

ISAIAH, PART 1 (JUDGMENT – BUT HOPE)
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SERIES: Isaiah, Part 1 (Judgment – But Hope)

TITLE: Program 68 – Resisting Compromise

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

Have you ever known fear? I mean, an enemy comes along; they threaten you. They threaten your job, they threaten your marriage, they threaten your relationships, they threaten your financial future; they threaten your physical being. And all of a sudden, you're tied up in a knot. You are a basket case. Is there anything you can do to keep from being a basket case? Oh yes! We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

Listen to me, Beloved. It is no accident that you are listening to the Word of God on this program, today, because God wants to speak to you. God does not want you to live in fear. God, instead, wants you to know when fear comes that it can be turned into triumph. We're looking all this week at the blessings of our enemies, and the blessings of illness. Now we're coming to illness later on in the week. But as we look at Isaiah 36, as we look at Rabshakeh and he's standing there in the position of Sennacherib the king of

Assyria is threatening the well-being of this city. He's telling them: "We are going to demolish you. You better, you better surrender." Now watch what he says here. He says in verse 12: **"But Rabshakeh said, 'Has my master sent me only to your master and to...speak these words...?'" (Isaiah 36:12)** Why? Because they were saying, ["Don't speak to these people in Judean, speak to them in Aramaic."] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 36:11) Why? Because these words that he's saying would strike fear in their hearts. And Rabshakeh knows that, and so what he is going to say is, "I'll speak to them in their language, 'cause this is what I want them to know." **"Has my master sent me only to your master... to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine...?" (Isaiah 36:12)** In other words, we're gonna take this city, and if we lay it under siege, I want you to know that eventually every one of you will be so hungry you're eating your own excrement, and so thirsty you're drinking your own urine. What is he ruling them by? He is ruling them by fear. So you wanna put that down. Number four: "The enemy rules by fear." Second Timothy chapter 1, verse 7 tells us this, that when that fear comes that's not from God, **"...God [has] not given [you a] spirit of fear; but [He has given you]...love..."** and He has given you "power," and He has given you, listen carefully, a mind under control, **"...a sound mind."** (2 Timothy 1:7, KJV) That's what it means. So that you don't go there, you don't start thinking about what it's like to eat your own excrement and drink your own urine. You don't even go there. Psalm 56 and it is verse 3 says this: **"When I am afraid, I will put my trust in [thee]."** (Psalms 56:3) So when the enemy comes and threatens you with fear, how is that a blessing? It causes you, if you're smart, if you're listening to God, it causes you to trust in God. It draws the line, and it says, "Okay, **'When I am afraid, I will put my trust in [thee].'**" (Psalms 56:3) And so it causes you to turn to God. The next thing that I want you to see is, and it is the fifth point: "The enemy seeks to divide us." The enemy seeks to divide us. Look

at verse 14 through 16. So let me read verse 13, he says: **“Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean...,”** he was not going to speak Aramaic. **“...And [he] said, ‘Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus says the king, ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you; nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, ‘The LORD will surely deliver us, this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’””** (Isaiah 36:13-15) What is he trying to do? He is trying to divide the troops. He is trying to separate his people from the king. Now I want to tell you something. This is what happens on the political scene all the time. This is what happens, listen, when someone decides that they’re going to go to another country that is an enemy, that our president has decided to stay away from, and they decide they’re going anyway. They are dividing the country. They are not being loyal to the country; they’re loyal to their own desires. The enemy seeks to conquer, the enemy seeks to divide, the enemy comes in among the sheepfold so that he might devour that sheep. So you need to remember that. So when the enemy comes and tries to do that, what is the blessing that can come? The blessing is this: That you remember, as Ephesians chapter 3 says, you, and Ephesians 2, that you are part of a body of Jesus Christ. And you need to remember that we are bone of His bone and we are flesh of His flesh, and we are not to allow the enemy to intimidate us, and we are not to allow the enemy to divide us, all right? Now the next thing that I want you to see is this, in verses 16 to 17: **“The enemy will come along and he will offer an alternative,”** something that is going to spare you; something that is going to spare you. Now watch what he says in verse 16 and 17. **“‘Do not listen to Hezekiah,’”** for thus says the king of Assyria, **‘Make your peace with me and come out to me, and [each] eat...of his vine and each of his fig tree and...each of the waters of his own cistern, until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, [to] a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.’** (Isaiah 36:16-17) What is he trying to do

here? Well he is offering an alternative. He is saying, “You can have something that is better. I’m going to give you the right to come out of the city to enjoy your own land until I can take you to a better land.” Now listen, when the enemy does this, when the enemy comes and entices you and gives you an alternative, this causes you to stop and evaluate what is right and what is wrong; what is truth and what is error. What is the enemy saying? And what is God saying? And so he will come along and he’ll say that he wants to spare you. Now listen, 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 13 says this: That there has **“No [trial or testing or] temptation...[taken] you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful...,”** listen carefully, **“...[He] will not [permit] you to be [tried or tested or] tempted [above] what you are able [to bear], but with...,”** that trial, that testing, **“...[that] temptation... [God will make a] way of escape....” (1 Corinthians 10:13)** You do not take the enemy’s way of escape. What do you do? This is where you get the blessing from the enemy. You stop in every trial and you recognize, “God, you permitted this trial. You allowed it. I am able to endure it. I am able to handle it and you have a way for me to escape so that I don’t yield to this. So Lord I’m looking for Your way.” Not the devil’s way. Now some people will say, “God, just surely does not want me to stay in this marriage. And so I’m walking out.” Now there are some marriages that are totally, absolutely wrong, and God tells you exactly what to do in them. But you have to understand that, **“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled....” (Hebrews 13:4)** [God hates divorce]. (PARAPHRASE, Malachi 2:16) You are to stay within a marriage unless God gives you His way of escape, not yours. The devil will offer you a way to escape. You see this with David and Saul. Saul was trying to kill David. And they were saying to David, “There he is! You can kill him right now. You can deliver yourself.” But did David take that opportunity? No because it was not God’s way. It was not God’s way. And David, by waiting on God, then took the kingdom and took the throne of David in a way that pleased God and

pleased the people. He never had any regrets. So when the enemy comes and he tells you, “I want to spare you. I want to offer you this,” just remember, there is no compromise, no selling out to the enemy, because if you do, you’re selling out on God. So what’s the next thing? In verses 18 to 22 what you see is: “The enemy will challenge God’s power to deliver you.” He will say, “God is not able to do this.” And when he says this, he is laying down a gauntlet, so to speak. You pick it up and say, “Nothing is impossible with my God.” Look at it, let’s read it, verse 18: **“Beware that Hezekiah does not mislead you, saying ‘The LORD will deliver us.’ Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they delivered Samaria from my hand? Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD would deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”** (Isaiah 36:18-20) In other words, “I am greater than God because— look at my past history.” He forgot he’s touching a child of God. We’ll look at it in just a minute and you need to grasp it because it’s life-giving.

PART TWO

Enemies know how to manipulate. They’re evil. There is a serving of their selves in their own evil way. And what they will try to do is absolutely intimidate you, and convince you that God is not able to deliver you, so you’d better come over to their side. That’s what we just saw as we looked at Isaiah 36 when he says, **“Who among...the gods of these lands...,”** the ones that Assyria had conquered, **“...have delivered their land from my hand, that...[God] would deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”** (Isaiah 36:20) **“We conquered all the rest, we’re gonna conquer you. Give up. Surrender.”** No you don’t, Beloved. You don’t give up, you don’t surrender. You trust God. You have the attitude; I think of Shadrach, Meshach, and

Abendego when they threatened to put them in the fiery furnace, that they would not bow if they would not bend to their power, and this is what they said in that day: He says, **“If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.” (Daniel 3:17-18)** Listen, what he’s saying is, “We are willing to die for what we believe. We will not be intimidated by you.” And that’s what you need to remember, because as I told you before, the enemy seeks to intimidate you by fear. He seeks to tie you in knots. He wants to convince you that God is impotent, that God is not God. But listen, God is God. Psalm 103 says that, **“His throne [is] in...[heaven], and His sovereignty rules over all.” (Psalms 103:19)** So don’t be intimidated. Well we’re moving to chapter 37 now, and when we move to chapter 37 and we look at verse 1-4, we find out the blessing that comes from an enemy, if we respond right; if we respond right. Now remember, all these blessings from enemies that come are blessings because they drive us to God. Watch what it says in chapter 37. **“And when...Hezekiah heard it...” (Isaiah 37:1)** [These two men come to Hezekiah, and that’s what he tells us in the last two verses of the preceding chapter, they tear their clothes, showing their sign of mourning and anguish, and they, then, come into the presence of King Hezekiah. They deliver the message to Hezekiah, and when King Hezekiah hears it, he tears his clothes.] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 36:21-22; 37:1) You say, “Oh my gosh! Everybody’s running around with their clothes torn off their body in anguish.” No. It is a sign before God of humility, a sign of need. It is a sign of anguish, and it is a sign that they know that God is going to see. So he tears his clothes and he covers himself with sackcloth, which shows repentance, which shows mourning. If you’ve ever studied Joel, you’ll see that in the book of Joel. (See Joel 1:8, 13) **“...[He] entered the house of the LORD.” (Isaiah 37:1)** When are enemies blessings? When

they drive us to the house of the Lord, so to speak, when they drive us to God, when they drive us into His presence, He's sitting there with His omnipotent arms, His everlasting arms (See Deuteronomy 33:27) open wide and He's flexing His muscles. That's what He's doing. Now listen to what it says. **"Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. [And] they said to him, 'Thus says Hezekiah...,'"** they're speaking to Isaiah, now. **(Isaiah 37: 2-3) "...This day is a day of distress, rebuke...rejection; for children have come to birth, and there['s] no strength to deliver. Perhaps the LORD your God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left."** **(Isaiah 37:3-4)** What has happened? This enemy has driven Hezekiah, so to speak, to his knees; to his knees. And he is seeking God and he is calling others to seek God. He's calling Isaiah, "Isaiah, pray!" And he's calling, so to speak, a sacred assembly, so that they will beseech God. And you see, anyone that drives you into the omnipotent arms of God, the everlasting of God, has to be a blessing even if they are an enemy. Because where is your peace? Where is your security? Where is your protection? It is in God, and so you want to write that down: "The enemies drive us to the house of God and to the people of God," and there you see the benefit of the family. When my son had a blood clot on his brain, I got on the email and God amassed an army of people to pray, and when they prayed, my son was able to think, to remember, to walk, to talk. It was a miracle! We rallied the troops, and that's what the enemy doesn't realize he does. He drives you to your source of family and sharing and the power of prayer. Now the ninth thing that I want you to see, that happens many times because your enemies are coming against you: "You see the divine sovereignty of God over the hearts of men." You see God, all of a sudden, change a situation just by what

seems like a an accident, but it's not because God controls us, because God is sovereign; because [God can turn the heart of the king anytime He wants to], as Proverbs tells us. (PARAPHRASE, Proverbs 21:1) Look at verse 5. We see this in verse 5-11. **“So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. [And] Isaiah said to them, ‘Thus you shall say to your master, ‘Thus says the LORD...,’”** now here is is again: **“...‘Do not be afraid because of the words [which] you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.’” (Isaiah 37:5-6)** “They have blasphemed me! They have said that I cannot deliver you. They have lied and said that I sent them. They have blasphemed Me!” He says, **“Behold, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own land....” (Isaiah 37:7)** “I am going to cause Sennacherib, who is down at Lachish, to hear a rumor, and I’m going to send him back to his own land. There’s not going to be an arrow that is shot against this city,” in essence, is what he is saying. **“Then Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. [And] when he heard them say concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, ‘He has come out to fight against you,’ and when he heard it he sent [his] messengers to Hezekiah, saying. ‘Thus you shall say to Hezekiah king of Judah, “Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, ‘Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’”” (Isaiah 37:8-10)** Ah-ho-ho-ho-ho, is that guy ever wrong! God has done his supernatural work and God will do the same for you, Beloved, in delivering you from your enemies, and you will know God in a new dimension.