



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"A Tricky Stew of the False and the True"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Is 36:1-10; Is. 7:3; 10:5-6; 30:18; 31:3; 2 Kings 18:13-17; 2 Cor. 10:3-6; Prov. 3:5-6

We're moving into a new section of Isaiah—chapters 36 through 39—and the shift is important. Up to this point, we've been immersed in prophetic poetry: the word of the Lord spoken, warned, pleaded, promised. Now the text slows down and tells a story. Narrative. Real people. Real fear. Real pressure. This isn't abstract theology—it's lived experience. Isaiah is showing us what the word of the Lord looks like when it collides with real life, real enemies, and real anxiety.

And that's where we often struggle. It's easy to trust the Lord in poetic language, in worship songs, or when everything feels stable. But when the threat is loud, visible, and pressing—when the enemy is at the doorstep, when the systems we leaned on are collapsing—the temptation is to trust what we can see rather than what God has said. Isaiah 36 brings us to that place of decision. Who will you trust when your last line of defense is gone?

1. WHEN THE ENEMY SPEAKS, HE OFTEN SOUNDS REASONABLE

The Assyrian commander doesn't begin with outright lies. He begins with questions—reasonable ones. *"What is this confidence you are trusting in?"* (Isa. 36:4). And that's what makes this moment so dangerous. Much of what he says is rooted in what seems like visible reality. Egypt really has failed. Judah really is isolated. Their political strategy really has collapsed. The enemy is telling the truth—at least part of it.

This is how deception works. The enemy rarely comes with something that is obviously false. He comes with a mixture. Truth seasoned with lies. Reality twisted just enough to lead the heart in the wrong direction. *"Your plans are only words of the lips"* (Isa. 36:5). In one sense, that's true—Isaiah had already warned them that their secret alliances and hidden counsel were not from the Lord. But the enemy uses that truth to push a lie: since your plans failed, you have no hope. Since what you trusted collapsed, you should now submit to me.

2. THE PLACE OF THREAT IS ALWAYS THE PLACE OF DECISION

The Rab-shakeh stands at the aqueduct—the place of water, security, and survival. It's the same place Isaiah once met Ahaz, Hezekiah's father (Isa. 7:3). Same location. Same question. Who will you trust when the thing you *think* sustains you is threatened? When your water supply—your sense of safety—is under siege?

Everything Hezekiah relied on is gone. The fortified cities have fallen. Lachish is captured. Egypt is defeated. From a human perspective, the game is over. This is the moment when trust is no longer theoretical. The enemy presses in and says, *"Don't trust Egypt."* That part is true. But then he adds the poison: *"And don't trust ADONAI either."* The enemy's goal is not just to expose false trust—it's to destroy true trust.

This is where many believers stumble. When God removes the false supports we've leaned on, the enemy whispers, "See? God failed you." But the Lord was never trying to take away our hope—He was removing what could never have held us up in the first place.

3. The Enemy Quotes God—but Leaves Out the Ending

The most chilling moment comes when the enemy claims divine authority: "*Adonai said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'*" (Isa. 36:10). And shockingly—there's truth there. Isaiah had already said Assyria was the rod of God's discipline (Isa. 10:5–6). The enemy is quoting God's Word, so to speak. But he's leaving out what God also has said.

What he doesn't know—or refuses to say—is that the Lord also promised deliverance. Judgment was real, but it was not the end of the story. The enemy presents a partial word and demands full surrender. That's the trick. When fear is high and pressure is intense, partial truth can feel like total truth. This is why Paul says, "*We are tearing down false arguments and every high-minded thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah*" (2 Cor. 10:5). The battle is not just around us—it's in our minds. The question is whether we will let fear interpret reality, or whether we will let God's Word have the final say.

CONCLUSION

The enemy's message is always the same: "*God has failed you. Make a deal with me.*" He takes your gold, your peace, your compromises—and still demands your life. But the Lord says something very different: "*Therefore ADONAI waits to be gracious to you*" (Isa. 30:18). Even when discipline is real, His heart is mercy. Even when the pressure is intense, His promises remain true. So today, the challenge is simple but serious: **Where is your trust?** What are you leaning on that cannot hold you? What voices have grown louder in the lived-out reality of your life than the LORD's voice? This is the moment to stop negotiating with fear and to return your trust fully to Him. Not tomorrow. Not when circumstances change. Today.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it dangerous that the enemy often mixes truth with lies rather than speaking only falsehood?
2. What "Egypts" are believers tempted to lean on today when fear rises?
3. How does pressure reveal where our true trust really lies?
4. Why is it important to know not just part of God's Word, but the whole counsel of God?
5. What does it look like practically to "take every thought captive" in seasons of anxiety?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkhenu, Our Father, Our King, we confess that too often we trust what we can see instead of what You have spoken. We repent of the compromises we've made out of fear, the alliances we've formed out of anxiety, and the voices we've allowed to drown out Your truth. Today, we choose to trust You again. We place our confidence not in systems, not in strength, not in human solutions—but in You alone. Help us to take every thought captive. Steady our hearts, oh Lord, and teach us to stand firm on the Rock that cannot be shaken.

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