

Faith, Hope, and Love: Three Questions of Life and Death

Isaiah 36–39

FAITH: Who Do You Trust? (Isaiah 36)

36:1–3	The Threat. The Rabshekah vs Eliakim, Shebna, Joah <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah . . .</i> (701 BC) (v. 1) • The Washer’s Field (v. 2) recalls another encounter with Ahaz (Isa. 7:3) 	
	36:4–10	Trust Doubted? The Rabshakeh Questions the Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do you trust? (vv. 4–5) • <i>Egypt</i> is a Broken Reed (vv. 6; cf. ch. 30–31) – Truth • <i>Hezekiah</i> has Broken Yahweh’s Altars (vv. 7) – Half-truth • <i>Assyria</i> is Your Only Hope (vv. 8–10) – Lie
		36:11–12 The Taunt: Fearful Managers + a Taunting Rabshakeh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliakim, Shebna, Joah attempt to manage the situation (v. 11) • The Rabshekah is seemingly more forthright (v. 12)
	36:13–20	Trust Denied! Rabshakeh Tears Down the Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not trust in Yahweh or listen to Hezekiah (vv. 13–16a) • Eat my food and drink my water (vv. 16b–17) • What God can save you? (vv. 18–20)
36:21–22	The Trial. Eliakim, Shebna, Joah offer nothing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The managers of Jerusalem have no answer (v. 21) • The king has no answer (v. 21) • All the leaders their clothes in fear and lamentation (v. 22) 	

HOPE: To Whom Do You Call? (Exodus 37)

37:1–7	The LORD speaks to the King of Assyria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story continues from ch. 36 – Hezekiah tears his clothes too (v. 1) • Hezekiah sends for Isaiah – this is entirely different than Ahaz (v. 2) • The source of the mockery is not the messenger, but the king of Assyria (vv. 4, 6) • The LORD takes personally the words of Rabshakeh (v. 6) 	
	37:8–13	Sennacherib’s Letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The King speaks, boasting in his nation’s prowess (vv. 10–13) • The competition is one of divine gods – who is greater!?!)
		37:14–20 Hezekiah’s Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to Sennacherib’s threat, he seeks God • Hezekiah shows his loyalty to Israel’s God
	37:21–32	Isaiah’s Prophecy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LORD hears Hezekiah and sends Isaiah (v. 21) • The LORD is doing what he said he would do (v. 26; cf. Isaiah 10) • Notice: The nation of Assyria knew the prophecy (cf. 36:10)
37:33–38	The LORD speaks to the King of Assyria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I will defend this city for the sake of David” (v. 35) • 185,000 soldiers killed (v. 36) • Sennacherib is killed in his own house (v. 38) • The LORD he is God, so hope in him 	

LOVE: Who Will Save You? (Exodus 38–39)

38:1–6	Immanuel: The LORD comes to Hezekiah <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God afflicts Isaiah with sickness (38:1) • Hezekiah cries for mercy (38:2) – he cries bitterly (cf. Luke 22:62) • God hears Hezekiah’s prayer (38:4–5) • God promises salvation (38:6)
	38:7–21 Hezekiah’s Testimony of God’s Love (see outline below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hezekiah’s testimony is prompted by two signs (vv. 7, 21) • The movement is from death to life (vv. 9–13, 18–20) • Hezekiah’s Prayer is Answered with Salvation (vv. 14–17) • Praise to God is the purpose (vv. 18–20) • Health is restored for the sake of the soul (vv. 16–17; cf. 3 John 2) • Forgiveness of sins is the only way to life (38:17)
39:1–8	No Immanuel: Hezekiah is not the One (cf. 2 Chron. 32:24–26) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon his recovery, Hezekiah returns to his own self-reliance (39:) • The Babylonians arrive to see the temple (39:2) and Hezekiah foolishly shows them (39:4) • Isaiah forewarns of the coming exile (39:5–7), which sets up Isaiah 40–66 • Hezekiah wickedly comforts himself with no pain in his generation (39:8)

Hezekiah’s Testimony

⁷ “This shall be the **sign** to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he has promised: ⁸ Behold, I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps.” So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined.

⁹ A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness: ¹⁰ I said, In the **middle of my days** I must depart; I am consigned to **the gates of Sheol** for the rest of my years.

¹¹ I said, I shall not see the LORD, the LORD in the **land of the living**; I shall look on man no more among the inhabitants of the world. ¹² **My dwelling is plucked up and removed** from me like a shepherd’s tent; like a weaver I have rolled up my life; he cuts me off from the loom; from day to night you bring me to an end; ¹³ I calmed myself until morning; like a lion he breaks all my bones; from day to night you bring me to an end.

¹⁴ Like a swallow or a crane I chirp; I moan like a dove. My eyes are weary with looking upward. O Lord, I am oppressed; be my pledge of safety! ¹⁵ What shall I say? For he has spoken to me, and he himself has done it. I walk slowly all my years because of the bitterness of **my soul**.

¹⁶ O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these is the life of **my spirit**. Oh restore me to health and make me live!

¹⁷ Behold, it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness; but in love you have delivered my life from the pit of destruction, for you have cast all my sins behind your back.

¹⁸ **For Sheol** does not thank you; death does not praise you; those who go down to the pit do not hope for your faithfulness.

¹⁹ **The living, the living**, he thanks you, as I do this day; the father makes known to the children your faithfulness.

²⁰ The LORD will save me, and we will play my music on stringed instruments **all the days of our lives**, at **the house of the LORD**.

²¹ Now Isaiah had said, “Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the boil, that he may recover.” ²² Hezekiah also had said, “What is the **sign** that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?”