

Isaiah

Defeat of the Assyrians

Lesson #7 for February 13, 2021

Scriptures: Isaiah 36-39.

1. If you ever have the privilege of visiting the British Museum in London, you need to go to the room where the bas-relief (carved) depictions from the palace at Nineveh are displayed.

A gaunt man walks barefoot with his two sons. Another family has loaded all their belongings onto an oxcart pulled by emaciated oxen. A man leads the oxen while two women sit on the cart. Less fortunate people have no cart, so they carry their possessions on their shoulders.

“Soldiers are everywhere. A battering ram smashes into the city gate. Archers on top of the ram shoot at defenders on the walls. Hectic carnage reigns supreme.

“Fast forward. A king sits grandly on his throne, receiving booty and captives. Some captives approach him with hands upraised, pleading for mercy. Others kneel or crouch. Descriptions of these scenes with the king begin with these words: ‘Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria’ and continue with such expressions as ‘sat in a *nēmedu*-throne and the booty of the city Lachish passed in review before him.’”—John Malcolm Russell, *The Writing on the Wall* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), pp. 137, 138.—[as quoted in *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath, February 6].^{§†}

2. The kings of the Assyrians, who styled themselves as emperors, had no shortage of pride. They were great at bragging about their accomplishments. Look at Isaiah 36:1.

Isaiah 36:1: In the fourteenth year that Hezekiah was king of Judah, Sennacherib, the emperor of Assyria, attacked the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Isaiah 36:1). New York: American Bible Society.

3. The historical background tells us that when Sargon II died and Sennacherib became the new emperor, it looked like Assyria was temporarily weakened. Hezekiah along with a group of other smaller nations decided it was time to rebel against Assyria. The result was that Assyria attacked Judah and conquered and decimated all of Judah except Jerusalem. The pictures that you can see in the British Museum tell of Assyria’s conquest of Lachish, about 30 miles from Jerusalem. (You can see some of them as described above on Google Images: Lachish.)

4. As we discussed in our last lesson, Ahaz, Hezekiah’s father, had tried to purchase peace from the Assyrians by sending them gold and silver from Solomon’s Temple.

2 Chronicles 28:16-21: ¹⁶⁻¹⁷ The Edomites began to raid Judah again and captured many prisoners, so King Ahaz asked Tiglath Pileser, the emperor of Assyria, to send help. ¹⁸At this same time the Philistines were raiding the towns in the western foothills and in southern Judah. They captured the cities of Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, and Gederoth, and the cities of Soco, Timnah, and Gimzo with their villages, and settled there permanently. ¹⁹**Because King Ahaz of Judah had violated the rights of his people and had defied the LORD, the LORD brought troubles on Judah.** ²⁰The Assyrian emperor, instead of helping Ahaz, opposed him and caused him trouble. ²¹So Ahaz took the gold from the Temple, the palace, and the homes of the leaders of the people, and gave it to the emperor, but even this did not help.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

5. Considering what we now know about this story, was it a good idea for Hezekiah to rebel against Assyria? How many of the children of Judah died or were taken into Assyrian captivity? We know

what happened to Israel when they were captured by the Assyrians—they disappeared. And we know what happened to the Assyrian army. Do you think God was responsible for Hezekiah's rebellion?

6. We do know something about Hezekiah's attempt to prepare for the Assyrian onslaught.

2 Chronicles 32:1-8: ¹After these events, in which King Hezekiah served the LORD faithfully, Sennacherib, the emperor of Assyria, invaded Judah. He besieged the fortified cities and gave orders for his army to break their way through the walls. ²When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib intended to attack Jerusalem also, ³⁻⁴he and his officials decided to cut off the supply of water outside the city in order to prevent the Assyrians from having any water when they got near Jerusalem. The officials led a large number of people out and stopped up all the springs, so that no more water flowed out of them. ⁵The king strengthened the city's defences by repairing the wall, building towers on it, and building an outer wall. In addition, he repaired the defences built on the land that was filled in on the east side of the old part of Jerusalem. He also had a large number of spears and shields made. ⁶He placed all the men in the city under the command of army officers and ordered them to assemble in the open square at the city gate. He said to them, ⁷ **"Be determined and confident, and don't be afraid of the Assyrian emperor or of the army he is leading. We have more power on our side than he has on his. ⁸He has human power, but we have the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles."** The people were encouraged by these words of their king.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

7. While we do not know or have evidence about most of the preparations he made, we do have the Siloam water tunnel carved through the solid rock to bring water into the city limits of Jerusalem. In the middle of that tunnel, there was an important message carved into the rock wall which in modern times was chipped out and can be seen in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, Turkey. It confirms what we know about the story.

8. But, Hezekiah did not limit his preparations to military reinforcements and human plans.

But the king of Judah had determined to do his part in preparing to resist the enemy; and, having accomplished all that human ingenuity and energy could do, he had assembled his forces and had exhorted them to be of good courage.—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*^{*} 351.2.

9. **Was it a waste of time for Hezekiah to go through all those preparations when he could have just relied on God?** Notice these comments in the New Testament.

Philippians 2:12-13: ¹² So then, dear friends, as you always obeyed me when I was with you, it is even more important that you obey me now while I am away from you. Keep on working with fear and trembling to complete your salvation, ¹³because God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose.—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

10. Sennacherib had a powerful military. But, he realized that if he could overcome an enemy by psychology, it was a lot better than having to fight for it. Sennacherib himself was busy trying to conquer Lachish. So, he sent a trusted palace official known as the Rabshakeh, (2 Kings 18:17, *KJV*,^{*} *NKJV*,^{*} *NRSV*^{*}) which literally means *the chief cupbearer*, to go to Jerusalem to see if he could get them to surrender. **What happened in that encounter is key to our whole understanding of this story.** Notice the details.

Isaiah 36:2–22: ²Then he ordered his chief official to go from Lachish to Jerusalem with a large military force to demand that King Hezekiah should surrender. The official occupied the road where the clothmakers work, by the ditch that brings water from

the upper pond.³ Three Judeans came out to meet him: the official in charge of the palace, Eliakim son of Hilkiyah; the court secretary, Shebna; and the official in charge of the records, Joah son of Asaph.⁴ The Assyrian official told them that the emperor wanted to know what made King Hezekiah so confident.⁵ He demanded, “Do you think that words can take the place of military skill and might? **Who do you think will help you rebel against Assyria?**”⁶ You are expecting Egypt to help you, but that would be like using a reed as a walking stick—it would break and jab your hand. That is what the king of Egypt is like when anyone relies on him.”

⁷ The Assyrian official went on, “**Or will you tell me that you are relying on the LORD your God?** It was the LORD’s shrines and altars that Hezekiah destroyed when he told the people of Judah and Jerusalem to worship at one altar only.⁸ I will make a bargain with you in the name of the emperor. I will give you 2,000 horses if you can find that many riders.⁹ You are no match for even the lowest ranking Assyrian official, and yet you expect the Egyptians to send you chariots and cavalry.¹⁰ **Do you think I have attacked your country and destroyed it without the LORD’s help? The LORD himself told me to attack it and destroy it.**”

¹¹ Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the official, “**Speak Aramaic to us. We understand it. Don’t speak Hebrew; all the people on the wall are listening.**”

¹² He replied, “Do you think you and the king are the only ones the emperor sent me to say all these things to? **No, I am also talking to the people who are sitting on the wall,** who will have to eat their excrement and drink their urine, just as you will.”

¹³ **Then the official stood up and shouted in Hebrew,** “Listen to what the emperor of Assyria is telling you.¹⁴ He warns you not to let Hezekiah deceive you. Hezekiah can’t save you.¹⁵ **And don’t let him persuade you to rely on the LORD. Don’t think that the LORD will save you and that he will stop our Assyrian army from capturing your city.**”¹⁶ Don’t listen to Hezekiah! The emperor of Assyria commands you to come out of the city and surrender. You will all be allowed to eat grapes from your own vines and figs from your own trees, and to drink water from your own wells—¹⁷until the emperor resettles you in a country much like your own, where there are vineyards to give wine and there is corn for making bread.¹⁸ **Don’t let Hezekiah fool you into thinking that the LORD will rescue you. Did the gods of any other nations save their countries from the emperor of Assyria?**¹⁹ Where are they now, the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? **Did anyone save Samaria?**²⁰ **When did any of the gods of all these countries ever save their country from our emperor? Then what makes you think the LORD can save Jerusalem?**”

²¹ The people kept quiet, just as King Hezekiah had told them to; they did not say a word.²² Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah tore their clothes in grief and went and reported to the king what the Assyrian official had said.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

11. A lot of what the chief official said was true. His words made powerful arguments. Egypt could not be trusted. The nations around had been conquered, and Hezekiah himself had torn down the high places and altars throughout Judah. What was happening in those high places and before those altars? Were those only fertility cult worship sites? Or, is it possible that some of the children of Israel were actually offering sacrifices to *Yahweh* at those sites? And then, finally, the official said: “I will give you 2000 horses if you can find that many riders.” (Isaiah 36:8, *GNB**) Ancient cities were very prone to having sieges. In the days when there was no gunpowder or any airplanes, a high wall, thick and strong, was a good defense. But, how long can people survive inside a walled city which is under siege? The people of Jerusalem must have known that,

essentially, the entire nation of Judah had already been conquered. Many of the people from those cities and villages had probably escaped and rushed to Jerusalem, hoping to be safe there.

12. Furthermore, the northern kingdom of Israel had already been conquered about 20 years earlier. Samaria had fallen after a long siege by Assyria. (2 Kings 18:9-10) It did not look like Jerusalem had much of a chance of surviving. Some years earlier, Isaiah himself had been given a vision about the emperor of Assyria as the instrument of God!

Isaiah 10:5-11: ⁵The LORD said, “Assyria! I use Assyria like a club to punish those with whom I am angry. ⁶I sent Assyria to attack a godless nation, people who have made me angry. I sent them to loot and steal and trample on the people like dirt in the streets.”

⁷ But the Assyrian emperor has his own violent plans in mind. He is determined to destroy many nations. ⁸He boasts, “Every one of my commanders is a king! ⁹I conquered the cities of Calno and Carchemish, the cities of Hamath and Arpad. I conquered Samaria and Damascus. ¹⁰I stretched out my hand to punish those kingdoms that worship idols, idols more numerous than those of Jerusalem and Samaria. ¹¹I have destroyed Samaria and all its idols, and I will do the same to Jerusalem and the images that are worshipped there.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

13. With those words ringing in his ears, was it difficult for Isaiah to respond to Hezekiah’s request? He knew perfectly well that God had been using the Assyrians; but, would God protect Jerusalem? There are times when God’s people are faced with situations like that. Have you ever faced such a situation? Do these situations give us opportunities to grow our faith?
14. We know what happened. The oratory of the Assyrian chief officer had its impact on Hezekiah and his officials.

2 Kings 18:37-19:4: ³⁷Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah tore their clothes in grief, and went and reported to the king what the Assyrian official had said.

^{19:1}As soon as King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes in grief, put on sackcloth, and went to the Temple of the LORD. ²He sent Eliakim, the official in charge of the palace, Shebna, the court secretary, and the senior priests to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. They also were wearing sackcloth. ³This is the message which he told them to give Isaiah: “Today is a day of suffering; we are being punished and are in disgrace. We are like a woman who is ready to give birth, but is too weak to do it. ⁴**The Assyrian emperor has sent his chief official to insult the living God. May the LORD your God hear these insults and punish those who spoke them. So pray to God for those of our people who survive.**”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

15. This was a life-and-death situation. Hezekiah and all of his associates understood that they could die. Fortunately for them, Hezekiah, speaking on behalf of all those in Jerusalem turned to God. And how did God respond?

Isaiah 37:5-7: ⁵ When Isaiah received King Hezekiah’s message, ⁶he sent back this answer: “The LORD tells you not to let the Assyrians frighten you by their claims that he cannot save you. ⁷**The LORD will cause the emperor to hear a rumour that will make him go back to his own country, and the LORD will have him killed there.**”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

16. It was a very brief message; but, it gave hope to Hezekiah and Isaiah and some of their close associates. Sennacherib and his chief cupbearer must have been frustrated because their clever oratory had not gotten them the victory in Jerusalem.
17. He realized that the only hope that Hezekiah had left was trusting in the Lord. We do not know

exactly how much Sennacherib understood about the God of Hezekiah and Isaiah; but, he responded by saying:

Isaiah 37:10,12: ¹⁰ “Do not let your God on whom you rely deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.... ¹²**Have the gods of the nations delivered them...?**”—*NRSV*.^{*†} [See also 2 Chronicles 32:17.][‡]

18. Hezekiah did not hesitate, despite that brief response, to go to the temple and pray urgently:

Isaiah 37:15-20: ¹⁵ And prayed, ¹⁶ “Almighty LORD, God of Israel, enthroned above the winged creatures, you alone are God, ruling all the kingdoms of the world. You created the earth and the sky. ¹⁷ Now, LORD, hear us and look at what is happening to us. **Listen to all the things that Sennacherib is saying to insult you, the living God.** ¹⁸ We all know, LORD, that the emperors of Assyria have destroyed many nations, made their lands desolate, ¹⁹ and burnt up their gods—which were no gods at all, only images of wood and stone made by human hands. ²⁰ **Now, LORD our God, rescue us from the Assyrians, so that all the nations of the world will know that you alone are God.**”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

19. What Sennacherib did not realize, but hopefully Hezekiah did—although perhaps not as much as he should have—was that when one challenges God in open speech, God feels that it is necessary to respond. And respond, He did!

20. We must not forget that:

According to Sennacherib, as reported in his annals, he took forty-six fortified towns, besieged Jerusalem, and made Hezekiah the Jew “a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage.”—James B. Pritchard, editor, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 288. But in spite of his penchant for propaganda as an extension of his monumental ego, **neither in text nor in pictures does he claim to have taken Jerusalem.** From a human point of view, this omission is amazing, given the inexorable power of Sennacherib and the fact that Hezekiah led a revolt against him. Rebels against Assyria had short life expectancies and gruesome deaths.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, February 10.^{†§}

21. Biblical scholars and archaeologists have to admit that even without the biblical record, some kind of a miracle must have taken place. For that enormous army to all of a sudden disappear—and there is no hint of Jerusalem being conquered—something incredible happened! But, Bible students know what happened.

Isaiah 37:21-37: ²¹ Then Isaiah sent a message telling King Hezekiah that in answer to the king’s prayer ²²the LORD had said, “The city of Jerusalem laughs at you, Sennacherib, and despises you. ²³**Whom do you think you have been insulting and ridiculing? You have been disrespectful to me, the holy God of Israel.** ²⁴You sent your servants to boast to me that with all your chariots you had conquered the highest mountains of Lebanon. You boasted that there you cut down the tallest cedars and the finest cypress trees, and that you reached the deepest parts of the forests. ²⁵You boasted that you dug wells and drank water in foreign lands, and that the feet of your soldiers tramped the River Nile dry.

²⁶ “Have you never heard that I planned all this long ago? And now I have carried it out. I gave you the power to turn fortified cities into piles of rubble. ²⁷The people who lived there were powerless; they were frightened and stunned. They were like grass in a field or weeds growing on a roof when the hot east wind blasts them.

²⁸ “But I know everything about you, what you do and where you go. I know how you rage against me. ²⁹I have received the report of that rage and that pride of

yours, and now I will put a hook through your nose and a bit in your mouth and will take you back by the road on which you came.”

³⁰ Then Isaiah said to King Hezekiah, “This is a sign of what will happen. This year and next you will have only wild grain to eat, but the following year you will be able to sow your corn and harvest it, and plant vines and eat grapes. ³¹Those in Judah who survive will flourish like plants that send roots deep into the ground and produce fruit. ³²There will be people in Jerusalem and on Mount Zion who will survive, because the LORD Almighty is determined to make this happen.

³³ “This is what the LORD has said about the Assyrian emperor: ‘He will not enter this city or shoot a single arrow against it. No soldiers with shields will come near the city, and no siege mounds will be built round it. ³⁴He will go back by the road on which he came, without entering this city. I, the LORD, have spoken. ³⁵**I will defend this city and protect it, for the sake of my own honour and because of the promise I made to my servant David.’ ”**

³⁶ **An angel of the LORD went to the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 soldiers. At dawn the next day they lay, all dead!** ³⁷Then the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib withdrew and returned to Nineveh.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

22. **God’s reputation must be upheld at all costs.** This proud Assyrian emperor thought that his pagan gods were more powerful than the God of Hezekiah. But, on this occasion, he made a terrible mistake. God reassured Isaiah and Hezekiah; what happened—as detailed in 2 Kings 19:35-36 and Isaiah 37:33-37—makes it very clear.
23. We should note in passing that some scholars say that it is impossible for any ancient nation to have had an army as large as 185,000. But, we need to remember that Nineveh controlled a lot of territory, and war was their theme. Their “god” was a god of war. And if one wanted to be “somebody” in Nineveh, he had to have stories of conquest. What did the nations around think of this story when they heard it?
24. But, when God takes action, the results are absolute and unequivocal.

The God of the Hebrews had prevailed over the proud Assyrian. The honor of Jehovah was vindicated in the eyes of the surrounding nations. In Jerusalem the hearts of the people were filled with holy joy.—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*^{* 361.4.†}

25. It is important to note in passing that the northern kingdom of Israel had already been “scattered to the winds” by Assyria and had been lost to history. Only the southern kingdom of Judah was left. **If Jerusalem had been conquered and its inhabitants scattered throughout the territory of Assyria, who would have been left to give birth to the Messiah?**
26. In those days, literally millions of people died from those wars between different nations. Who knows how many of the people of Judah died as a result of Sennacherib’s conquest of all Judah except Jerusalem. Then, 185,000 Assyrian soldiers died. Human life seemed to be of little value in those days. It is possible that Sennacherib actually made two campaigns against Judah; but, the biblical account seems to summarize them in a single account.
27. Does the fact that the Bible three times records this story of this direct challenge of God by the Assyrian leaders as they approached Jerusalem (Isaiah 36&37; 2 Kings 18&19; 2 Chronicles 32) mean that this confrontation or “face-off” and God’s response to this direct challenge was very important in the great controversy? Compare the records of the life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus in the Gospels which are often recounted in three or four different places.
28. Unfortunately, this very humble trusting in God is not the only story we have of Hezekiah. Shortly after Sennacherib retreated home, it is recorded in Isaiah 38:5-6 and 2 Kings 20:6 that Hezekiah

came down with a fatal illness. Then, Hezekiah prayed and pleaded with God for a longer life.

Isaiah 38:4-6: ⁴Then the LORD commanded Isaiah ⁵to go back to Hezekiah and say to him, “I, the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will let you live fifteen years longer. ⁶I will rescue you and this city of Jerusalem from the emperor of Assyria, and I will continue to protect the city.”—*Good News Bible*.* [His son, Manasseh, was born during those 15 years!][‡]

2 Kings 20:6: “I will let you live fifteen years longer. I will rescue you and this city of Jerusalem from the emperor of Assyria. **I will defend this city, for the sake of my own honour and because of the promise I made to my servant David.**”—*Good News Bible*.*[†]

Satan was determined to bring about both the death of Hezekiah and the fall of Jerusalem, reasoning no doubt that if Hezekiah were out of the way, his efforts at reform would cease and the fall of Jerusalem could be the more readily accomplished.—Article regarding Isaiah 38:6. *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 240.[†] [Satan must have thought he had almost won!][‡]

29. What happened next is very interesting. Remember from our previous studies that Isaiah approached Ahaz, Hezekiah’s father, and asked him to ask for a sign from God. Ahaz refused. But, in this story, Hezekiah essentially said, “Here I am, about to die. Give me a sign that the Lord will bless me.” So, Hezekiah ended up asking for that sign in which the shadow on the sundial went back 10 degrees.
30. The Babylonians, far away by the river Euphrates, had taken a very deep interest in astronomical phenomena. When the sun went back 10 degrees, they immediately noticed. They started asking why that happened. Babylon had tried to rebel against Assyria on many occasions and had failed, as we have noted in previous lessons. But, when they heard about Hezekiah’s illness and his request for the sun to go back 10 degrees, they immediately sent emissaries to talk with him. **Surely, any person who had a connection with any god who was capable of turning the sun back 10 degrees is someone all would want to know! King Merodach-baladan was excited to learn more about Hezekiah. Babylon was also trying to rebel against Assyria!**
31. God sent those emissaries from Babylon to Hezekiah, hoping that Hezekiah would continue to exhibit his faith in God and tell them about the great God who controls the heavens and the earth. But, unfortunately, that is not what happened.

Only by the direct interposition of God could the shadow on the sundial be made to turn back ten degrees; and this was to be the sign to Hezekiah that the Lord had heard his prayer. Accordingly, “the prophet cried unto the Lord: and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.” Verses 8–11.—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings** 342.4.

The visit of these messengers from the ruler of a far-away land gave Hezekiah an opportunity to extol the living God. How easy it would have been for him to tell them of God, the upholder of all created things, through whose favor his own life had been spared when all other hope had fled! ...

But pride and vanity took possession of Hezekiah’s heart, and in self-exaltation he laid open to covetous eyes the treasures with which God had enriched His people. The king “showed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.” Isaiah 39:2. Not to glorify God did he do this, but to exalt himself in the eyes of the foreign princes.—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings** 344.4-345.0.

32. Seventh-day Adventists know that difficult times are ahead of us. No doubt, Satan was responsible for the challenges that the Rabshakeh spoke against Hezekiah and Jerusalem. If that is the case, what does he say about us? Satan is an accuser of all of God's faithful people. He would love to destroy us or get rid of us so that he could claim this world as his unchallenged domain. Read Zechariah 3:1-5 and Revelation 12:7-12.
33. How would you feel if you knew that the leader of your government, or even of your church, received direct messages from God? Hezekiah and Isaiah had been responsible for driving away the Assyrian army. Then, they were responsible for that personal healing of Hezekiah by following the directions of God.
34. In our day, are we inclined to trust in God when difficult times come? Is our faith growing on a day-by-day basis as we walk more and more continually in God's path?
35. Hezekiah had started out on a very good note.

2 Chronicles 29:1-5: Hezekiah became king of Judah at the age of 25, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.
²Following the example of his ancestor King David, he did what was pleasing to the LORD.

³ In the first month of the year after Hezekiah became king, he re-opened the gates of the Temple and had them repaired. ⁴He assembled a group of priests and Levites in the east courtyard of the Temple ⁵and spoke to them there. He said, "You Levites are to consecrate yourselves and purify the Temple of the LORD, the God of your ancestors. Remove from the Temple everything that defiles it."—*Good News Bible*.*

36. Hezekiah knew that the northern kingdom of Israel had fallen to the Assyrians because they, basically, had completely abandoned the worship of the true God. (For details of what that was like, read 2 Kings 17:5-23.) So, in light of all that history, Hezekiah and Isaiah turned to the Lord. Should they have trusted Egypt? Should they have trusted the Assyrian king with his promises? We are so fortunate that they trusted in the Lord and preserved the family line that would one day give us the Messiah.
37. What do you suppose the Assyrians knew about Hezekiah's trust in the Lord? We have already noticed from Hezekiah's prayer that he poured out his heart in trust to God. He knew that God was in charge of everything. He did not doubt God's ability to act in this case.
38. Many of us have faced crises in our lives. And many more crises are ahead for God's people. Will we trust in the Lord as Hezekiah did? Hezekiah actually wrote a psalm about his experiences. See Isaiah 38:10-20.
39. Commentators have suggested two important messages that we should not pass over before we finish this lesson.
1. Even emperors and kings are powerless before God's presence and action. No one else can be trusted more than God.
 2. While Hezekiah was a good king and trusted God most of the time, he was not the Baby spoken about in Isaiah 9.

As we have seen in this lesson, God is concerned with individual problems, not just national problems. Every day, we need to walk with Him step-by-step; He will see us through the worst possible times—even the seven last plagues.

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