



# ShalomAZ Ministries

*In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption*

## **“Finally Seeking the Lord? Better Late than Never.”**

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### **Devotion and Discussion Questions**

**Key Texts (TLV):** *Is 37:1-13; 2 Kings 18:14-16; Isa. 36:16-17, 20-22; 30:15; 2 Cor. 12:9*

Sometimes what we call “seeking God” is really just using God as a resource for our own plans. That’s where Judah’s been. The fortified cities have fallen. Lachish—the last major stronghold—has been defeated. And what makes this so painful is that Judah’s leaders *saw it coming*. The Lord had been speaking. But they also had *their own* plan... developed quietly, confidently, secretly. Their plan was Egypt—horses from Egypt, chariots from Egypt, strength from Egypt. Except Egypt is defeated. No cavalry is coming. No help is on the way. Everything they invested in is bankrupt.

And when your “sure thing” collapses, panic starts talking. “Oh no... I’ve got to do something... give me a plan B.” Hezekiah’s first instinct in fear wasn’t prayer—it was compromise. He tried to make a deal with the enemy. Not because he suddenly got humble, but because he got scared. And here’s the sobering thing: when fear drives, we don’t just make bad decisions—we start stripping away what was devoted to God to keep ourselves comfortable. We start bargaining with what was holy to buy relief. We start doing “spiritual math” to survive. And then we learn what Judah learned: compromise never satisfies the destroyer—it only feeds him.

#### **1. FEAR MAKES US REACH FOR PLANS BEFORE WE REACH FOR GOD**

When Judah’s plan A failed, Hezekiah rushed into plan B: “Let’s bargain with Assyria.” *“So King Hezekiah of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria at Lachish... ‘Withdraw from me. Whatever you impose on me, I will bear.’” (2 Kings 18:14).* And then comes the cost: *“Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Adonai... At that time Hezekiah stripped off the gold from the doors of the Temple of Adonai... and gave them to the king of Assyria.” (2 Kings 18:15-16).* Do you hear it? The only way God enters the plan is pragmatically: “There’s silver and gold in the House of the LORD.” Not, “What does the LORD say?” but “What can I take to make this go away?”

And notice what fear does: it makes you treat sacred things like bargaining chips. It makes you strip the gold off the doors you once overlaid for worship—“Can I have that back for a minute, Lord?”—without ever asking God. And then even after you pay, compromise fails. The enemy takes everything...and still says, “I’m coming for you.” That’s what the king of Assyria does—he shouts in the ears of the people: your confidence is empty, your leaders can’t save you, your king can’t rescue you, and your God can’t snatch you from my hand. He even tries to hijack worship language: *“Make peace with me... make a blessing toward me... and come out to me.” (Isa. 36:16-17)* The destroyer always wants your trust, your surrender, your “b’rachah.” Fear tells you, “Do something.” Faith says, “Seek God.” And so often we don’t seek the Lord first—we seek Him last.

#### **2. REAL REPENTANCE ISN’T ABOUT OPTICS—IT’S OWNERSHIP AND HUMILITY**

Finally the moment gets dire enough that Hezekiah goes into the House of the LORD. *“When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Adonai.” (Isa. 37:1)* No more gold-plated doors. Sackcloth. Humility. And I love that this repentance isn’t hidden. It isn’t curated. It isn’t “Let’s keep this quiet so we don’t look weak.” Real repentance isn’t worried about image—real repentance is worried about God’s opinion. You can go through motions and tears, but repentance is when you finally say, “My ways failed. No excuses. I didn’t seek the LORD.”

Then he sends a delegation—top government officials and senior priests—also in sackcloth—to Isaiah. (*Isa. 37:2*) And you can feel the shift: “I need a word from the LORD.” God has been speaking for a long time—Isaiah didn’t just start talking yesterday. But who was listening? Sometimes it takes collapse to wake us up. And here’s the mercy: it’s not too late. Better late than never. Yes, it takes humility—“eating crow”—but this is what makes Hezekiah a “good king.” Not perfection. Not flawless faith. But that when he realized he was wrong, he didn’t double down. He humbled himself. Many kings never do. They just harden. They just defend. They just blame. But Hezekiah finally owns it and turns.

### 3. THE END OF OUR STRENGTH IS WHERE GOD’S POWER AND PEACE BEGIN

Hezekiah’s message to Isaiah is honest: *“This day is a day of distress, rebuke and contempt... For children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength for giving birth.”* (*Isa. 37:3*) That’s a vivid picture: labor has progressed to the crisis point—there’s no turning back—and now there’s no strength left to bring forth life. Either God delivers, or everything dies. And that’s where Hezekiah finally lands: “We have no capacity. No horses are coming. No plan will save us. Jerusalem must be delivered, but we can’t do it.” This is the end of human strength. This is bankruptcy with no excuses. And strangely, this is also the doorway to grace.

That’s why the Lord tells Paul, *“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.”* (*2 Cor. 12:9*) And this is what the LORD had been saying all along: *“By repentance and rest you are saved, in quietness and trust is your strength—but you were not willing.”* (*Isa. 30:15*) Now Hezekiah IS willing. He appeals to God’s honor—*“Perhaps ADONAI your God will hear the words... the King of Assyria has sent to mock the living God... So offer prayer for the remnant that is left.”* (*Isa. 37:4*) And what is the Lord’s reply? Not, “I told you so.” Not shame. Not rubbing his face in it. Isaiah says, *“Thus says ADONAI: Do not be afraid of the words you have heard.”* (*Isa. 37:6*) **The first word is: stop fearing—trust Me.** And then, in kindness, the LORD even explains *how* He’ll do it: *“He will hear a report... return to his own country... and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.”* (*Isa. 37:7*) And immediately, part of it happens—the report comes, the king shifts direction. (*Isa. 37:8–9*) The threats get louder, but that’s what bullies do when they feel their grip slipping. Meanwhile the LORD is steady: “Do not be afraid.”

### CONCLUSION

So here’s the question this passage won’t let us dodge: **Why do we wait until the last second to seek the Lord?** Why, in panic and fear, are *our plans* our first resort...and second resort...and hearing from the LORD is the last resort? Why do we compromise—giving up what was devoted to God—when the Lord keeps calling us to trust Him, to wait on Him, to look to Him?

But this is also a mercy story: it’s not too late. Better late than never. Hezekiah finally walked into the House of the LORD in humility, and the Lord met him with a word: *do not be afraid*. That’s what God does—He calls us out of fear-driven living and into trust-driven obedience. He doesn’t respond to your “deal-making” with more shame—He responds to true repentance with direction, strength, and peace. And if you’ll stop running to Egypt—stop running to plan B—stop running to compromise—God will teach you what He’s been saying all along: *“In quietness and trust is your strength.”* (*Isa. 30:15*)

Have you been living in “plan” mode, trying to manage your fears with strategy. You’ve been making deals with what’s threatening you—compromising in ways you never thought you would. And maybe you’ve even pulled “silver and gold” out of God’s house—maybe not literally, but you’ve stripped away devotion, obedience, prayer, integrity, Sabbath, holiness, faithfulness—just to buy temporary relief. And it hasn’t worked. The enemy took what you gave...and he’s still coming for more.

Today, the Lord is calling you to stop negotiating and start repenting. Not optics—heart. Not excuses—ownership. Not “I’ll add God into my plan,” but “Lord, I need Your word. Trust the Living God. Ask Yeshua to forgive you, cleanse you, and lead you. Better late than never. It’s not too late.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Where do you most naturally run first when you feel fear—prayer, people, money, control, strategy, distractions? Why?
2. In what ways can “including God” still be a form of pragmatism—using Him to fund our plans instead of seeking His will?
3. What does real repentance look like in your life—without excuses and without managing optics?
4. What “gold” have you been tempted to strip away—devotion, obedience, boundaries, integrity—just to reduce pressure?
5. How does God’s word “*Do not be afraid*” (Isa. 37:6) challenge what has been dominating your thoughts lately?

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

*Avinu Malkhenu*, Our Father, Our King, we come to You as the Living God—the One who hears, the One who sees, the One who speaks. Forgive us for the ways we have trusted in “Egypt,” for the ways we have leaned on human strength, and for the compromises we’ve made in fear. We confess that our plans have failed, and we admit our bankruptcy before You. Teach us what You’ve been saying all along—that in repentance and rest is salvation, and in quietness and trust is strength.

Adonai, give us the humility to seek You first—not last. Wash us clean, restore what has been stripped away, and rebuild devotion in our hearts. And as You told Hezekiah, speak it over us today: “Do not be afraid.” Let Your power be made perfect in our weakness, and let the power of Messiah dwell in us.

*B'Shem Yeshua*, In Yeshua’s Name, *Amen*.