

Saturday, September 21

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Isaiah 37:1 - 38:22

37 **1** When King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes and put on burlap and went into the Temple of the LORD . **2** And he sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the court secretary, and the leading priests, all dressed in burlap, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. **3** They told him, “This is what King Hezekiah says: Today is a day of trouble, insults, and disgrace. It is like when a child is ready to be born, but the mother has no strength to deliver the baby. **4** But perhaps the LORD your God has heard the Assyrian chief of staff, sent by the king to defy the living God, and will punish him for his words. Oh, pray for those of us who are left!” **5** After King Hezekiah’s officials delivered the king’s message to Isaiah, **6** the prophet replied, “Say to your master, ‘This is what the LORD says: Do not be disturbed by this blasphemous speech against me from the Assyrian king’s messengers. **7** Listen! I myself will move against him, and the king will receive a message that he is needed at home. So he will return to his land, where I will have him killed with a sword.’” **8** Meanwhile, the Assyrian chief of staff left Jerusalem and went to consult the king of Assyria, who had left Lachish and was attacking Libnah. **9** Soon afterward King Sennacherib received word that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia was leading an army to fight against him. Before leaving to meet the attack, he sent messengers back to Hezekiah in Jerusalem with this message: **10** “This message is for King Hezekiah of Judah. Don’t let your God, in whom you trust, deceive you with promises that Jerusalem will not be captured by the king of Assyria. **11** You know perfectly well what the kings of Assyria have done wherever they have gone. They have completely destroyed everyone who stood in their way! Why should you be any different? **12** Have the gods of other nations rescued them—such nations as Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Tel-assar? My predecessors destroyed them all! **13** What happened to the king of Hamath and the king of Arpad? What happened to the kings of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?” **14** After Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it, he went up to the LORD ’s Temple and spread it out before the LORD . **15** And Hezekiah prayed this prayer before the LORD : **16** “O LORD of Heaven’s Armies, God of Israel, you are enthroned between the mighty cherubim! You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You alone created the heavens and the earth. **17** Bend down, O LORD, and listen! Open your eyes, O LORD, and see! Listen to Sennacherib’s words of defiance against the living God. **18** “It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all these nations. **19** And they have thrown the gods of these nations

into the fire and burned them. But of course the Assyrians could destroy them! They were not gods at all—only idols of wood and stone shaped by human hands. **20** Now, O LORD our God, rescue us from his power; then all the kingdoms of the earth will know that you alone, O LORD, are God.” **21** Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Because you prayed about King Sennacherib of Assyria, **22** the LORD has spoken this word against him: “The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and laughs at you. The daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head in derision as you flee. **23** “Whom have you been defying and ridiculing? Against whom did you raise your voice? At whom did you look with such haughty eyes? It was the Holy One of Israel! **24** By your messengers you have defied the Lord. You have said, ‘With my many chariots I have conquered the highest mountains— yes, the remotest peaks of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars and its finest cypress trees. I have reached its farthest heights and explored its deepest forests. **25** I have dug wells in many foreign lands and refreshed myself with their water. With the sole of my foot, I stopped up all the rivers of Egypt!’ **26** “But have you not heard? I decided this long ago. Long ago I planned it, and now I am making it happen. I planned for you to crush fortified cities into heaps of rubble. **27** That is why their people have so little power and are so frightened and confused. They are as weak as grass, as easily trampled as tender green shoots. They are like grass sprouting on a housetop, scorched before it can grow lush and tall. **28** “But I know you well— where you stay and when you come and go. I know the way you have raged against me. **29** And because of your raging against me and your arrogance, which I have heard for myself, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth. I will make you return by the same road on which you came.” **30** Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Here is the proof that what I say is true: “This year you will eat only what grows up by itself, and next year you will eat what springs up from that. But in the third year you will plant crops and harvest them; you will tend vineyards and eat their fruit. **31** And you who are left in Judah, who have escaped the ravages of the siege, will put roots down in your own soil and grow up and flourish. **32** For a remnant of my people will spread out from Jerusalem, a group of survivors from Mount Zion. The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen! **33** “And this is what the LORD says about the king of Assyria: “His armies will not enter Jerusalem. They will not even shoot an arrow at it. They will not march outside its gates with their shields nor build banks of earth against its walls. **34** The king will return to his own country by the same road on which he came. He will not enter this city,’ says the LORD . **35** ‘For my own honor and for the sake of my servant David, I will defend this city and protect it.’” **36** That night the angel of the LORD went out to the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. When the surviving Assyrians woke up the next morning, they found corpses everywhere. **37** Then King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and returned to his own land. He went home to his capital of Nineveh and stayed

there. **38** One day while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with their swords. They then escaped to the land of Ararat, and another son, Esarhaddon, became the next king of Assyria.

38 1 About that time Hezekiah became deathly ill, and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to visit him. He gave the king this message: “This is what the LORD says: ‘Set your affairs in order, for you are going to die. You will not recover from this illness.’” **2** When Hezekiah heard this, he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, **3** “Remember, O LORD, how I have always been faithful to you and have served you single-mindedly, always doing what pleases you.” Then he broke down and wept bitterly. **4** Then this message came to Isaiah from the LORD : **5** “Go back to Hezekiah and tell him, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will add fifteen years to your life, **6** and I will rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. Yes, I will defend this city. **7** “And this is the sign from the LORD to prove that he will do as he promised: **8** I will cause the sun’s shadow to move ten steps backward on the sundial of Ahaz!’” So the shadow on the sundial moved backward ten steps. **9** When King Hezekiah was well again, he wrote this poem: **10** I said, “In the prime of my life, must I now enter the place of the dead? Am I to be robbed of the rest of my years?” **11** I said, “Never again will I see the LORD GOD while still in the land of the living. Never again will I see my friends or be with those who live in this world. **12** My life has been blown away like a shepherd’s tent in a storm. It has been cut short, as when a weaver cuts cloth from a loom. Suddenly, my life was over. **13** I waited patiently all night, but I was torn apart as though by lions. Suddenly, my life was over. **14** Delirious, I chattered like a swallow or a crane, and then I moaned like a mourning dove. My eyes grew tired of looking to heaven for help. I am in trouble, Lord. Help me!” **15** But what could I say? For he himself sent this sickness. Now I will walk humbly throughout my years because of this anguish I have felt. **16** Lord, your discipline is good, for it leads to life and health. You restore my health and allow me to live! **17** Yes, this anguish was good for me, for you have rescued me from death and forgiven all my sins. **18** For the dead cannot praise you; they cannot raise their voices in praise. Those who go down to the grave can no longer hope in your faithfulness. **19** Only the living can praise you as I do today. Each generation tells of your faithfulness to the next. **20** Think of it—the LORD is ready to heal me! I will sing his praises with instruments every day of my life in the Temple of the LORD . **21** Isaiah had said to Hezekiah’s servants, “Make an ointment from figs and spread it over the boil, and Hezekiah will recover.” **22** And Hezekiah had asked, “What sign will prove that I will go to the Temple of the LORD ?”

Galatians 6:1 - 18

6 1 Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. **2** Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. **3** If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important. **4** Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. **5** For we are each responsible for our own conduct. **6** Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them. **7** Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. **8** Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. **9** So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. **10** Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith. **11** NOTICE WHAT LARGE LETTERS I USE AS I WRITE THESE CLOSING WORDS IN MY OWN HANDWRITING. **12** Those who are trying to force you to be circumcised want to look good to others. They don't want to be persecuted for teaching that the cross of Christ alone can save. **13** And even those who advocate circumcision don't keep the whole law themselves. They only want you to be circumcised so they can boast about it and claim you as their disciples. **14** As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world's interest in me has also died. **15** It doesn't matter whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creation. **16** May God's peace and mercy be upon all who live by this principle; they are the new people of God. **17** From now on, don't let anyone trouble me with these things. For I bear on my body the scars that show I belong to Jesus. **18** Dear brothers and sisters, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Psalms 65:1 - 13

65 1 What mighty praise, O God, belongs to you in Zion. We will fulfill our vows to you, **2** for you answer our prayers. All of us must come to you. **3** Though we are overwhelmed by our sins, you forgive them all. **4** What joy for those you choose to bring near, those who live in your holy

courts. What festivities await us inside your holy Temple. **5** You faithfully answer our prayers with awesome deeds, O God our savior. You are the hope of everyone on earth, even those who sail on distant seas. **6** You formed the mountains by your power and armed yourself with mighty strength. **7** You quieted the raging oceans with their pounding waves and silenced the shouting of the nations. **8** Those who live at the ends of the earth stand in awe of your wonders. From where the sun rises to where it sets, you inspire shouts of joy. **9** You take care of the earth and water it, making it rich and fertile. The river of God has plenty of water; it provides a bountiful harvest of grain, for you have ordered it so. **10** You drench the plowed ground with rain, melting the clods and leveling the ridges. You soften the earth with showers and bless its abundant crops. **11** You crown the year with a bountiful harvest; even the hard pathways overflow with abundance. **12** The grasslands of the wilderness become a lush pasture, and the hillsides blossom with joy. **13** The meadows are clothed with flocks of sheep, and the valleys are carpeted with grain. They all shout and sing for joy!

Proverbs 23:24

23 24 The father of godly children has cause for joy. What a pleasure to have children who are wise.