

# THE DEFEAT OF SENNACHERIB

**TEXT:** Isaiah 36 and 37

**REFERENCE READING:** 2 Kings 18:11, 21:26 and 2 Chronicles 32, 33

(This covers the background for the three-lesson unit on the historical background of Isaiah's time.)

1. Note the location where Rabshakeh stood to defy the God of Judah!



**Isaiah 36:2:** *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.*

Remember the advice Isaiah gave Ahaz from this very place?

**Isaiah 7:3-4:**

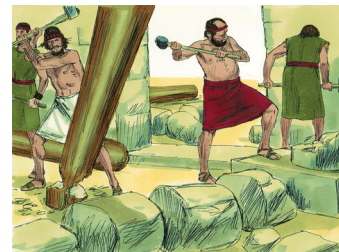
**3** Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

**4** And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

Do you suppose Isaiah's advice would still apply?

2. What kind of "altars and high places" did Hezekiah destroy?

**Isaiah 36:7:** *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*



Destroying the poles erected to honor the idol Asherah.

**away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, ye shall worship before this altar?**

At what altar, did Hezekiah demand his people worship? To whom was Rabshakeh appealing here?

3. In whatever “enemy” action is pressing hard on you just now, how do you personally answer the questions, **“What confidence is this in which thou trusteth? On whom dost thou trust now?”**

**Isaiah 36:4-5:**

**<sup>4</sup> And Rabshakeh saith unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trusteth?**

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



Rabshakeh shouting the demands of the king of Assyria.

4. What do you think about:

**a. Rabshakeh’s opinion of Egypt?**

**Isaiah 36:6: Lo, Thou trusteth 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.**

**b. Rabshakeh’s estimate of Judah’s strength?**

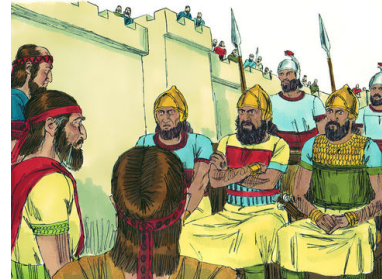
**Isaiah 36:8: Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.**

**c. Rabshakeh’s claim that God told him to destroy Judah?**

**Isaiah 36:10: 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.**

5. Why did Hezekiah's men want the Assyrians to speak in their own language instead of the language of the Jews?

**Isaiah 36:11: 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.**



Asking the Assyrians not to speak in Hebrew

How did Rabshakeh respond to this request?

6. What thoughts do you suppose might have entered Isaiah's mind when Hezekiah now sends for his counsel?

**Isaiah 37:1-5:**

**<sup>1</sup> 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.**

**<sup>2</sup> 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.**

**<sup>3</sup> 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.**

**<sup>4</sup> 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.**

**<sup>4</sup> So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.**

7. What did Isaiah say, as God's spokesman, to the penitent king?

**Isaiah 37:6-7:**

***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. Where is the “dwelling place” of God, to which Hezekiah refers in **Isaiah 37:16**?

***Isaiah 37:16: O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest among the cherubims, Thou art the God, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: Thou hast made the heaven and earth.***

9. What lessons in prayer can we learn from

***Isaiah 37:14-20?***

***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.***



Hezekiah spreads the message in the Temple before the Lord.

10. How many titles for the Lord do you find in this chapter?

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