

Proclaiming the Gospel

Message
of
Jesus Christ

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

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The Wise Still Seek Him

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The Battle Is Not Yours; It Belongs to the Lord God!

Dou know Jesus Christ as your Savior and are serving Him with all your heart, living according to the standards set forth in the Holy Bible; but, you have received a threat from someone demanding that you succumb to their desires. It would put you under their control, contrary to God's Word. To refuse them could bring great harm to you and cost you your life, and even your soul; but you do not have the ability to win a battle against them; they are too powerful.

Or perhaps, you are a pastor who is careful to preach the Truth of God's Word – the tender, merciful dealings of Christ with His people as well as the strict, hard word against sin and disobedience. Unexpectedly, you receive a letter from someone(s) in your church demanding that you "lighten up" and preach what they want to hear, what will make your preaching more palatable and will draw more people. If you do not submit, there is a threat of false accusations, dissension, and rebellion in the congregation. You are committed to preach the Truth, but have no way to stop the threats from being carried out. All you would have to do is avoid certain subjects: sin, hell, the Blood of the Lamb, repentance, forgiveness . . . but you refuse to compromise the Truth, that is, to deny your Lord – Who is the way, the Truth, and the life.

Answers for every problem that we face are found in the Holy Bible, the Word of God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. While on earth, Jesus experienced every suffering, every temptation that we experience (Acts 17.3; Heb 4.15; 13.12), and He knows our weaknesses and our inability to stand against the enemy in our own strength. He will hear and answer our cries.

In the Bible, we have the account of King Hezekiah, king of Judah, the Southern Kingdom of Israel, with the responsibility of caring for all of God's people in Judah; He loved God and served Him with his whole heart (II K 18.3-6). Hezekiah held a threatening letter in his hand from Sennacherib, King of Assyria, delivered by his servants.

Assyria had already taken all the defended cities in Judah (II K 18.13); now they threatened to take Jerusalem – wherein was the temple, the mercy-seat, the place of God's presence, the very life source of God's people! How could he surrender all of this to the enemy? He could not; he would not. Hezekiah did not have the military strength to fight with Assyria's vast army; yet, he refused to submit to the enemy. Read II Kings 18 and 19.

How long has it been since you knelt by your bed and
prayed to the Lord up in heaven?
How long since you knew that he'd answer you,
and would keep you the long night through?
How long has it been since you woke with the dawn,
and felt that the day's worth the living?
Can you call him your friend?
How long has it been since you knew that he cared for you?

Mosie Lister

Let us go to the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer and give Him the battle today!

Mrs. Bettie L. Lowery, M.R.E., Deaconess The Rev. Mrs. Dr. C. S. Cole, Pastor, Ret.

Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31).

Hezekiah already had paid tribute to Assyria in an effort to stop their attack and save Jerusalem; yet, Rabshekeh, Assyria's military leader, had come with a great host and encamped against Jerusalem. He yelled threats and blasphemy to the Jews upon the wall around Jerusalem and demanded that they surrender to Assyria (II K 18.17-37).

How did King Hezekiah handle this situation? Upon being informed of the words of Rabshekeh, he humbled himself and went into the house of the Lord. God spoke to him through the prophet Isaiah:

...Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land (II K 19.6, 7).

King Sennacherib did leave; but the enemy does not give up; he sent servants with a threatening letter to Hezekiah, saying, in essence, "**I'll – be – back . . .**" (II K 19.9-14).

Hezekiah went into the house of the Lord again, taking the letter with Him into the presence of the Lord God of Israel. He "spread it before the Lord." Hezekiah was faced with a situation, a direct attack of the enemy – under which King Hezekiah and the people of Judah could not stand. Perhaps you are in such a situation with Satan attacking you; perhaps you are battling threats, accusations, and blasphemies against God; and Satan tells you that God is not with you, that you must succumb to Satan's demands . . .

Do not hesitate to admit your need of God's help, your helplessness in this situation; go into God's presence in humility recognizing God's sovereignty. Take your "threatening letter" (whatever is the accusation/attack of the enemy which you face) and "spread it before the Lord." It is always acceptable to "spread before the Lord" our fears, our hurts, our battles with the enemy. God has provided for us a loving, understanding advocate in Jesus Christ. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4.16).

Notice that Hezekiah prayed exalting the Lord God, "... 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" (II K 19.15).

Hezekiah declared God as the God of all the kingdoms – whether they recognized Him, whether they recognized God in Christ Jesus as the only living God did not determine Who the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is. **He is God of all the kingdoms**. He is the God Who created heaven and earth and all that therein is.

Have we not been given a model prayer in Matthew Six when praying to God Who is "Our Father which art in heaven"? Are we not taught that we are first to exalt the Name of the only living God, giving honor and glory to His Holy Name? Let us look at the beginning of that prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done..." We are to honor Him, extol Him, and worship Him.

This is what Hezekiah did, knowing that the God of all the kingdoms was the living God who would hear and answer his prayer. Hezekiah requested God's

attention, that He would "bow down thine ear, and hear" (II K 19.16). Hezekiah goes on to make known his situation; he continues his prayer, "...open, Lord, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God." It was now appropriate for Hezekiah to bring his petition before the Lord. He went with confidence in God, with faith believing God would hear and deliver him from the evil that was a grave reproach against the living God.

Verses 17 and 18 are laying before the Lord the work of the enemy and that the gods of the enemy are gods made with hands. Do not be afraid to acknowledge to God what Satan has brought against you, and know that Satan has no power to stand against God.

Hear the strength of Hezekiah as he speaks forth the Truth of God:

Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, 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 (II K 19.17, 18; see also Ps 115.4-8; 135.15-18).

Hezekiah is saying they were able to take down those gods because they were no gods but were of wood and stone; however, Hezekiah is declaring that God is truly the only living God and has the power to save them out of the hand of the enemy – that all the kingdoms will know there is but one God, the living God of Israel.

When we seek the Lord to answer us and to deliver us from evil, our hearts must desire that all is done for the glory of the Lord, that His Name be exalted among the nations. Hezekiah prays in verse 19, "...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." Oh, that we would seek the hand of the Lord in our lives giving glory to His Holy Name. Oh, that we would seek the hand of the Lord against our enemy for deliverance for God's glory – instead of using worldly means in our attempts to deliver ourselves and exalt ourselves.

It was at the Red Sea where God told Moses, "...Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day....The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (Ex 14.13, 14).

I am reminded once again of how the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel under the leadership of Jehoshaphat: "...stand ye *[still]*, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the Lord *[will be]* with you" (II Chr 20.17). Where is our faith and trust in the Lord?

God responds to Hezekiah: "...Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, *[That]* which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard" (II K 19.20).

How long since we went to the Lord in our hour of need of deliverance and placed before the Lord our petition as did Hezekiah? How long has it been? How long since we prayed in faith believing the battle belongs to the Lord God of Israel?