

# When Man Mocks God and His People

Text: Isaiah 36

Date: 3-27-22 @ 10:30 AM

Isaiah had been called in the year King Uzziah died, which was 740 BC. The year is now around 701 BC which means Isaiah had prophesied for 40 years against the idolatry and idolatrous leaders of Judah. For the next few chapters Isaiah will deal with the Assyrian led invasion of Judah and Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem. Chapters 36 and 37 mirror II Kings 18-19 (II Chron. 32) and point back to the Assyrian Empire. II Kings 18:7 tells us that as Hezekiah reformed Judah God prospered Him. II Chron. Chapters 29-31 give more details on Hezekiah's work to reform and rebuild the worship of Jehovah in the land (II Chron. 29:1-11 for details on this endeavor). Hezekiah then felt like he could rebel against Assyria and refused to serve him.

**Explanation/v. 1:** Isaiah writes now of Sennacherib's siege of the 46 (according to historical accounts) walled cities of Judah. The Assyrian leader successfully pushed his attacks to the edge of Jerusalem. In II Kings 18:14 we find that Hezekiah admitted to violating a treaty with the Assyrians so he pleaded to have them leave Judah in exchange for tribute money. The amount Sennacherib desired was 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. Hezekiah took the money from the treasury and stripped the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple and gave it to the Assyrians.

## I. The Assyrian envoy meets the Judean ambassadors at Washer's Field (Isa. 36:2-3).

**Ahaz's choice that day to beg Assyria's help was now bearing its full harvest. The consequences of not obeying God were on full display.**

The Assyrians main point man was Rabshakeh and was probably representative of a military title than a personal name.

In response to the call for Hezekiah, the king of Judah sent his own ambassadors: Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah.

## II. Rabshakeh's ridicules Jehovah and Judah (Isa 36:4-10).

His utter disdain for the people and God of Judah and prideful lifting up of his own king demonstrate one of the most insolent speeches in the entire Bible. We must realize that our choice of words mean something and be careful how we lift ourselves up and put others down.

Rabshakeh now declares that Judah has only two choices: Egypt or Jehovah.

To place your trust in Egypt is folly since he is a wounded enemy who will provide little help against the strong Assyrian army.

His thinking was if Hezekiah had destroyed the places of god worship, then God would be of no help to Judah.

In this the Assyrian ambassador blundered for he thought that destroying the idols was an act against Jehovah when in actuality it was in support of worship at the one true altar at the Temple in Jerusalem. In Rabshakeh's eyes the Jews had no help from on earth (Egypt) or from heaven (God). He painted a picture of an already defeated enemy.

Rabshakeh uses God like a chess piece against God's people. Yet the point was partially correct since God had led the Assyrians to come against Judah and Jerusalem (Isa. 10:5-6). I doubt that Assyria knew of Isaiah's prophecy, but he was using a daring strategy to attempt to scare the Jews into the deal. What we find here is the clear belief that Rabshakeh was at this meeting for one reason and one purpose only: that his people, the Assyrians, sought to destroy Jerusalem!

### III. **Rabshakeh threatens the Jewish people (Isa. 36:11-12).**

They knew that Rabshakeh's words would put fear into the soldiers and other people nearby if they heard them. So they requested the Assyrians speak in the Syrian language (diplomatic language of the day) and not the Jewish language.

### IV. **The complete humiliation of Judah (Isa. 36:13-20).**

In this speech Rabshakeh purports his king and his nation is greater than God, Hezekiah, and the people of Judah.

The ultimatum: The king has spoken and on his authority you had better to listen to me. Do not allow Hezekiah to deceive you into trusting the Lord for he will tell you that the Lord will deliver you and the city will not be taken by the Assyrian king.

**When the world or lukewarm Christians mock our confidence in God, we know that we are on the right path of obedience and trust before God.**

**This man is overly confident that, since Jehovah is just like the other defeated gods, He will no more be able to save them than these other already humiliated gods of other nations. Yahweh will then not be present to help the people of Judah. "The devils believe and tremble; but the Rabshakeh, blinded by the power of the Assyrian king, thinks that the God against whom he is to fight is as impotent as the gods that are the creation of men's hands" Young 470).**

### V. **The response to the Assyrian demands demonstrates Judah's desire to follow the Lord (Isa. 36:21-22).**

**The first response was to clearly say nothing.** Hezekiah was trusting Jehovah, and since the enemy clearly despised God and thought nothing of His power, the best response was to be quiet.

**The second response was to return to Jerusalem and to mourn over the impending situation. T**

What can we learn?

- Do not let people attract you to anything other than full trust in the Lord.
- When faced with the enemies deceptive tactics, remember how God has delivered you in the past and His promises of salvation in the future.
- Sometimes the best thing in response to those who would oppose us is to walk away in silence and mourn and pray for their spiritual condition.