stage — because they can't. They may or

may not act friendly on the surface but, in reality, they're volatile and violent....

***2 And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.***

***3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.***

***4 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?***

***5 I say, sayest thou, (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?***

***6 Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.***

***7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: is it not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?***

***8 Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.***

~ Rabshakeh was a man with no spiritual discernment whatsoever. As far as Rabshakeh knew, worshipping a heathen god on any hilltop was the same as worshipping the True and Living God in Jerusalem. All Rabshakeh could see was Hezekiah destroying the high places, and the groves, so the people had no material or physical representation of deity to turn to! So, Rabshakeh just wanted to fight. He was even willing to throw in some horses for Hezekiah to fight with — so he could kill even more! Rabshakeh

simply could not believe Hezekiah saying “... *the Lord fights for me*” – I’m sure of that.

Of course, that’s when Rabshakeh counters, and says the Lord has sent *him* — so God is on the side of the Assyrians against Israel! We see this play out constantly in religious circles. As far back as World War One, Germany and America *both* claimed God to be on their side. I doubt very seriously He was on *either* side. In this case, at the time in which we are studying, we know Scripturally, without question, that God is using the Assyrian as a rod of punishment against His children in the northern kingdom of the ten tribes; so, Rabshakeh is technically correct — but what Rabshakeh doesn’t know is that God is not ready to allow Judah to be destroyed. Well, make sure you read the following portion of truth in Isaiah carefully in prayer....

***9 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?***

***10 And am I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.***

***11 Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.***

***12 But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?***

***13 Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.***

***14 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you.***

**15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.**

**16 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me: and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern;**

**17 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.**

**18 Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?**

**19 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?**

**20 Who are they among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?**

**21 But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.**

**22 Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, that was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.**

## **XXXVII**

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

**5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.**

**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.**

**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.**

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

**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,**

**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.**

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

***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?***

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

***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.***

***15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,***

***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.***

***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.***

***18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries,***

***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.***

***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.***

***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:***

***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.***

***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.***

***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.***

***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.***

***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.***

***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.***

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

***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.***

***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.***

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

***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.***

***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.***

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

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

***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.***

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

***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 ~***

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