

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### First Quarter 2021: *Isaiah: "Comfort My People"*

### Lesson 7 "Defeat of the Assyrians"

#### Read for this week's study

Isaiah 36:1; Isaiah 36:2–20; Isaiah 36:21–37:20; Isaiah 37:21–38; Isaiah 38, 39.

#### Memory Text

" 'O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth' " (Isaiah 37:16, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Strings Attached (*Isa. 36:1*)
- III. Propaganda (*Isa. 36:2–20*)
- IV. Shaken but Not Forsaken (*Isa. 36:21–37:20*)
- V. The Rest of the Story (*Isa. 37:21–38*)
- VI. In Sickness and in Wealth (*Isaiah 38, 39*)
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. For this lesson we are jumping past almost ten chapters to look at chapters 36-39. This section follows up on the history we explored in Isaiah, chapters 7-10. The Assyrian threat comes to full fruition in this section of Isaiah. Several matters of geography are critical here; 1) the location of Judah/Israel among the surrounding nations, 2) the reason for locating the capital at Jerusalem, 3) the importance of Lachish in the defense of Jerusalem, and 4) the crucial role that agriculture played in the power and wealth dynamics of the ancient Near East. (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. In what condition was Judah after King Ahaz's disastrous decision to bribe the king of Assyria to fight for him against Israel and Syria (2 Chronicles 28:16-27)? Read 2 Kings 18:1-6. What did Hezekiah do to strengthen Judah's situation? What was happening to Israel while Hezekiah was restoring Judah's relationship with God (2 Kings 18:9-12)? What did he do next (2 Kings 18:7-8)? Was this a mistake? How did the new King of Assyria respond (2 Chronicles 32:1 and Isaiah 36:1)? Read 2 Chronicles 32:1-9. How did Hezekiah prepare for the invasion? What was the military significance of

Lachish? If Hezekiah trusted in the Lord so much, why did he make so much effort on his own? (Sunday's lesson)

3. Who did the king of Assyria send to Jerusalem and for what purpose? Read Isaiah 36:2-20. What arguments did the "Rabshakeh" use to intimidate Judah? To what degree was he telling the truth? (Monday's lesson)
4. How did the representatives of Hezekiah respond to the clever oratory of the Rabshakeh? Read Isaiah 36:21-22. How did Hezekiah himself respond (Isaiah 37:1-4)? How did Isaiah the prophet respond in God's behalf (Isaiah 37:5-7)? What, evidently, was God's reaction to the Rabshakeh's speech? Read Isaiah 37:8-13. How did the king of Assyria react to the news of a new and formidable enemy approaching? Read Isaiah 37:14-20. What did Hezekiah do in response to the letter from the Assyrian king? What was at stake in this crisis at Jerusalem? How is Hezekiah's prayer a model for our own? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. According to the annals of Assyria, Sennacherib captured 46 fortified towns of Judah, besieged Jerusalem, and shut Hezekiah up there "like a bird in a cage." But here is no claim to have captured Jerusalem. Given the massive power of Assyria, even if we didn't have the biblical record, one is tempted to think some sort of miracle occurred (like the problem of the empty tomb). Read Isaiah 37:21-38 for the biblical version of "the rest of the story." Given the tiny size of Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day (a fraction of the size of a golf course), does it make sense for Assyria to send 185,000 soldiers to capture it? Was it fair that these Assyrian soldiers died en masse like that? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Isaiah 38:1. The events of chapters 38 and 39 seem to have happened during the siege of Jerusalem, according to Isaiah 38:5-6. Read Isaiah 38:7-8. What sign did God give Hezekiah to confirm his faith? Read Isaiah 39. How did Hezekiah lose an opportunity to glorify God in the eyes of the king of Babylon? What was the ultimate result of action? (Thursday's lesson)
7. In what way is Satan like the Assyrian Rabshakeh? Does he tell the truth sometimes? Read Zechariah 3:1-5. How does God respond to Satan when he tells the truth? (Friday's lesson)
8. Does Satan stop his accusations when we are forgiven by God? See Revelation 12:10. What law of God is he breaking at that point? Deuteronomy 19:16-21. (Friday's lesson)

## Further Study with Ellen White

Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith. {SC 48.1}

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

Amidst great discouragement, Nehemiah made God his trust, his sure defense. And He who was the support of His servant then has been the dependence of His people in every age. In every crisis His people may confidently declare, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31. However craftily the plots of Satan and his agents may be laid, God can detect them, and bring to nought all their counsels. The response of faith today will be the response made by Nehemiah, "Our God shall fight for us;" for God is in the work, and no man can prevent its ultimate success. {PK 645.2}

We pour out our heart's desire in our closets, we breathe a prayer as we walk by the way, and our words reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. They may be inaudible to any human ear, but they cannot die away into silence, nor can they be lost through the activities of business that are going on. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the confusion of the multitude, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard. {COL 174.1}

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. {FLB 62.8}

When the Christian takes his baptismal vow, divine help is pledged to him. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit stand ready to work in his behalf. God places at his command the resources of heaven, that he may be an overcomer. His own power is small; but God is omnipotent, and God is his helper. Daily he is to make known his wants at the throne of grace. By faith and trust, by availing himself of the resources provided, he can be more than a conqueror. {OHC 157.5}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands. {PK 176.1}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. No one who in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but, thank God, we have a mighty Saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven. {MH 94.3}

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

Every true child of God has the co-operation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength, stand at God's right hand, "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. {CC 336.5}

The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. Through these messengers He is in active communication with every part of His dominion. By His Spirit He is everywhere present. Through the agency of His Spirit and His angels He ministers to the children of men. {MH 417.2}

Thus God's people, exposed to the deceptive power and unsleeping malice of the prince of darkness, and in conflict with all the forces of evil, are assured of the unceasing guardianship of heavenly angels. {GC 513.1}

God gives us the opportunity to impart grace, that He may refill us with increased grace. Hope and faith will strengthen as the agent for God works with the talents and facilities that God has provided. He will have a divine agency to work with him. {AG 238.6}

Every word you speak, every action you perform, has an influence for good or evil upon those who associate with you; and, oh! how necessary it is that you have Christ dwelling in your heart by faith, that your words may be words of life, and your works, the works of love.—RH, June 12, 1888. {2MCP 433.3}

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls. {MH 100.2}