

ISAIAH LESSON 32

Trust in the Lord – No Other Way^a
(Isaiah 37:8-38)

Isaiah 37:8-38 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

37 ⁵When the servants of King Hezeki'ah came to Isaiah, ⁶Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord^b: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. ⁷Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.'" ⁸The Rab'shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah^c; for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. ^d⁹Now the king heard concerning Tirha'kah king of Ethiopia, "He has set out to fight against you." And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezeki'ah, saying, ^e¹⁰"Thus shall you speak to Hezeki'ah king of Judah: 'Do not let your God on whom you rely deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.' ^f¹¹Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, destroying them utterly. And shall you be delivered?^g ¹²Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations which my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Tel-assar?^h ¹³Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharva'im, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?"ⁱ

Hezekiah's Prayer

¹⁴Hezeki'ah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezeki'ah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. ^j¹⁵And Hezeki'ah prayed to the Lord: ^k¹⁶"O Lord of hosts^l, God of Israel, who art enthroned above the cherubim^m, thou art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. ⁿ¹⁷Incline thy ear, O Lord, and hear; open thy eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear all the words of Sennach'erib, which he has sent to mock the living God. ^o¹⁸Of a truth, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations^p and their lands, ^q¹⁹and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they were destroyed. ^r²⁰So now, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou alone art the Lord."^s

²¹Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezeki'ah, saying, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennach'erib king of Assyria, ^t²²this is the word that the Lord has spoken concerning him: 'She despises you, she scorns you—

the virgin daughter of Zion;

she wags her head behind you—

the daughter of Jerusalem."^u

²³'Whom have you mocked and reviled?

Against whom have you raised your voice
and haughtily lifted your eyes?

Against the Holy One of Israel!^v^w

²⁴By your servants you have mocked the Lord^x,

and you have said, With my many chariots

I have gone up the heights of the mountains,

to the far recesses of Lebanon;

I felled its tallest cedars,

its choicest cypresses;

I came to its remotest height,

its densest forest.^y

²⁵I dug wells

and drank waters,
and I dried up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.^z
²⁶ ‘Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should make fortified cities
crash into heaps of ruins,^{aa}
²⁷ 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.^{bb}
²⁸ ‘I know your sitting down
and your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.^{cc, dd}
²⁹ Because you have raged against me
and your arrogance has come to my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth,
and I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.’^{ee}
³⁰ “And this shall be the sign for you: this year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs of the
same; then in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.^{ff} ³¹ And the surviving remnant of
the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward;^{gg} ³² for out of Jerusalem shall go forth a
remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.^{hh}
³³ “Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, or shoot an arrow
there, or come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege mound against it.ⁱⁱ ³⁴ By the way that he came, by the same
he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, says the Lord.^{jj} ³⁵ For I will defend this city to save it, for my
own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”^{kk}

Sennacherib’s Defeat and Death

³⁶ And the angel of the Lord went forth, and slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians;
and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.^{ll} ³⁷ Then Sennach’erib king of Assyria
departed, and went home and dwelt at Nin’evah.^{mmm} ³⁸ And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch^{mm} his god,
Adram’melech and Share’zer, his sons, slew him with the sword, and escaped into the land of Ar’arat. And E’sar-
had’don his son reigned in his stead.^{oo}

Revised Standard Version (RSV)

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^a 2 Kings 18:13–19:19; 2Ki 18:13, 17–37; 2Ch 32:9–19; 37:1–13pp — 2Ki 19:1–13; 37:14–20pp — 2Ki 19:14–19; 2 Kings 19:20–37 Jhan note: If you make this pact, Israel/Judah will never be independent state again and the Messiah will not be born a king. Is 7, Isaiah told Ahaz not to make the deal with Egypt. 36:1–39:8 Except for 38:9–20 (Hezekiah’s prayer of thanksgiving), this historical appendix describing the siege, etc., is paralleled in 2 Kgs 18:13–20:19, which, however, has certain details proper to itself. The events are also reflected in the cuneiform inscriptions of Sennacherib.

^b **Lord - Yahweh**, or **Jehovah** (יהוה, YHWH), see Note in the Introduction to this Study. YHWH appears here and in verses 37:14 (twice), 37:15, 37:17 (twice), 37:18, 37:20 (twice), 37:21, 37:22, 37:33 and 37:36.

^c **Libnah** (לִבְנָה) was about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem (Nu 33:20; Jsh 10:29–34, 21:13; 2Ki 8:22, 19:4; 2Ch 21:10; Jr 52:1) and, perhaps, a City of Refuge (Jsh 20:1–9) from the founding of Israel. The Cities of Refuge were six Levitical towns in the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah in which the perpetrators of manslaughter could claim the right of asylum. Maimonides, invoking Talmudic literature, expands the city of refuge count to all 48 Levitical cities of which Libnah was one. Outside of these cities, blood vengeance against such perpetrators was allowed, even mandated, by law.

^d **(37:8)** 2Ki 19:8. Jerusalem not having surrendered, the Assyrian Cupbearer or General, returned to the Assyrian King, who was busy besieging another city, for further instructions (Jsh 10:3).

^e **(37:9)** 2Ki 19:9. As predicted by Isaiah (verse 7), the Assyrian King hears a rumor of an attack brewing on his flank. He decides to send another message to Hezekiah attempting to get them to surrender. Tirha’kah at the time may have been general of the Egyptian army in 701 B.C. Later he became pharaoh, one of the Ethiopian (Cush) dynasty of Egyptian kings (ca. 690–664 B.C.). The reference in verse 7 to hearing a rumor that God will plant in Sennacherib’s mind indicates that Tirha’kah may, or may not, have actually taken the field against Assyria. Much as Gideon won the battle against the Midianites by following God’s instructions and causing the enemy to believe they were being attacked by a large force (Jdg 7:1–25) Sennacherib believed that his flank was threatened perhaps causing him to change his strategy against Jerusalem, seeking a quick surrender rather than a big battle. Had the Egyptian army actually been approaching, it would have vindicated Ahaz’s and Hezekiah’s policy of alliance with Egypt and a rebuke to Isaiah (Is 20:3–5). The LXX states, “And Tirha’kah king of the Ethiopians went forth to attack him. And when he heard it, he turned aside, and sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying . . .” stating the movements of Tirhakah as fact rather than rumor.

^f **(37:10)** 2Ki 19:10. Sennacherib’s message to Hezekiah warns him not to trust (בטח, *batach*; Is 12:2, 26:3–4, 30:12, 31:1, 42:17, 47:10, 50:10, 59:4; Jb 11:18, 39:11; Ps 4:5, 22:4–5, 22:9, 27:3, 56:3–4, 78:22, 115:9–11, 118:8–9; Pr 31:11; Jr 9:4, 28:15, 49:11; Mi 7:5) God to protect Jerusalem (Is 14:32, 36:14–15; 2Ch 32:13–15) because God is deceiving (נשח, *nasha*) him when He promises protection (Is 36:15–18). Sennacherib no longer seeks to dissuade Hezekiah from reliance upon Egypt, perhaps because Sennacherib fears that Hezekiah may have heard the same rumor about Tirha’kah that Sennacherib had heard. Hezekiah, warned by Isaiah about the rumor, apparently did not give it credence, but rather continued to trust the Lord and did not return to trusting in Egypt. This is a direct attack on Hezekiah’s faith. Prior to this verse, Sennacherib and his messengers did not give Hezekiah a royal title, calling him only by his name. But here the letter is addressed to Hezekiah as King. In Hezekiah’s prayer, he returns the favor by referring to Sennacherib by name only and without a royal title. The Greek in the LXX for “trust” (πεῖθω, *peithó*) comes from the proper name of the Greek goddess of persuasion, and is also used in the Messianic Writings for persuade or trust (Mt 27:43, 28:14; Mk 10:24; Lk 16:31, 18:9; Ac 5:36–37, 17:4, 26:26; Rm 2:8, 2:19, 8:38, 14:14, 15:14; 2Co 1:9, 2:3, 10:7; Gal 1:10, 5:10; Php 1:6, 1:14, 1:25, 2:24, 3:3–4; 2Th 3:4; 2Tm 1:5, 1:12; Heb 2:13, 6:9, 13:18; 1Jn 3:19). Another word derived from the same root (πίστις, *pistis*) is most often used in the Messianic Writings for faith (e.g., Mt 8:10, 9:2, 9:22, 15:28, 28:23; Mk 4:40, 11:22; Lk 18:8, 22:32; Ac 3:16, 6:5, 14:9, 14:22, 14:27, 15:9, 16:4, 26:18; Rm 1:5, 1:8, 1:17, 3:3, 3:22, 3:26, 3:28, 9:30, 10:6–8, 11:20; 1Co 12:9; 2Co 1:24; Gal 1:23, 2:16, 2:20; Eph 6:16; Php 3:9; Col 2:5; 1Tm 3:13; 2Tm 4:7; Heb 4:2, 10:22, 10:38–39, 11:1–12:2; Jas 1:6; Rv 2:13, 13:10, 14:12).

^g **(37:11)** 2Ki 19:11. Sennacherib points to the fact that the gods of none of the other nations Assyria has conquered were able to save their cities or people (Is 10:9–11, 36:18–20; 2Ki 18:33–35; 2Ch 32:17).

^h **(37:12)** 2Ki 19:12. Sennacherib gives specific examples of places in northern Mesopotamia (Gn 11:31–32, 12:1–4; 2Ki 17:6, 18:11; Ezk 27:23; Am 1:5; Ac 7:2) that Assyria conquered and were not saved by their gods (Is 36:19–20) including Haran, a place that Abraham dwelled for a time (Gn 11:31, 28:10; Ac 7:2). Although Sennacherib was only the second of his dynasty, the reference to his fathers refers to his predecessors as King of Assyria. The LXX states, “Have the gods of the nations which my fathers destroyed delivered them, be it Gozan, Haran, or Rezep, which are in the land of Telassar?”

ⁱ (37:13) 2Ki 19:13. Sennacherib gives additional examples of Assyria's conquests (Is 10:9, 36:19; 2Ki 17:24, 18:34, 19:13) and asks where their kings are now in mocking (Hab 1:10) and in an obvious personal warning to Hezekiah.

^j (37:14) 2Ki 19:14. It would appear that unlike the prior exchange when the emissaries of Isaiah returned themselves to the King to give news of what had transpired, on this occasion Sennacherib sent a letter to Hezekiah to be delivered by his messengers. Hezekiah gives no answer to the messengers and, in a sign of his true conversion and repentance, went to the Temple (Ps 27:5) himself and laid, or "spread" (פָּרַשׁ, *paras*), the letter, and by implication the threat of the Assyrians, before (פָּנִים, *panim* meaning before or face) the Lord (Ps 62:1-3) requesting that the Lord protect Jerusalem (1Ki 8:1-35).

^k (37:15) 2Ki 19:15; 2Ch 32:20. The prayer of Hezekiah himself, and not through Isaiah, shows his genuine repentance and faith and asks only that God's glory be vindicated (1Sm 7:8-9; 2Sm 7:18-19; 2Ch 14:11, 20:5-12; Jr 32:17-25; Dn 9:3-4; Ac 4:24-30; Php 4:6-7; Jas 5:13).

^l **Lord of Hosts - Yahweh Tsebaoth** (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת), see note on the Names of God in the Introduction – Appears here and in verses 37:32 and 37:34. (Ezk 10:1)

^m **Cherubim** (Is 6:3; Gn 3:24; Ex 25:22; Nu 7:89; 1Sm 4:4; 2Sm 6:2; Ps 80:1, 99:1; Ezk 10:1) or heavenly beings (כְּרֻבִים, *kerub*; Greek Χερουβίμ, *Cheroubin*).

ⁿ (37:16) 2Ki 19:15. Hezekiah's prayer begins in a theologically correct way by acknowledging who God is (Dt 6:4, 10:17; 2Sm 7:28; Ezr 1:3; Ps 2:4, 83:18, 86:10, 90:2; Jr 10:11-12; Ac 4:24; Rm1:18-23) and praising and thanking Him (2Sm 7:26; 1Ki 8:39; Ps 4:8, 46:7-11, 68:32, 136:2-3; Dn 4:34) before turning to the petition. The name he Hezekiah chooses for God, **Yahweh Tsebaoth**, or Lord of Hosts emphasizes God's power over the armies and empires of the world. In contrast to the empty boasting of the Assyrians, Hezekiah proclaims the Lord as Creator of the Heavens and the Earth (Is 40:28, 42:5, 45:12; Gn 1:1; Ex 20:11; Neh 9:6; Ps 146:6; Jr 10:12; Jn 1:1-1:3; Col 1:16) and "God over all the kingdoms of the earth" (Ps 46:10; Rv 15:4).

^o (37:17) 2Ki 19:16. Even though we know that God is omniscient Hezekiah metaphorically asks Him to pay attention (2Sm 16:12; 1Ki 8:29; 2Ch 6:40, 7:15; Jb 36:7; Ps 17:6, 71:2, 116:1, 130:1-2; Dn 9:17-19) to the insults (Is 37:4; 2Ch 32:17-19; Ps 74:10, 74:22, 79:12) that Sennacherib has hurled at the Living God (אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים, *elohim chay*; Jsh 3:10) so that God would come to the rescue of Jerusalem (Ps 74:10, 89:50-51).

^p **Nations/Lands** – In the Masoretic Text, the same Hebrew word (עַרְצֵי, *erets*) is used for both nations and lands (literally "all the lands and their lands"). 1QIsa omits the second "land". The parallel passage, 2Ki 19:17, substitutes the plural of "nation" (גוֹי, *goy*) for the first *erets* in the verse so that it reads as translated above. The LXX has Assyria destroying the inhabited world (οἰκουμένη, *oikoumené*) and its fields or lands (χώρα, *chóra*).

^q (37:18) 2Ki 19:17. Hezekiah understands the reality of the situation he and Jerusalem are in, with the great conquering nation and its King at their very gates. He understands that if the city falls, he will be deposed and his people sent into exile (2Ki 15:29, 16:9, 17:6, 17:24; 1Ch 5:26). He recognizes that no human action can save Jerusalem, only God's intervention (Is 10:13-14).

^r (37:19) 2Ki 19:18. Sennacherib has destroyed the idols of the gods of the nations he has conquered (Is 10:9-11, 26:14, 36:20). But Hezekiah compares the false gods and idols (Is 2:8, 6:5-7, 40:19-21, 41:7, 41:24, 41:29, 44:9-20, 46:1-2; Dt 4:28, 28:36, 28:64, 29:17, 32:17; Ps 115:4-8, 135:15; Jr 10:3-6, 10:11, 16:20; Hos 8:6; Ac 19:26) of the other, defeated, people of the region to the one true God (Is 40:17-21; 2Ch 32:19) from Whom he sought protection. Isaiah has promised that the people of Israel will be redeemed and give up their idolatry (Is 2:20, 17:8, 31:7; Ex 32:20; Jsh 7:15; 2Sm 5:21; 2Ch 13:9; Jr 1:16, 2:11, 5:7; Ezk 20:32; Gal 4:8). The LXX reads, ". . . and have cast their idols (εἰδωλον, *eidolon*) into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; and they have cast them away."

^s (37:20) 2Ki 19:19. Hezekiah asks God to save Jerusalem in order to glorify the Name of God (Is 42:8; Ex 9:15-16; Jsh 4:24, 7:8-9; 1Sm 17:46; 1Ki 8:60, 18:36-37, 20:13; Ps 46:10; Ezk 36:23, 39:21; Mal 1:1), prove the boasts and insults of Sennacherib false, and vindicate the faith of Hezekiah and Judah (Is 25:9, 33:22, 35:4, 45:3-6; 1Ki 18:36-37; Ps 3:2-7; Pr 20:22).

^t (37:21) 2Ki 19:20. Isaiah tells Hezekiah that the Lord has heard his prayer for deliverance from Assyria (Is 38:3-6, 58:9, 65:24; Jb 22:27; Ps 91:15; Dn 9:20-23; Ac 4:31). Although the Apostle Paul does not use this as an example in Romans when he interprets the stories of the heroes of the Hebrew Scriptures to show that they were saved by faith and not by works (Rm 4:13-15), this would, in fact, have been a good example. Hezekiah and Jerusalem were not saved by anything that they did, but by Hezekiah's faith and trust in the Lord.

^u (37:22) 2Ki 19:21. The Lord's voice (through Isaiah's mouth) describes Jerusalem as hurling insults upon the Assyrians (Jb 16:4; Ps 22:7, 109:25; Jr 18:16; Lam 2:13-15; Mt 27:39) as they retreat back the way they came (Is 62:11; Ps 9:14; Zep 3:14). Cities, particularly Jerusalem, are often pictured as female (Is 1:8, 3:16-17, 4:4, 10:32, 23:12, 47:1, 52:2; Jr 14:17, 46:11; Lam 1:1-2; Zec 2:10; Mi 4:13).

^v **Holy One of Israel** - *Qedosh Yisrael* (קדוש ישׂראל), see note on the Names of God in the introduction.

^w (37:23) 2Ki 19:22. Verses 23-25 are in the voice of Jerusalem speaking to, and mocking, Sennacherib (Is 5:15). In verse 23 Jerusalem rhetorically asks the King of Assyria whom he had mocked (2Ch 32:17; Ps 44:16, 73:9, 74:18, 74:23) in his arrogance (Is 5:21, 10:12-15, 14:13-14; Ex 5:2, 9:17; Nu 15:30; Jb 15:25; Pr 30:13; Jr 48:42; Dn 7:25; Ezk 28:2, 28:9; 2Th 2:4; Rv 13:1-6), and answering back that it was the Holy One of Israel (Is 10:20, 12:6, 17:7, 30:11-12, 41:14-16, 43:14), emphasizing here God's holiness (Is 10:17; Ex 15:11; Hab 1:12-13). God should be praised and worshipped (Is 2:11, 12:6; Gn 12:3; Ex 23:22; Ezk 39:7; Dn 5:20-23, 8:11) not mocked (Is 1:4, 37:4, 52:5; Ps 74:10; Ezk 36:20-23; Gal 6:7).

^x **Lord** - *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי), see note on the Names of God in the introduction.

^y (37:24) 2Ki 19:23. The words refer apparently to an unreported boast of Sennacherib. It would not be out of character, however, The inscriptions of the Assyrian kings are full of like boasts. Shalmaneser, "Trackless paths and difficult mountains . . . I penetrated" (Records of the Past, iii. 85): and Assumacirpal, "Rugged mountains, difficult paths, which for the passage of chariots were not suited, I passed" (Id. p. 43). God says that Sennacherib boasted that he overcame all kinds of natural barriers, including mountains and forests (Zec 11:1-2), and accomplished great things (Jr 46:8). General George S. Patton Jr. is reported to have said, "Fixed fortifications are monuments to man's stupidity. If mountain ranges and oceans can be overcome, anything made by man can be overcome." Sennacherib takes it one step further by claiming that he overcame obstacles built by God (Is 10:18, 14:8; Jr 22:7; Hos 14:8), implying that even the Creator God cannot stop him (Is 14:13; Ex 14:26-28, 15:4, 15:19; Dt 20:1; Jsh 11:4-9; 2Ch 16:8).

^z (37:25) 2Ki 19:24. Isaiah continues describing the boasts of Sennacherib over the powers of nature. Here he describes diverting the Nile waters (Is 19:6; Dt 11:10) and changing or drying up (Is 44:27) the course of rivers to help him defeat besieged cities (Is 36:12; Is 8:7-8) or supply water to parched ones. The word translated above as "Egypt" at the end of the verse (מִצְרַיִם, *matsor*) might also be translated as "besieged places" thus creating an ambiguity as to whether Sennacherib was depriving his enemies of water, or supplying his friends. It was Sennacherib's special glory, as recorded in his inscriptions, that he had provided cities with water which were before scantily supplied, that he had made wells even in the deserts (Records of the Past, i. 29, 31, 9:23). The LXX reads, ". . . and I have made a bridge, and dried up the waters, and every pool of water."

^{aa} (37:26) 2Ki 19:25. God speaks and reminds Sennacherib and us that He long ago planned (Is 22:11) Sennacherib's conquests (Is 17:1, 40:21, 40:28, 41:24-29, 46:10-11), accomplishments and actions, the destruction of cities (Is 25:1-2; Dt 13:16; Am 3:6), implying that just as these were God's doing (Is 10:7-18) to punish His people (Is 10:5-6, 46:11; 1Pt 2:8), He can always undo them and restore His people (Is 5:19, 10:33-34, 14:24-27). God's plans sometimes use that which is intended for evil to result in the fulfillment of God's plan (Gn 50:20; Jr 18:11; Ac 2:23, 4:27-28; Jude 1:4). The LXX reads, "Have you not heard of these things which I did of old? I appointed them from ancient times; but now have I manifested My purpose of desolating nations in their strongholds, and them that dwell in strong cities."

^{bb} (37:27) 2Ki 19:26. God views all men as no more than blades of grass (Is 40:6-8; Ps 37:2, 92:7, 103:15; Jas 1:10-11; 1Pt 1:24). Here the people of the conquered cities are "dismayed and confounded" (Is 19:16) and are susceptible to destruction like blades of grass when there is no rain (Is 15:6; Gn 41:6; Ps 129:6). The LXX states, "I weakened their hands, and they withered; and they became as dry grass on the housetops, and as grass."

^{cc} **And your raging against me** does not occur in the LXX and is likely a copy error from doubling the first words of verse 29.

^{dd} (37:28) 2Ki 19:27. God knows where Sennacherib lives (Jr 23:23-24; Rv 2:13), and his going out and his coming in (Is 40:27; 1Sm 29:6; 2Sm 3:25; Pr 5:21, 15:3; Ps 139:1-3), and how he mocked God. The three words, abode (יָשַׁב, *yashab*), going out (יָצָא, *yatsa*) and coming in (בָּיָא, *bo*) indicate, colloquially, the full experience of human life. God even knows where Satan lives and what he does (Rv 2:13). *The Lutheran Book of Concord, Formula, Solid Declaration* (1577) states at XI Election 4-8: "FIRST, THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ETERNAL FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND THE ETERNAL ELECTION OF HIS CHILDREN TO ETERNAL SALVATION, IS CAREFULLY TO BE OBSERVED. FOR *PRAESCIENTIA VEL PRAEVISIO* [foreknowledge or prevision], THAT IS, THAT GOD SEES AND KNOWS EVERYTHING BEFORE IT HAPPENS, WHICH IS CALLED GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE [prescience], EXTENDS OVER ALL CREATURES, GOOD AND BAD; NAMELY, THAT HE FORESEES AND FOREKNOWS EVERYTHING THAT IS OR WILL BE, THAT IS OCCURRING OR WILL OCCUR, WHETHER IT BE GOOD OR BAD, SINCE BEFORE GOD ALL THINGS, WHETHER THEY BE PAST OR FUTURE, ARE MANIFEST AND PRESENT. THUS IT IS WRITTEN, MATT. 10:29, ARE NOT TWO SPARROWS SOLD FOR A FARTHING? AND ONE OF THEM SHALL NOT FALL ON THE GROUND WITHOUT YOUR FATHER. AND PS. 139:16, THINE EYES DID SEE MY SUBSTANCE, YET BEING IMPERFECT; AND IN THY

BOOK ALL MY MEMBERS WERE WRITTEN, WHICH IN CONTINUANCE WERE FASHIONED, WHEN AS YET THERE WERE NONE OF THEM. ALSO IS. 37:28, I KNOW THY ABODE, AND THY GOING OUT, AND THY COMING IN, AND THY RAGE AGAINST ME. THE ETERNAL ELECTION OF GOD, HOWEVER, *VEL PRAEDESTINATIO* [or predestination], THAT IS, GOD'S ORDINATION TO SALVATION, DOES NOT EXTEND AT ONCE OVER THE GODLY AND THE WICKED, BUT ONLY OVER THE CHILDREN OF GOD, WHO WERE ELECTED AND ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD WAS LAID, AS PAUL SAYS, EPH. 1:4. 5, HE HATH CHOSEN US IN HIM, HAVING PREDESTINATED US UNTO THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BY JESUS CHRIST. THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD (*PRAESCIENTIA*) FORESEES AND FOREKNOWS ALSO THAT WHICH IS EVIL; HOWEVER, NOT IN SUCH A MANNER AS THOUGH IT WERE GOD'S GRACIOUS WILL THAT IT SHOULD HAPPEN; BUT ALL THAT THE PERVERSE, WICKED WILL OF THE DEVIL AND OF MEN WILLS AND DESIRES TO UNDERTAKE AND DO, GOD SEES AND KNOWS BEFORE; AND HIS *PRAESCIENTIA*, THAT IS, FOREKNOWLEDGE, OBSERVES ITS ORDER ALSO IN WICKED ACTS OR WORKS, INASMUCH AS A LIMIT AND MEASURE IS FIXED BY GOD TO THE EVIL WHICH GOD DOES NOT WILL, HOW FAR IT SHOULD GO, AND HOW LONG IT SHOULD LAST, WHEN AND HOW HE WILL HINDER AND PUNISH IT; FOR ALL OF THIS GOD THE LORD SO OVERRULES THAT IT MUST REDOUND TO THE GLORY OF THE DIVINE NAME AND TO THE SALVATION OF HIS ELECT, AND THE GODLESS, ON THAT ACCOUNT, MUST BE PUT TO CONFUSION. HOWEVER, THE BEGINNING AND CAUSE OF EVIL IS NOT GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE (FOR GOD DOES NOT CREATE AND EFFECT [or work] EVIL, NEITHER DOES HE HELP OR PROMOTE IT); BUT THE WICKED, PERVERSE WILL OF THE DEVIL AND OF MEN [is the cause of evil], AS IT IS WRITTEN HOS. 13:9, O ISRAEL, THOU HAST DESTROYED THYSELF; BUT IN ME IS THY HELP. ALSO, THOU ART NOT A GOD THAT HATH PLEASURE IN WICKEDNESS. PS. 5:4. THE ETERNAL ELECTION OF GOD, HOWEVER, NOT ONLY FORESEES AND FOREKNOWS THE SALVATION OF THE ELECT, BUT IS ALSO, FROM THE GRACIOUS WILL AND PLEASURE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS, A CAUSE WHICH PROCURES, WORKS, HELPS, AND PROMOTES OUR SALVATION AND WHAT PERTAINS THERETO; AND UPON THIS [divine predestination] OUR SALVATION IS SO FOUNDED THAT THE GATES OF HELL CANNOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT, MATT. 16:18, AS IS WRITTEN JOHN 10:28, NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN PLUCK MY SHEEP OUT OF MY HAND. AND AGAIN, ACTS 13:48: AND AS MANY AS WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE, BELIEVED."

^{cc} (37:29) 2Ki 19:28. God tells Sennacherib that because he mocked God in his arrogance (Is 10:12; Jr 48:30), He will treat him like an animal or slave and force him to go back the way he came. **Hook** and **bit** are tools to control animals and slaves (Jb 40:24, 41:1-2). The Assyrians' monuments portray captives with hooks or rings piercing their lips or noses. By means of cords or chains attached to these hooks or rings, the Assyrians led or controlled captives. The reference to the "hook" in the nose and the "bridle" in the lips appears to be to such hooks or rings (2Ch 33:11; Ezk 29:4, 38:4; Am 4:2). Thus humiliated like a captive of war, Sennacherib would be forced to return to his own land without having attained his objective to capture Jerusalem (Is 30:28; Ezk 19:9).

^{ff} (37:30) 2Ki 19:29. Isaiah speaks to Hezekiah [you, singular], and through him to the people of Jerusalem, giving a **sign** (Is 7:10-17, 20:3, 38:7-8; Ex 3:12; 1Ki 13:3-5; 2Ki 20:9; Jr 44:29; Lk 2:12) only to be interpreted later (Is 65:21; 1Sm 2:34), that after two years the normal conditions of agricultural life will be resumed (Is 7:15-16, 7:21-25, 8:4, 16:14, 21:16). Lest people think that it was a random act of nature, a plague or fight among the different units of the besieging army, Isaiah predicts specifically how long it would take to restore normal agricultural production so that, when it comes to pass, people could look back and see that Isaiah's prediction about this was correct and, by implication, that God was behind the salvation of Jerusalem. The Jews had many times before repented and had a rebirth in faith and obedience to God as God had delivered them. When the Assyrians left, would Judah go back to its old ways? Fields could not be sown in 701 B.C. because of the siege, but in the first year after that, grain grown "voluntarily" from seed that fell from the prior year's harvest (Lv 25:4-11) will be sufficient to feed the people. In the second year, grain will also grow from seeds that had fallen from the first year's harvest (Is 32:10). But in the third year the people will be able to sow and plan and there will be a plentiful harvest (Is 30:23; Ps 107:37; Jr 31:5). The LXX reads, "And this shall be a sign to you, Eat this year what you have sown; and the second year that which is left; and the third year sow, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof."

^{gg} (37:31) 2Ki 19:30. Is 17:6, 34:13; Ps 2:1 The remnant (Is 1:9, 6:13, 11:10-11, 37:4; Jr 31:7, 44:28; Ezk 7:16; Rm 9:27, 11:5; Gal 3:29), those that survived the Assyrian invasion and siege, and the subsequent hard economic times, will both be more strongly connected to, and secure in, the Land (take root downward; Is 65:9; Ps 80:9) and more fruitful in their lives (bear fruit upward) likely referring to becoming more faithful to God (Is 4:2, 10:20-21, 27:6; Ps 92:4) as well as to material prosperity. A repopulated Judah, under Josiah, was also able to reconquer much of the Northern Kingdom (2Ch 34:6, 34:18). Many of the people of Judah outside Jerusalem had been killed or taken captive by the Assyrians so that the population of Judah would have been greatly diminished. The LXX reads, "And they that are left in Judah shall take root downward, and bear fruit upward . . ."

^{hh} (37:32) Is 1:9, 9:6-7, 10:20-22, 11:11, 14:32, 37:4, 59:17; Ex 20:5; 2Ki 19:31; Ezr 9:14; Jl 2:18; Zec 1:14 Isaiah knew that there would be a remnant though, because of Hezekiah's repentance, the day was delayed for a time.

ⁱⁱ (37:33) Is 32:18, 32:24; Jr 6:6, 32:24; Hab 1:10; Lk 19:43 Archeologists have found siege mounds near Lachish used to make scaling the walls easier. This describes what actually happened. The Assyrians did not conquer Jerusalem. There was not even a battle. And Sennacherib went back the way he came.

^{jj} (37:34)

^{kk} (37:35) Is 29:1, 31:5, 38:6, 43:25, 48:9-11; 2Sm 7:11; 1Ki 11:13, 11:32-38, 15:4; 2Ki 19:35-37, 20:6; 1Ch 17:19; 2Ch 32:20-21; Ezk 34:23, 36:21-22. God assures Hezekiah of His protection for Jerusalem and the Davidic line (Is 38:6; Ps 132:11-18). God would defend Jerusalem for His own honor, and for the sake of David. Assyria, though God's instrument for punishing Israel and Judah, would now receive punishment and denied the capture of Jerusalem, something the Judeans could not do for themselves. Isaiah's prophecies to Ahaz and Hezekiah were vindicated when God delivered Jerusalem after Hezekiah's repentance.

^{ll} (37:36) Is 10:12, 10:33-34, 14:25, 17:14, 29:5, 30:31, 31:8; Gn 16:7-11; Ex 3:2, 12:12, 12:23; Nu 22:22-35; Jdg 6:11-12; 2Sm 24:15-17; 2Ki 19:35-37; 2Ch 32:21; Ps 34:7; Nah 2:11-12. 37:36 The destruction of Sennacherib's army is also recorded by Herodotus, a Greek historian of the fifth century B.C. It was possibly owing to a plague, which the author interprets as God's activity.

^{mmm} (37:37) Gn 10:11; Jon 1:2; 3:3; 4:11; 2Ch 32:1; Na 1:1; Zep 2:13. Nineveh is located across the Tigris River from Mosel in modern Iraq, and was the capital of the Assyrian Empire at the time.

ⁿⁿ **Nisroch** (נִסְרוֹךְ, *Nisrok*) literally means "great eagle". This name is otherwise unknown in the historical record and may be the Assyrian name for Marduk, the chief god of the Babylonian mythology or refer to the Assyrian god of agriculture.

^{oo} (37:38) Is 9:4, 10:12, 10:26, 10:33-34, 14:25; Gn 8:4; 2Ki 17:24; Ezr 4:2; Jr 51:27. 37:38 The violent death of Sennacherib (681 B.C.) is also mentioned in Assyrian and Babylonian chronicles. It occurred twenty years after his invasion of Judah in 681 B.C. and fulfils the prophecy of Is 37:7. Ararat: the land of Urartu in the mountains north of Assyria.