

# On What Are You Trusting

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[ 0 : 00 ] So good to be with you all this morning in this beloved embassy of Christ's kingdom. We bring you greetings again from all the saints at Grace Reformed Baptist Church.

And we've heard God's word before we consider it. Let's go to him in prayer. Ask for his help. O great King, you have said that all flesh is grass.

And all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it.

Surely the people are grass. The grass withers. The flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. And this is the word that you have given us.

We rejoice, but we ask for your help. Because without the Holy Spirit, we will be as stones before your word. Help us, Lord.

[ 1 : 08 ] Help me to preach it. Help us all to hear it. Help us all to obey it. For your glory and your bride. In Jesus' name, for his glory.

Amen. Amen. If you'll keep your finger in 2 Chronicles chapter 32, we'll be making a lot of reference to that passage. I wonder if anyone here can name all seven of the wonders of the ancient world. It would probably surprise those who built those wonders that you cannot name all seven. Maybe some of you can. But I'll name them all this morning. Most of you, I'm sure, know about the Pyramid of Giza.

And that's because it is well known from Egyptian history, which intertwines with the scriptures. The Great Pyramid was built somewhere between 2700 and 2500 BC.

It's lasted almost 4,600 years. And though it's pretty worn, it still remains to this day. It's the only wonder that remains to this day. And most of you probably are familiar with the Temple of Artemis because this is in the New Testament.

[ 2 : 24 ] It's during Paul's ministry. We read about that in his ministry in Ephesus. The final form of this temple was constructed in the late 3rd century BC. It lasted around 700 years and was destroyed by the 4th century AD.

The statue of Zeus was constructed in 435 BC. It lasted 800 years. The mausoleum at Halicarnassus, built around 350 BC, lasted over 1800 years.

The Colossus of Rhodes stood for only 54 years before splitting at the knees and falling on the spot in around 220 BC. In the Ferris Lighthouse in Alexandria, it was the tallest structure in the world for a long time.

But it lasted about 1500 years before being broken down by earthquakes. And finally, there is the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, of which no real reliable records exist as to its dating.

Well, these are just seven examples of great works which were undertaken to display the wisdom, power, wealth, and strength of men in subduing the earth and in manipulating their gods.

[ 3 : 35 ] These works have impressed generations of men for their genius and beauty, but none of them, except for one, has lasted. They did not last because they were but dust of the earth, built by flesh, which is like grass and like the flower which perishes.

The men who financed and constructed these works were feared for their power, but each one of them is dead and forgotten. These men who struck fear into the hearts of so many now lay in the same grave as those they ruled over.

From the vantage point of history, we can study these failed attempts at greatness, and we can realize that all great men of the world are really destined for the same fate.

They gather, they conquer, they rule, they boast, they die, they decay, they're forgotten, and remembered no more.

Yet the powers and principalities of this present darkness continue to attempt the very same thing of what has been done from generation to generation under the sun.

[ 4 : 51 ] They seek to set themselves in the place of God and cast off the reign of Yahweh and ravage the people of God, the church of Jesus Christ.

These are dark times for our nation. Many of us feel this. As we watch the rapid advance of the enemies of God, the church seems more and more threatened.

Are we tempted to be afraid? Are we tempted to doubt God's sovereignty and His providence for us in this generation?

Well, the Lord is the same. And He continues to build His church in every age. And this church has outlasted the most powerful and ambitious empires again and again, despite the threats of those who ruled them.

This is evident in our text that we've read this morning, and I think consideration of that text will provide much encouragement to us as we experience this same exact phenomenon happening again and again under the sun done by sinful men.

[ 6 : 07 ] And if you'll follow along with me there, beginning in verse 1, the text begins, After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself.

As was said, the occasion of our text is the invasion of Judah by King Sennacherib and the Assyrian hordes during the reign of King Hezekiah.

We should first consider more about who is King Hezekiah, king of Judah. King Hezekiah, upon ascending the throne in Judah, had mounted dramatic civil and religious revivals in Judah.

He did what was right, the text says, in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David, his father, had done. He repaired the temple of the Lord, reassembled and consecrated the priests and the Levites.

He reinstated the Passover, and he purged the land of idolatry. And this is what the text refers to when it speaks of these acts of faithfulness. But we should also consider who is King Sennacherib of the Assyrians.

[ 7 : 20 ] That would be helpful for us to consider. King Sennacherib was the second king in succession to King Shalmaneser V. That king besieged Samaria, or the northern kingdom of Israel, which you can read about earlier in the book of 2 Chronicles.

He captured King Hosea and removed the people of Israel from their land and carried them as captives into exile about 722 B.C., just a few generations before our text this morning. Two decades, excuse me.

Around two decades later, Sennacherib mounts a campaign against the southern kingdom of Judah, ruled by Hezekiah. He has his sights now set on Hezekiah and Jerusalem.

Now, the Assyrians were a fierce and powerful people. Maybe some of you have studied them in your school studies. And by this time, according to one source, had earned a reputation as cruel barbarians.

Assyrian kings boasted of their military might and harsh treatment of those they defeated, impaling their victims on spiked poles, burning cities, and carrying off much plunder.

[ 8 : 25 ] The Old Testament characterizes the Assyrians as barbarous heathens. One historian calls Assyria an irresistible engine of war that struck terror in all the surrounding cities in the ancient Near East at that time.

These are the Assyrians who have invaded the land of Judah. And now they set their sights on the capital in Jerusalem. The faithful king Hezekiah, the reformer of Judah, now faces his greatest test in the siege of Assyria.

But I think this text, when we consider it in light of the parallel passage in 2 Samuel, it actually doesn't pit Hezekiah against Sennacherib.

I believe that the text is structured in such a way that indicates that you have going on as Sennacherib on one side with his bos, Yahweh on the other side.

And I think this is strongly indicated by the fact that the Rapshika, or the speaker for Sennacherib, has numerous speeches in that text, where he boasts of the great king, the king of Assyria.

[ 9 : 39 ] But then you have Hezekiah goes to Isaiah. And I believe the text pits the Rapshika. Isaiah, who has a rebuttal from Yahweh.

And ultimately it highlights the fact that Sennacherib is setting himself up not against Hezekiah, but against Yahweh. And so when we approach this text, I think it's helpful to think of it in this light, that what Sennacherib is doing is not opposing Hezekiah, but he's opposing Yahweh.

Moving on to verse 2, we're told in verses 2 to 5 that when Hezekiah perceives that Sennacherib was coming to lay siege to Jerusalem, he took immediate strategic and military action to defend the city from the threat.

And in this, we simply see that while the people of God are to trust in the Lord, and not in horses and chariots, not in the arm of the flesh, yet there are wise and appropriate preparations that may be lawfully taken to resist danger from God's enemies.

We see this done in these few verses. Our Lord uses means in order to defend His name and to protect His people. And God's people are not simply to roll over and submit to the advance of His enemies, but they should employ wise and lawful defenses.

[10:58] But more importantly, though, notice that Hezekiah not only prepares the people militarily, but primarily this text is interested in the spiritual preparation. Only four verses are given here to the physical preparation, the military preparation, and the remaining portion of the passage is to their spiritual presentation, or preparation.

He prepares the people spiritually to take courage and believe upon the providence of the Lord, that He will fight for them. We see this in verses 6 to 8. Beginning in verse 6, And He set combat commanders over the people and gathered them together to Him in the square at the gate of the city and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, Be strong and courageous.

Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him, for there are more with us than there are with him.

With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles. And the people took confidence from the words of Hezekiah, king of Judah.

Now the faith and courage in Hezekiah's words is remarkable, and I think it's worthy of our attention. And the ground of his confidence seems to be, from this text, God's past faithfulness to Israel.

[12:20] And the reason I say that is because some of you may pick up that some of the language he uses is references to earlier Old Testament stories of God's protection of Israel and his causing them to have great success in battle against terrible odds.

Think of, first of all, the battle cry of Israel to be strong and courageous. It was somewhat of a mantra during the conquest of Canaan under Joshua.

And this, as Israel, was led to many improbable victories, which they were vastly outnumbered or outmanned, outgunned. Notice second, his call not to be afraid or dismayed.

It's also been said before. It's the same instruction given by King Jehoshaphat to Judah. You can read about that in 2 Chronicles 20. As they faced the vast hordes of the Moabites and Ammonites. Another great story of a king being vastly outnumbered and outmanned and praying to God. And he does nothing because the Lord fights the battle and slays all the armies for him as the Lord turned these armies against each other.

[13:32] Then you see the words, there are more with us than with him. Well, this reminds me of Elisha's words to his servant when they were surrounded by the Syrians in 2 Kings 6 in Dothan.

Elisha's servant's eyes were opened according to the prayer of Elisha and what does he see? He sees the mountain is full of angelic horses and chariots ready to defend him.

And as Elisha prayed, the Syrian army was struck with blindness and led right into the capital. And then fourth, when I hear with him is an arm of flesh but with us is the Lord our God, I couldn't help but think of the youth David standing before Goliath.

And what does he say? You come with me, you come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel whom you defy.

Another similar story where a giant leaves the entire Israelite army quaking and one unexpected boy stands up and expresses faith in the deliverance and promise of Yahweh.

[14:43] I think here Hezekiah is intentionally phrasing his encouragement in this situation to bring these vignettes and these stories into the mind of his people who need similar faith in the midst of a great threat.

He's bringing these word pictures into their minds and into ours as well. What appears to be great strength to the Assyrians, more than 185,000 men, we learn, Hezekiah calls an arm of flesh. What does he mean by an arm of flesh? Isaiah illustrates this in chapter 40 of his prophecy. A voice says, cry, and I said, what shall I cry?

All flesh is grass and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it. Surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. This is the God of Israel whom no king can subdue or thwart.

[15:56] No one can tell him, what have you done? Or stop him from what he is doing. Well, by any reasonable human estimate, anyone looking in on this from the outside or inside of the walls of Jerusalem, it's clear that Judah is outmatched by these notoriously cruel Assyrians and will be doomed to suffer a miserable siege.

Sennacherib threatens those upon the wall that they would be doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine. The Israelites would have known that this was a very common thing to have happened in other of their neighbors at the time.

Assyria had already overwhelmingly succeeded in a campaign which left so many other nations in that very state and in complete ruin at their surrender. So how could Judah, little Judah, how could they overcome the hordes of the Assyrians?

Yet Hezekiah, in faith in his God, calls this army an arm of flesh. The greatest army is no match for the Lord of hosts, the Lord of armies.

Hezekiah is confident that no matter the size of the army, no matter that they are surrounded with no other human help, things are not always as they appear.

[17:21] Yahweh can work a great deliverance for them, as he does so many times in the scriptures. When the enemies boast, he does the rug pull on the enemy and shows his strength and that he alone is to be trusted.

But how can Hezekiah be so confident in this situation that Yahweh is going to deliver them? Well, I think we should consider that Hezekiah was confident in specific promises from God.

Very specific promises. Because you see, Hezekiah was no normal king. He was the Lord's anointed. Hezekiah's confidence stemmed from a very specific promise that Yahweh had made to the offspring of David.

That his offspring would sit on his throne forever. The threat of Assyria posed to Judah was a threat to eliminate the offspring of David.

the seed of promise, no doubt, is in Hezekiah's mind. This is the offspring that God promised to the woman back in the garden after the first sin that he would crush the head of the serpent.

[18:35] This line is threatened and that cannot happen. This would violate God's promise. It would cut off the kingly line of the Messiah.

And Hezekiah believed God's promise and so believed that this would certainly not happen, notwithstanding the great threat. Yet even this faith-filled speech, even after this faith-filled speech, the situation worsens as the king of Assyria speaks against Hezekiah and against Yahweh.

Let's consider this together now beginning in verse 9. In this section, Sennacherib attempts to persuade through his Rapshika, his speaker, that he seeks to persuade the Judeans to turn against Hezekiah and persuade without a fight.

Oh, if you just give up your ruler who's stabbed you in the back, you can all sit under your vine and under your own fig tree and all will be well with you. Just give up this Hezekiah and we'll put this all to an end.

He says in verse 10, Thus says Sennacherib, king of Assyria, on what are you trusting? On what are you trusting that you endure the siege? Is not Hezekiah misleading you that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst when he tells you the Lord our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria?

[19:59] Has not this same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem before one altar you shall worship and on it you shall burn your sacrifices?

Sennacherib really shifts blame Hezekiah for the siege and accuses him of undermining Yahweh's worship as a good polytheistic pagan. The idea that you would restrict worship to one altar would have been akin to some kind of atheism or manipulation.

So Sennacherib he alludes to this. He says, Don't you see he's taking down altars of Yahweh? This doesn't make any sense. He doesn't have your best in mind. This is the way he seeks to break down confidence in the Lord's anointed Hezekiah.

But those altars that he broke down were not Yahweh's altars. And it's interesting to see him acknowledge this in his speech what seems to us in the light of scripture to be such a wonderful act he sees as something to be distrusted in Hezekiah.

He testifies against himself in this way. But Sennacherib does not stop at seeking to persuade the people to distrust their king. He tries to persuade them to disbelieve and abandon their God.

[ 21 : 21 ] And we need to consider this carefully. Beginning in verse 13. Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all able to deliver their lands out of my hand?

Who among all the gods of those nations that my fathers devoted to destruction was able to deliver his people from my hand that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand?

And further a little bit farther down he wrote letters to cast contempt on the Lord the God of Israel and to speak against him saying like the gods of the nations of the lands who have not delivered their people from my hands so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver his people from my hand.

Well this is a bold and defiant challenge from the king of Assyria. Here you see that Sennacherib has not set him up against the human king. He's not set himself up against the human king.

He's set himself up against Yahweh of hosts. He's set up for the ultimate showdown. He doesn't allude to his gods here. My God will defeat your God. No.

[ 22 : 38 ] He sees himself. He says I am Sennacherib the great king. I am Sennacherib the god slayer and I will make your God Yahweh just like all the other gods that I have destroyed.

This is a boast that is unmatched. He has risen himself up against Yahweh of hosts and boasted against him that he will slay him.

Well here in the words of God's enemies I think we learn something critical about the heart of this text and perhaps why the reason is told to us three times in scripture at length three times.

Very important text. We see the emphasis of that by the repetition. The scriptures teach us that there is something worse than defeat and death at the hand of God's enemies.

Something much much worse. Do not fear him our Lord says. Do not fear him who can kill the body and after that there is nothing he can do.

[ 23 : 50 ] If God's enemies can cause us to doubt or betray our God do they not succeed in a much more devastating way than mere physical conquest? We see this testified in the book of Revelation.

They love not their own lives unto death. That's the description of the faithful bride of Christ in the book of Revelation. While the Assyrians were tempting the Israelites to think of the God of Jerusalem as if he were like the gods of the peoples of the earth which are the works of men's hands.

And by their surrendering they would acknowledge that God Yahweh God is just the same as those other gods that I have vanquished. The greatest threat to the people of Judah was not imminent death at the hand of Assyria but to be made idolaters and apostates out of fear of the great king of Assyria.

That's the threat that faces God's people here to be made mere idolaters and apostates and to acknowledge that their God Yahweh is just like the works of men's hands.

That's the threat in this passage. The choice for all in Judah was whether they believed Sennacherib or not. Is Yahweh like the gods of all the other nations or not?

[ 25 : 15 ] That's their choice. Sennacherib asks a very important question for the people of Judah and for us also on what are you trusting that you endure the siege?

On what are you trusting that you endure the siege? This challenge was intended as a direct challenge to the power of Yahweh as we've seen.

Yet this question is a good one for us to ask ourselves as well. as we face pressures from an increasingly dark culture economic and political turmoil personal pain suffering and death we should ask ourselves the question that Sennacherib asked Jerusalem as we feel ourselves besieged by a pagan world more and more on what are you trusting that you endure?

Many things we've taken for granted all of our lives seem to have been shaken. I remember when there would be romanticized talk of possible future persecution from a decade or so.

There may be persecution in my children's day. I don't know what it's going to be like in my children's day. Well, now it seems to be more and more here before us, doesn't it?  
[ 26 : 38 ] It's not hard to see that happening much sooner than any of us would like. are you afraid? Does that make you afraid? Are you dismayed?

What about when trouble comes? What will we do? On what are you trusting? That's the question before all of us this day.

On what are you trusting? Well, that hard times should come should be no surprise to the people of God, should it? this abundant witness, specifically in the New Testament, about Christ's church continuing on, his ministry of suffering, conquest through suffering, all the way from Matthew to Revelation.

The expectation is set for the people of God, they will be a suffering, victorious church. Those two things go together until the resurrection and the final infirmament of Christ, physically.

God has given abundant encouragement to us, and we must walk in the steps of our suffering, Lord. We read in Peter, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you as though something strange were happening to you.

[ 27 : 55 ] But rejoice, but rejoice, insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

But I think it's also good for us to consider that these trials and sufferings don't just happen. They don't just happen. God tells us that he allows them.

In fact, he tells us that he plans them. He plans them. Why would God allow such a trial to come upon his people?

Because, you see, it is the Lord who appoints the trials and raises up such enemies for his glory and the good of his people.

And what is the purpose of the testing? Well, one purpose is that we would learn not to trust in the arm of the flesh, but to trust in the Lord who fights our battles for us.

[ 29 : 09 ] And this is the pattern throughout the Old Testament that we would put no trust in the flesh, but that we would give God all the glory. We see that in the Corinthian letter that God is glorified by the weak putting to shame the strong, the foolish putting to shame the wise of the world.

Isaiah's prophecy, which you can find in 2 Kings and also the book of Isaiah, makes it clear that the Lord had raised up Assyria for a very specific purpose.

You have the great king of Assyria boasting, look what I've done, I will make you as one of those, I'm Sennacherib the god slayer.

Isaiah, the Lord's rapture, brings a word from the Lord, saying, oh yeah, oh yeah, you've laid waste to peoples, you've put to death the gods that were the work of men's hands, you know who did that? You didn't do that, I did that in you, I gave those nations into your hand, I gave you strength, and you boast against me, listen to the word of Isaiah, have you not heard that I determined it long ago, I planned from days of old what I now bring to pass, that you should turn fortified cities into heaps of ruins while their inhabitants shorn of strength are dismayed and confounded and have become like plants of the field and like tender grass, like grass on the housetops blighted before it is grown.

[ 30 : 51 ] So the Lord's rapture says, you didn't do any of that. And you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to put my hook in your nose and I'm going to take you back to where you came from and I'm going to show you that I am Lord of all the earth and you are not.

Isaiah reveals that it was Yahweh that raised up Assyria to conquer nations. But why would God raise up his enemies to threaten the destruction of his own people? We come back to this question again.

Well, you'll remember that he was the one who raised up Pharaoh to enslave the Israelites. And why did he raise him up? For he says, for this very purpose, Yahweh says to Pharaoh, for this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Pharaoh set himself against Yahweh as well. Moses comes to his presence, says, who is Yahweh? Who is Yahweh that I should submit to him?

He sets himself against Yahweh. Well, God tells him, I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show my power in you and that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.

[ 32 : 13 ] And that's exactly what he does. Now, Hezekiah knows this. Hezekiah has read those accounts. He knows this. At the heart of Hezekiah's prayer is this, that all the kingdoms of the earth

may know you, O Lord, our God alone.

And we'll see his prayer in just a moment. He knows because he's memorized these texts from the time that he recovered the text of the Lord. He's memorized these texts of what God did to Pharaoh. He knows the Lord wanted to display before his people and before the nations that he is not like the gods of men created by the hands of men. He alone is God and he alone is to be worshipped.

And listen to the words of Matthew Henry. He says of calamities like these that God orders it so for the trial of our confidence in him and the manifestation of his care concerning us.

God doesn't want his people running to any other. He doesn't want them trusting in horses and chariots, any other God. He wants them to trust in his hand alone. And it's a manifestation of his care toward them.

[ 33 : 19 ] Now that being said, think to yourself, if you are faced with this dilemma, you're Hezekiah, you've been presented with these options, how do you react? How do you respond?

After receiving such a message? Well, let's see the response of Hezekiah. May God give us the grace to respond the way that he does. We are told that he prays.

Verse 20. Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, prayed because of this and cried to heaven.

Hezekiah spread the words of the king before the Lord, we read in 2 Kings 19, and prayed to the Lord. And we find this prayer, not in our text this morning, but in the parallel passage in 2 Kings 19, beginning in verse 15.

O Lord, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim. You are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

[ 34 : 22 ] Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear. Open your eyes, O Lord, and see. And hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands and have cast their gods into the fire.

For they were not gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore, they were destroyed. So now, O Lord, our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O Lord, are God alone.

This is the prayer of Hezekiah. Hezekiah's impulse in his time of trouble was to turn to the Lord in prayer for Yahweh's defense. He knows that no army of human strength will withstand the enemies outside that gate.

But notice, particularly, that this is no thoughtless wish of a desperate man. We hear those near-death prayers that we have seen in movies of men.

I'll serve you if you deliver me from this. That is not what's happening in this passage. This is a remarkable prayer that acknowledges Yahweh's sovereignty and addresses him with adoration and appeals to the works in the past and his promises for the future.

[ 35 : 37 ] He says, God alone of all the kingdoms of the earth, maker of heaven and earth. This is the God whom Hezekiah is petitioning.

He addresses Yahweh as the king of the earth, expressing the identity of God as the foundation of his hope and the ground of his petition. Notice also, this is very significant, I think, that Hezekiah's prayer is informed by the word of God and directed by the will of God.

Hezekiah makes it clear how the situation is conflicting with the revealed will of God. Hezekiah, he asks the Lord to intervene.

What is the chief complaint in Hezekiah's prayer to God? What is the chief complaint that he makes? He argues his petition that Yahweh would not be mocked as a lifeless idol, but that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, Lord, are God alone.

On his mind, certainly the rescue of his people and his own life, which is certainly at risk. But I think his prayer indicates that the biggest problem in his mind is that by means of the destruction of the people of Judah and the Davidic line of promise of an offspring, Sennacherib, the god slayer, will be able to boast that he made Yahweh just like the other gods that are made by men's hands.

[ 37 : 14 ] So I think Hezekiah, to summarize this line in his prayer, you can't let Sennacherib get away with these boasts that he's made against you.

He's mocked the living God. Hezekiah is concerned here. Even as his own life is in trouble, the life of his people is in trouble. He's concerned for the glory of God. Now I think the question must be pressed upon us in this hour as well.

Do you respond to trouble like Hezekiah does here? Do our prayer lives demonstrate that we serve a powerful God who accomplishes all of his holy will?

Do we ask great things of God according to that revealed will in scripture? And do we do it believing that he will certainly give it? Or do we show by our lack of prayer that we agree more with the assessment of Sennacherib that we think our God is nothing more than the works of men's hands? The choice of Judah and Hezekiah is our choice as well as we face pressures in our lives also. We do have a growing concern for the condition of our nation and the instabilities of government and what this may mean for us for our children in years to come for the church of Jesus Christ.

[ 38 : 38 ] But is there not a living God in heaven? A living God in heaven who can thwart the advances of wickedness in our country and revive our hearts to fear His name?

You can certainly do it. fear. We should not fear. But what about the content of our prayers? Are our prayers filled only with petitions concerned with our own preservation, prosperity, and comfort? Or do they demonstrate a concern for the manifestation of God's glory and the accomplishing of His revealed will in His people? May God give us the grace to pray like Hezekiah with an eye primary to the glory of God in the nations.

But, even as a great intercessor for His people, that Hezekiah is in this text before us, I think Hezekiah's example points us to one that is much greater of an intercessor.

And we can't look at this passage and see Hezekiah the great intercessor and only think of Hezekiah. We must think of the one who His example points to. We have a perfect intercessor who sits at the right hand of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who lives to make intercession for His people.

[ 40 : 06 ] He's Hezekiah's greater son. How often does our Savior intercede for us in the midst of our troubles?

and we're not even aware of it. How many times has He prayed to the Father for our blessing, for our deliverance, and more importantly, for the accomplishing of the will of God in the expansion of the church of Jesus Christ?

How is He praying for His beloved bride now as we fret and fear in dark times? What are His prayers to the Father? Father? Robert Murray McShane said, if I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies.

But it makes no difference if I hear it or not. He is praying for me. He is praying for me. Do you fret and fear because you feel alone in this?

What will I do for my children when all of this terrible ideology is thrust upon them? We'll convert your children, they say.

[ 41 : 19 ] You're not alone. If you're in Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ intercedes at the right hand of the Father, that His church would stand in the midst of any time.

He does this continually, and that should give us great courage. We're told that the prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. And this prayer that Hezekiah has made this morning is heard, that we've heard of this morning, is heard in the throne room of heaven.

And Yahweh rises to the defense of His people. And now we see the victory of Yahweh over the Assyrians. Verse 21, the Lord sent an angel who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria.

So he returned with shame face to his own land. That's not all. When he came into the house of his God, here the great king of Assyria who was going to put Yahweh to death.

He can't even protect himself in the temple of his God. When he came into the house of his God, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword.

[ 42 : 27 ] So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and from the hand of all his enemies, and he provided for them on every side.

God loves to work in ironic ways in the world. And whenever you see the enemies of God boast, you just almost are ready to see a great fall.

And we see Yahweh humiliate Sennacherib here, being put to death by his own sons in his own temple of his God. So the Lord is often working incredible and improbable victories for the people of God, again and again, for the accomplishment of his purposes and for the glory of his name that no man would boast.

But Yahweh would get all the glory. He gives victory in that way in which no man can boast.

Overnight, Yahweh takes one of the most powerful armies in the planet that has slain numerous

armies and countries.

put them to death. He slays 185,000 of them overnight. The enemy was at the very gates. Judah could do nothing to stop it other than pray to the king of heaven.

[ 43 : 39 ] They have no other resort but to pray. Yahweh fought for them, destroying the army, and King Sennacherib returns with shame to Nineveh where he's put to death by his own sons. Thus the end of Sennacherib, the God slayer.

And this is the end for all who dare to boast against Yahweh. It will be the end. Some in this life, some for eternity.

What can our Lord accomplish in our day for his great name? I think this passage provides great encouragement for us as we face foes in our day.

There's really no limit. Should we tremble at the decline of Christianity in the West? Should we fear the authoritarian language and actions that our government seems to be more and more embracing?

And should we fear the real possibility of persecution for the people of God for not conforming to this world? While we should grieve at the lawlessness on display in our world and in our country, we should not fear or despair because of it.

[ 44 : 48 ] The Lord is accomplishing his purposes and fulfilling his promises even in the midst of what appears to be the ruthless advance of the enemy. And great is their boast.

You hear the voice of Sennacherib and many of these men. They will have a similar end. Our Lord is not like the gods of the nations.

We sang that this morning. But we need to rejoice in that. Our God is not like the gods of the nations. He's not like the works of men's hands. He is enthroned above all nations and peoples and his purposes will stand.

No one will turn back his hand and say, what have you done? No one can do that of him. Every one of them will eventually, in this life or in the hereafter, bow their knee before him and acknowledge that he is Lord of all.

How many today remember the proud King Sennacherib? Aside from the reading of the scriptures here in this text for our instruction, how many remember this man's name?

[ 45 : 57 ] It's hard to find him in history books. It's a very short sketch of him in a lot of history books. You think the great king, the king of Assyria would have volumes. No, he's got a little paragraph and it's just a speck to show off God's power to the watching world.

There is no country on earth today called Assyria. No country. How many of the seven wonders still stand? They have been broken down, largely been broken down and forgotten.

Yet the church of Jesus Christ still stands, outlasts king after king, empire after empire, even those mighty ones that hated it and sought its destruction. Our Lord has promised, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

The church is that wonder that can never be matched. And the closer our life is aligned with Christ and his bride, the less we have to fear that we'll lose anything at all.

And this is the message of the New Testament. This is the message of the book of Revelation.

They love not their lives even unto death. Those people have nothing to fear of these men who can do nothing else after they've destroyed the body.

[ 47 : 13 ] If the Lord should tarry, our descendants will read about the rise and fall of the United States of America. But let us petition our Lord that they might also read of great things done by the Lord in this generation for the glory of his name.

Let us petition the Lord for great things. As many hundreds of thousands of warriors were slain by the Lord, that millions may be brought to the obedience of faith by the Spirit of God.

So in conclusion, for believers, on what are you trusting that you endure? We need to ask ourselves this question in years to come. Are you trusting in things that will be dust and ashes, that moth and rust will destroy, or that thieves will break in and steal?

Or are you trusting in the Lord and beseeching him according to his promises? Is that your hope in this life? Is your hope in this life alone or in that which is to come?

But, if you're in this room this morning and you are not in Christ, these words of comfort are not yours. Are there any children of Sennacherib here in this place today?

[ 48 : 29 ] Are there any here who, swelling with pride, boast in their hearts that they can defy the word of Yahweh without consequence? Conquering the people of God and putting them to shame.

You can see the children of Sennacherib in many churches around this country who seek to bring shame upon the people of God. Are there any who say in their hearts with Pharaoh, who is Yahweh that I should obey him?

That commandment has expired. That's not anymore for me. Have we raised ourselves above God's law as Pharaoh did?

Beware the day that you may find that Yahweh has raised you up in all your pride and success.

That he may show his power in you in that terrible day. The end of Sennacherib pales in comparison to the day of the wrath of the Lamb.

Yet, today is still a day of salvation. As long as the Lord tarries and as long as he gives us breath in this place.

[ 49 : 39 ] He says again this day, whoever comes to me, I will not cast out. Come to Jesus Christ, confess and forsake your sin, place your faith in Christ alone in his substitutionary death and his righteous life and you too can have hope in the darkest hour.

May God bless the hearing of his word. Let's pray. Father, your word is living and active.

We rejoice that we have this to take to heart. That you love your dear son and you love the bride of your dear son.

Help your church to arise and not to fear any foe, no matter their boast. As we know, they will come to nothing and be forgotten. Give your church courage.

Give your church strength. May you be exalted as we stand against the principalities and powers of this present darkness. Help us, Lord, to let goods and kindred go this mortal life also.

[ 50 : 49 ] The body they may kill. Your truth abides still.