**Isaiah 37-40**

Jerusalem’s Deliverance Foretold

**37**When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and went into the temple of the Lord. **2**He sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary, and the leading priests, all wearing sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. **3**They told him, “This is what Hezekiah says: This day is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace, as when children come to the moment of birth and there is no strength to deliver them. **4**It may be that the Lord your God will hear the words of the field commander, whom his master, the king of Assyria, has sent to ridicule the living God, and that he will rebuke him for the words the Lord your God has heard. Therefore pray for the remnant that still survives.”

**5**When King Hezekiah’s officials came to Isaiah, **6**Isaiah said to them, “Tell your master, ‘This is what the Lord says: Do not be afraid of what you have heard - those words with which the underlings of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. **7**Listen! When he hears a certain report, I will make him want to return to his own country, and there I will have him cut down with the sword.’”

**8**When the field commander heard that the king of Assyria had left Lachish, he withdrew and found the king fighting against Libnah.

**9**Now Sennacherib received a report that Tirhakah, the king of Cush, was marching out to fight against him. When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah with this word: **10**“Say to Hezekiah king of Judah: Do not let the god you depend on deceive you when he says, ‘Jerusalem will not be given into the hands of the king of Assyria.’ **11**Surely you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the countries, destroying them completely. And will you be delivered?**12**Did the gods of the nations that were destroyed by my predecessors deliver them - the gods of Gozan, Harran, Rezeph and the people of Eden who were in Tel Assar? **13**Where is the king of Hamath or the king of Arpad? Where are the kings of Lair, Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah?”

Hezekiah’s Prayer

**14**Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the Lord and spread it out before the Lord. **15**And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: **16**“Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. **17**Give ear, Lord, and hear; open your eyes, Lord, and see; listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to ridicule the living God.

**18**“It is true, Lord, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste all these peoples and their lands. **19**They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by human hands. **20**Now, Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, Lord, are the only God.”

Sennacherib’s Fall

**21**Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, **22**this is the word the Lord has spoken against him:

“Virgin Daughter Zion  
    despises and mocks you.  
Daughter Jerusalem  
    tosses her head as you flee.  
**23**Who is it you have ridiculed and blasphemed?  
    Against whom have you raised your voice  
and lifted your eyes in pride?  
    Against the Holy One of Israel!  
**24**By your messengers  
    you have ridiculed the Lord.  
And you have said,  
    ‘With my many chariots  
I have ascended the heights of the mountains,  
    the utmost heights of Lebanon.  
I have cut down its tallest cedars,  
    the choicest of its junipers.  
I have reached its remotest heights,  
    the finest of its forests.  
**25**I have dug wells in foreign lands  
    and drunk the water there.  
With the soles of my feet  
    I have dried up all the streams of Egypt.’

**26**“Have you not heard?  
    Long ago I ordained it.  
In days of old I planned it;  
    now I have brought it to pass,  
that you have turned fortified cities  
    into piles of stone.  
**27**Their people, drained of power,  
    are dismayed and put to shame.  
They are like plants in the field,  
    like tender green shoots,  
like grass sprouting on the roof,  
    scorched[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2037-40#fen-NIV-18380d)] before it grows up.

**28**“But I know where you are  
    and when you come and go  
    and how you rage against me.  
**29**Because you rage against me  
    and because your insolence has reached my ears,  
I will put my hook in your nose  
    and my bit in your mouth,  
and I will make you return  
    by the way you came.

**30**“This will be the sign for you, Hezekiah:

“This year you will eat what grows by itself,  
    and the second year what springs from that.  
But in the third year sow and reap,  
    plant vineyards and eat their fruit.  
**31**Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah  
    will take root below and bear fruit above.  
**32**For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant,  
    and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors.  
The zeal of the Lord Almighty  
    will accomplish this.

**33**“Therefore this is what the Lord says concerning the king of Assyria:

“He will not enter this city  
    or shoot an arrow here.  
He will not come before it with shield  
    or build a siege ramp against it.  
**34**By the way that he came he will return;  
    he will not enter this city,”  
declares the Lord.  
**35**“I will defend this city and save it,  
    for my sake and for the sake of David my servant!”

**36**Then the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning - there were all the dead bodies! **37**So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

**38**One day, while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisrok, his sons Adrammelek and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and they escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son succeeded him as king.

Hezekiah’s Illness

**38**In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, “This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover.”

**2**Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, **3**“Remember, Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

**4**Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: **5**“Go and tell Hezekiah, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. **6**And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city.

**7**“‘This is the Lord’s sign to you that the Lord will do what he has promised: **8**I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.’” So the sunlight went back the ten steps it had gone down.

**9**A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah after his illness and recovery:

**10**I said, “In the prime of my life  
    must I go through the gates of death  
    and be robbed of the rest of my years?”  
**11**I said, “I will not again see the Lord himself  
    in the land of the living;  
no longer will I look on my fellow man,  
    or be with those who now dwell in this world.  
**12**Like a shepherd’s tent my house  
    has been pulled down and taken from me.  
Like a weaver I have rolled up my life,  
    and he has cut me off from the loom;  
    day and night you made an end of me.  
**13**I waited patiently till dawn,  
    but like a lion he broke all my bones;  
    day and night you made an end of me.  
**14**I cried like a swift or thrush,  
    I moaned like a mourning dove.  
My eyes grew weak as I looked to the heavens.  
    I am being threatened; Lord, come to my aid!”

**15**But what can I say?  
    He has spoken to me, and he himself has done this.  
I will walk humbly all my years  
    because of this anguish of my soul.  
**16**Lord, by such things people live;  
    and my spirit finds life in them too.  
You restored me to health  
    and let me live.  
**17**Surely it was for my benefit  
    that I suffered such anguish.  
In your love you kept me  
    from the pit of destruction;  
you have put all my sins  
    behind your back.  
**18**For the grave cannot praise you,  
    death cannot sing your praise;  
those who go down to the pit  
    cannot hope for your faithfulness.  
**19**The living, the living - they praise you,  
    as I am doing today;  
parents tell their children  
    about your faithfulness.

**20**The Lord will save me,  
    and we will sing with stringed instruments  
all the days of our lives  
    in the temple of the Lord.

**21**Isaiah had said, “Prepare a poultice of figs and apply it to the boil, and he will recover.”

**22**Hezekiah had asked, “What will be the sign that I will go up to the temple of the Lord?”

Envoys From Babylon

**39**At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of his illness and recovery. **2**Hezekiah received the envoys gladly and showed them what was in his storehouses - the silver, the gold, the spices, the fine olive oil - his entire armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.

**3**Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, “What did those men say, and where did they come from?”

“From a distant land,” Hezekiah replied. “They came to me from Babylon.”

**4**The prophet asked, “What did they see in your palace?”

“They saw everything in my palace,” Hezekiah said. “There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.”

**5**Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord Almighty: **6**The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. **7**And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

**8**“The word of the Lord you have spoken is good,” Hezekiah replied. For he thought, “There will be peace and security in my lifetime.”

Comfort for God’s People

**40**Comfort, comfort my people,  
    says your God.  
**2**Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
    and proclaim to her  
that her hard service has been completed,  
    that her sin has been paid for,  
that she has received from the Lord’s hand  
    double for all her sins.

**3**A voice of one calling:  
“In the wilderness prepare  
    the way for the Lord;  
make straight in the desert  
    a highway for our God.[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2037-40#fen-NIV-18424f)]  
**4**Every valley shall be raised up,  
    every mountain and hill made low;  
the rough ground shall become level,  
    the rugged places a plain.  
**5**And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,  
    and all people will see it together.  
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

**6**A voice says, “Cry out.”  
    And I said, “What shall I cry?”

“All people are like grass,  
    and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.  
**7**The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
    because the breath of the Lord blows on them.  
    Surely the people are grass.  
**8**The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
    but the word of our God endures forever.”

**9**You who bring good news to Zion,  
    go up on a high mountain.  
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2037-40#fen-NIV-18430g)]  
    lift up your voice with a shout,  
lift it up, do not be afraid;  
    say to the towns of Judah,  
    “Here is your God!”  
**10**See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,  
    and he rules with a mighty arm.  
See, his reward is with him,  
    and his recompense accompanies him.  
**11**He tends his flock like a shepherd:  
    He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart;  
    he gently leads those that have young.

**12**Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,  
    or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens?  
Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket,  
    or weighed the mountains on the scales  
    and the hills in a balance?  
**13**Who can fathom the Spirit of the Lord,  
    or instruct the Lord as his counselor?  
**14**Whom did the Lord consult to enlighten him,  
    and who taught him the right way?  
Who was it that taught him knowledge,  
    or showed him the path of understanding?

**15**Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket;  
    they are regarded as dust on the scales;  
    he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.  
**16**Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires,  
    nor its animals enough for burnt offerings.  
**17**Before him all the nations are as nothing;  
    they are regarded by him as worthless  
    and less than nothing.

**18**With whom, then, will you compare God?  
    To what image will you liken him?  
**19**As for an idol, a metalworker casts it,  
    and a goldsmith overlays it with gold  
    and fashions silver chains for it.  
**20**A person too poor to present such an offering  
    selects wood that will not rot;  
they look for a skilled worker  
    to set up an idol that will not topple.

**21**Do you not know?  
    Have you not heard?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
    Have you not understood since the earth was founded?  
**22**He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth,  
    and its people are like grasshoppers.  
He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,  
    and spreads them out like a tent to live in.  
**23**He brings princes to naught  
    and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.  
**24**No sooner are they planted,  
    no sooner are they sown,  
    no sooner do they take root in the ground,  
than he blows on them and they wither,  
    and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.

**25**“To whom will you compare me?  
    Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.  
**26**Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens:  
    Who created all these?  
He who brings out the starry host one by one  
    and calls forth each of them by name.  
Because of his great power and mighty strength,  
    not one of them is missing.

**27**Why do you complain, Jacob?  
    Why do you say, Israel,  
“My way is hidden from the Lord;  
    my cause is disregarded by my God”?  
**28**Do you not know?  
    Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
    the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He will not grow tired or weary,  
    and his understanding no one can fathom.  
**29**He gives strength to the weary  
    and increases the power of the weak.  
**30**Even youths grow tired and weary,  
    and young men stumble and fall;  
**31**but those who hope in the Lord  
    will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
    they will run and not grow weary,  
    they will walk and not be faint.