

Isaiah 36 - Hezekiah's Trouble; Assyrian Invasion Threat

II. Historical interlude: conclusion and introduction (Is 36:1—39:8)

(1) Looking backward: Hezekiah and Assyria (Is 36:1—37:38)

(A) Rabshekah's addresses (36:1-22)

(a) Setting (36:1-3)

(b) First address to the leadership in (36:4-12)

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(i) People: silence (36:21)

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Isaiah 36

(1) Looking backward: Hezekiah and Assyria (Is 36:1—37:38)

(A) Rabshekah's addresses (36:1-22)

(a) Setting (36:1-3)

1 Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria marched against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.

1 Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them.

1 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.

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.

The Jewish and Assyrian Delegations

2 And the king of Assyria sent **Rabshakeh** from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the road to the fuller's field.

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

2 Then the king of Assyria sent his field commander, along with a very large army, from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. When the field commander stopped at the

aqueduct at the Upper Pool on the road to Laundryman's Field,

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.

- "...Rabshakeh" - not a name, but a title of the chief officer

3 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the secretary, went out to him.

3 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him.

3 Hilkiah's son Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the secretary, and Asaph's son Joah, the recorder, went out to him.

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.

(b) First address to the leadership in (36:4-12)

4 And Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'This is what the great king, the king of Assyria says: "What is this confidence that you have?"

4 Then Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, "What is this confidence that you have?"

4 The field commander told them:

"Tell Hezekiah, king of Judah, 'This is what the mighty king, the king of Assyria, has to say: What is this "guarantee" that makes you yourself rely on it?"

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, 'Your plan and strength for the war are only empty words.' Now on whom have you relied, that you have revolted against me?"

5 I say, 'Your counsel and strength for the war are only empty words.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me?"

5 Do you really think that guarantees alone can withstand strategy and military strength? On whom are you now depending, that you're rebelling against me?"

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 Behold, you have relied on the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.

6 Behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, *even* on Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.

6 Take note: you're relying on Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff, which pierces the palm of anyone who leans on it. This is what Pharaoh king of Egypt is like to everybody who depends on him!

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 you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'?

7 But if you say to me, 'We trust in the Lord our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'?

7 But if you all say to me, "We are depending on the LORD our God"—isn't he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah removed, while he kept on telling Judah and Jerusalem, 'You are to worship in front of this altar in Jerusalem'?

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 then, come make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to put riders on them!

8 Now therefore, come make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.

8 Come now, all of you, make a bet with my master, the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you can furnish riders for them!

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 Is Misinformed!

- Data is correct, yet interpretation is wrong
- Hezekiah had torn down all the idols, groves, altars
- They had misunderstood and thought that he had torn down the field altars to force worship at Jerusalem
- They didn't realize the difference in gods and God; thus they thought that the tearing down of altars had offended the gods they worshiped

9 How then can you drive back *even* one official of the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?

9 How then can you repulse one official of the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

9 How, then, can you repulse even one officer from the least of my master's officials, when you are depending for yourselves on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?

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 have I now come up without the LORD'S approval against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'""

10 Have I now come up without the LORD's approval against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'""

10 One other thing: have I really marched against this country to destroy it apart from the LORD's direction? The LORD himself ordered me, 'March against this country to destroy it.'"

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 Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand *it*; and do not speak to us in Judean so that the people who are on the wall hear *you*."

11 Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand *it*; and do not speak with us in Judean in the hearing of the people who are on the wall."

11 Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah replied to him, "Please speak with¹⁸ your servants—with us—in Aramaic, since we understand it. Don't speak to us in Hebrew where the people sitting on the wall can hear."

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.

- Rabshakeh is speaking in Hebrew. Hezekiah's men wish he would speak in Aramaic so the men on the wall would not understand the remarks being made about the army

12 But Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me *only* to your master and to you to speak these words, *and* not to the men who sit on the wall, *doomed* to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

12 But Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words, *and* not to the men who sit on the wall, *doomed* to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

12 But the field commander asked, "Was it only to all of you and to your master that my master sent me to speak these things? Wasn't it also to the men sitting on the wall—who, like you, will have to eat their own excrement and drink their own urine?"

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?

(c) Second address to the people (36:13-20)

13 Then Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Judean and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria!

13 Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

13 Then the commander stood up and shouted out loud in Hebrew: "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria!

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.

- Rabshakeh wants the people to know that if they do not surrender they will be under siege

— The strength of the wall was the main factor in a cities strength

— A siege would seal a city for as long as it would take to starve out the people, the Romans would be prepared to camp around a city for 15-20 YEARS!

— When Rabshakeh says, "That they may eat their own refuse and drink their own water" he is being literal and graphic, as sieges are horrible times for the people, forcing them to turn to cannibalism for survival!

14 This is what the king says: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to save you;

14 Thus says the king, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you;

14 This is what the king of Assyria says: 'Don't let Hezekiah deceive you—for he cannot save you!

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

15 and do not let Hezekiah lead you to rely on the LORD, saying, "The LORD will certainly save us. This city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria!"

15 nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us, this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."

15 Don't let Hezekiah persuade you to rely on the LORD when he says, "The LORD will really deliver us!" and "This city will never be handed over to the king of Assyria!"

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 Do not listen to Hezekiah,' for this is what the king of Assyria says: 'Surrender to me and come out to me, and eat, each one, of his vine and each of his fig tree, and each drink of the waters of his own cistern,

16 Do not listen to Hezekiah,' for thus says the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern,

16 Don't listen to Hezekiah, because this is what the king of Assyria says: 'Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then everyone will eat from his own vine and from his own fig tree, and everyone will drink water from his own cistern,

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 grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

17 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

17 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land—to a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.'

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* that Hezekiah does not mislead you, saying, "The LORD will save us." Has any one of the gods of the nations saved his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?

18 *Beware* that Hezekiah does not mislead you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?

18 Be careful not to let Hezekiah mislead you when he says, "The LORD will save us." Has any god of any nation ever delivered his country from the king of Assyria?

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 Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they saved Samaria from my hand?

19 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they delivered Samaria from my hand?

19 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sephar-vaim? Have they saved Samaria from me?

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 among all the gods of these lands have saved their land from my hand, that the LORD would save Jerusalem from my hand?"

20 Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD would deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

20 Who among all the gods of these countries has delivered their land from me? How then can the LORD deliver Jerusalem from me?"

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?

(d) Responses (36:21-22)

(i) People: silence (36:21)

21 But they were silent and did not answer him *so much as* a word; for the king's command was, "Do not answer him."

21 But they were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him."

21 But the people remained silent and didn't respond to him with so much as a single word, because the king had commanded, "Don't answer him."

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

(ii) Leaders: report to Hezekiah (36:22)

22 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the secretary, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and reported to him the words of Rabshakeh.

22 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told

him the words of Rabshakeh.

22 Then Hilkiyah's son Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the secretary, and Asaph's son Joah, the recorder, approached Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and let him know what the field commander had said.

22 Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, 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.