

Sermon #114 — Isaiah Series

Title: **“A DAY OF TROUBLE”**

Text: Isaiah 36:1-37:7

Subject: *Lessons for a Day of Trouble*

Date: Sunday Morning — December 15, 2019

Readings: *Psalm 42:5-11 and Isaiah 36:1-37:7*

Introduction:

(Isaiah 36:1-37:7) 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. (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. (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.

(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, *sayest thou*, (but *they are but* vain words) *I have* counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

against me? (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 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 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. (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 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 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

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

wall.

(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? (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. (14) Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you. (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) 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 everyone the waters of his own cistern; (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* lest Hezekiah persuade

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

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 Arphad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? (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? (21) But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

(22) Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, 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.

(Isaiah 37:1) 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. (2) And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. (3) 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. (4) 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. (5) So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. (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.

When Sennacherib invaded the land of Judah and surrounded the city of Jerusalem, he sent his

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

ambassador Rabshakeh with a great army to Hezekiah demanding the surrender of the city and the kingdom. The Assyrian army had the city surrounded, all supplies had been cut off, and the infamous barbarities of the Assyrians were well known.

The people of Jerusalem sat upon the walls of the city to hear what Rabshakeh would say. Hezekiah sent Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah out to receive his message. When Rabshakeh began to speak, he refused to speak in his own native tongue. He wanted to put terror into the people. He wanted to force Hezekiah to surrender the city by turning the people against him. So he spoke in the language of the Hebrews, blaspheming God, taunting the people of the city, and scandalizing Hezekiah their King, as he threatened to destroy Jerusalem and Judah, if Hezekiah refused to surrender to Sennacherib. Hezekiah’s servants held their peace, and answered him not a word, as the King had commanded them.

When these three loyal ambassadors came back into the city, they rent their clothes and gave their report

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

to King Hezekiah. When Hezekiah heard their report *“he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sack cloth, and went into the house of the LORD.”*

Then, he sent for Isaiah the prophet, seeking a word of instruction and direction from the man of God. This is the message that Hezekiah sent to Isaiah. — *“This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to birth, and there is not strength to bring forth”* (37:3).

My subject is **“A DAY OF TROUBLE.”** — Truly, *“This day is a day of trouble.”*

- For the Church of God
- For Many of Our Brethren.
- For You and Your Family

How can I find peace and help and strength in my day of trouble. That is what I want to show you in this message.

Proposition: In the day of trouble we will be wise, like Hezekiah, to seek the Lord our God, believe his Word, and obey his will.

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

Divisions: Our text is not really prophetic, but historic. Isaiah was inspired by God the Holy Ghost to record this sad piece of Israel’s history, just as it is recorded in 2 Kings 18-20. Let me direct your attention to five things.

1. Some Lessons We Need to Learn from This Portion of Holy Scripture
2. A Question that Must be Answered in the Day of Trouble
3. A Cause that Must be Maintained in Good Times and Bad
4. An Example We Would be Wise to Follow in Time of Trouble
5. A Promise that will Sustain and Comfort Us in the Day of Trouble

SEVEN LESSONS

1st — **Here are some lessons we need to learn from this portion of Holy Scripture.**

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

King Hezekiah was truly a godly man, a believer, a child of God. This king worked hard to reform the church of his day, trying to re-establish the true worship of God. He tore down the altars and high places of idolatrous worship and demanded that Judah worship only at the altar of the Lord God in the house of God. Yet, he suffered much from the Assyrians. Here are seven lessons we need to learn from this story.

1. **Faithfulness to Christ does not secure God’s saints or his servants from trouble, distress, and sorrow in this world.**

- Hezekiah
- Abraham
- Moses
- David
- Paul

2. **Wicked, ungodly people often prosper in their hellish pursuits against God’s people for a while.**

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

- Sennacherib had his way against Hezekiah for a while.
- The Pharisees had their way against Christ.
- The Jews had their way against Paul.
- But in all God has his way (Romans 8:28; Acts 4).

3. Those who oppose God’s church, God’s gospel, God’s people, and God’s servants often do so in the name of God himself (v. 10; John 15:20-21;16:1-2).

(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.

(John 15:20-21) Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. (21) But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

(John 16:1-2) These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. (2) They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

4. Those who sew discord among brethren, seek to divide the church of God, and try to turn the hearts of the people away from God’s appointed, faithful servants are sinister men, inspired by Satan, with wicked designs (vv. 11-16).

(Isaiah 36:11-16) 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. (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? (13) Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. (14) Thus saith the king, **Let not Hezekiah deceive you:** for he shall not be able to deliver you. (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) **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 everyone the waters of his own cistern;*

Illustration: Moses and the sons of Korah- (Numbers 16:3).

- *“Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm!”*
- *“Obey them that have the rule over you.”*
- *“Whose faith follow.”*

5. **Satan often tempts us to unbelief and disobedience by promising us better circumstances** (vv. 16-17).

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

(Isaiah 36:16-7) 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 everyone the waters of his own cistern; (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.

“Believe them not, though they speak fair words unto thee.” (Jeremiah 12:6).

6. **Wise men leave it to God to stop the mouths of his enemies** (v. 21).

(Isaiah 36:21) But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

“*Answer not a fool according to his folly.*” — God will take care of your enemies and of his. To answer railing with railing is carnal and fleshly. It never

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

serves a useful purpose. The way to answer railing accusations is with quiet confidence in God.

7. **Our trials, troubles, distresses, and sorrows ought to drive us to our God and Savior** (37:1).

(Isaiah 37:1) 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.

Matthew Henry wrote, “When pains are most strong, let prayers be most lively. When we meet with the greatest difficulties, then is a time to stir up ourselves to take hold of God. Prayer is the midwife of mercy that helps to bring it forth.”

(Hebrews 4:16) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

A QUESTION

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

2nd — **Here is a question that must be answered in the day of trouble.** — *“On whom dost thou trust?”* (Isaiah 36:5) — This question was raised by Rabshakeh, to belittle the faith of the Jews. It is as if he said, like the heathen did to David, *“Where is thy God?”* Let us answer like David, *“Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased!”* Should any ask, *“On whom dost thou trust?”* We have a ready answer. — *“I trust the living God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”*

- Some trust themselves.
- Some trust their church.
- Some trust a priest.
- Some trust blind fate.
- Some have faith in their faith.
- We trust the one true and living God! — Our Father! — Our Savior!

I trust God, my Heavenly Father! — If God is my Father, all is well. Believing that he has chosen me before the foundation of the world. I trust him to care for me as my Father, to provide for me in providence, to teach me, to guide me, to feed me, to correct me,

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

to clothe me, to protect me, and to bring me safely home to his house (Romans 8:32).

I trust God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, my Divine Savior! — Very God of very God is he — The man Christ Jesus! I trust him for all things, with all things, and in all things. Because of who he is, what he has done, what he is doing, and what he has promised to do, I rely upon him, the incarnate God. *“The Lord is my Shepherd — I shall not want.”*

- He is my Surety!
- He is my Redeemer!
- He is my Savior!
- He is my Intercessor!
- He is my Preserver!
- He is my Provider!
- He is my Protector!
- He is my Advocate!
- He is my Judge!
- He is my Refuge!

I trust God the Holy Ghost, my Divine Comforter!
— He subdues my will, enlightens my understanding,

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

checks my passions, strengthens me in weakness, preserves me in trouble, comforts me in sorrow, guides me in his way, and restores me when I fall.

“*On whom dost thou trust?*” —Trust in The Lord — (Proverbs 3:5-6; Revelation 19:6-7).

(Proverbs 3:5-6) Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (6) In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

(Revelation 19:6-7) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (7) Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.

A CAUSE

3rd — **Here is a cause that must be maintained in good times and bad.** — “*Ye shall worship before this altar*” (v. 7; 2 Chronicles. 30:13-16).

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

(2 Chronicles 30:13-16) And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation. (14) And they arose and took away the altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast *them* into the brook Kidron. (15) Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. (16) And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites.

Hezekiah was interested in one thing, only one thing — The Altar of God! That altar, he knew, represented Christ and his great sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 13:10). Hezekiah sought to maintain the worship of God, according to the Word of God, for the glory of God! He seems to have had no other great concern (2 Kings 18:1-7).

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

(2 Kings 18:1-7) Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. (2) Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. (3) And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did. (4) He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. (5) He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him. (6) For he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. (7) And the LORD was with him; *and* he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

Like David, Hezekiah’s cause in this world was the glory of God. — *“Is there not a cause?”*

There is something more important than you and me, something more important than our comforts or our troubles, something more important than my name, my ambitions, my family, and my cares. The Altar of God, the glory of God in Christ is more important! And I promise you this — If we make God’s cause our cause, he will make our cause his cause. Honor God and God will honor you, as he did Hezekiah (1 Samuel 2:30).

AN EXAMPLE

4th — **Here is an example we would be wise to follow in the day of trouble** (37:1-5).

(Isaiah 37:1-5) 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. (2) And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. (3) 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. (4) 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. (5) So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

Hezekiah had many things that concerned him. He had many troubles to face. But the thing that grieved his heart and crushed his soul was the fact that God’s name was blasphemed and the church and people of God appeared to be in great danger without any strength to overcome their enemies. — **What did he do?**

- **Broken, humble, and needy, Hezekiah went to the House of God.** — “*And it came to pass, when*

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD” (2 Kings 19:1).

- **He called for God’s prophet, Isaiah, to seek the will of God and the Word of God and show it to him.** “Lift up prayer for the remnant!” — Thank God, there is always a remnant!
- **He called upon the Lord God in prayer** (2 Kings 19:14-19).

(2 Kings 19:14-19) And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. (15) And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest *between* the cherubims, thou art the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. (16) LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. (17) Of a

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, (18) 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. (19) Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

- Hezekiah offered praise to God.
- He spread his case before the Lord.
- He asked for God's deliverance.
- He gave an argument that God could not resist (v. 19).

A PROMISE

5th — **Here is a promise to sustain and comfort us in the day of trouble** (37:6-7).

(Isaiah 37:6-7) 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

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

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.

- Be not afraid!
- I will deliver you (2 Kings 19:35-37; Isaiah 43:1-7).

(2 Kings 19:35-37) And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses. (36) So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. (37) And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

(Isaiah 43:1-7) But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have **redeemed** thee, I have **called** *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) **When thou passest through the waters,** I *will be* with thee; and **through the rivers,** they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest **through the fire,** thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For **I am the LORD thy God,** the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since **thou wast precious in my sight,** thou hast been **honourable,** and **I have loved** thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: **for I am with thee:** I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; (6) I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; (7) *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

“A DAY OF TROUBLE”

APPLICATION

In a day of trouble...

1. Answer this question — *“On whom dost thou trust?”*
2. Set your heart upon Christ, his Word, his Worship, his Glory.
3. Worship God. — Come to the house of God. — Enlist the aid of God’s people. — Seek a Word from God. — Call upon the Name of the Lord. — Wait for the Lord to fulfill his promise.

(Revelation 19:6-7) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (7) Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.

Amen.