

The Art of Spiritual Warfare Part 7 of 10: Sword of the Spirit and Belt of Truth; Being Armed (Presented in 2016)

The following text is based on a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cin1DmOya68>

***Portions of the video message have been edited to present a written document. All the Scripture verses are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted and are in the red. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

I want to start by reviewing a little bit of what we covered last week. We looked at the dialogue, or exchange, that took place between Yeshua and Satan. Within that exchange, we got to see behind the scenes. We were given a secret intelligence report, if you will, on our adversary. We got to see how he plans to maneuver against us to attack us. That is very valuable information.

Today we're going to continue to build upon that concept even further. I want to do this by taking you to the book of Isaiah where we find a situation that unfolds between King Hezekiah and the King of Assyria. In this story, we are going to see yet once again the nature of how the devil seeks to gain victory over us. When the plans of the enemy are known, it gives us this supernatural ability to respond. There's a saying, "Intelligence wins the war." The ones who have the intelligence reports are the ones that come out on top.

I want you to think about something; leading up to World War II, there was a nation that rose to power that frightened people. This was a nation that was so powerful, organized, and technologically advanced they struck fear in the hearts of the entire world. That country was Nazi Germany. Nazi Germany rose to power, and no nation on earth wanted to go head to head with Germany. I'll tell you that right now they were a superpower.

There was one particular thing that gave them such success and a significant advantage in the war over all the other nations. It wasn't necessarily their technological advancement in their tanks, guns, or their organization. It was something known as the Enigma which was a code machine. There were different models that businesses used before this became a tool of war, but the nation of Germany made their version and were the only ones to possess it.

What you would do with this tool was you would type the plans for war and send them out to the Generals and Lieutenants all over Europe and other parts of the world. Germany was free to communicate and express their plans because no one else knew the code. Germany, therefore, was free to attack whoever they wanted because no one knew what was coming. The other nations never knew what to expect from Germany because they couldn't get any intelligence from them. No one knew how to crack the code of the Enigma.

I want you to understand something; one of the primary reasons the tide turned in World War II was because British intelligence cracked the Enigma. Germany had one machine for their army and another even more complex machine for their navy. Because of the Enigma, Germany's U-boats were going around undetected. The allied forces had no clue what was coming until their ships were hit and sunk.

The allied forces could not find the U-Boats until they cracked the code of the Enigma machine. At that point, British intelligence started to see the plans Germany was sending out and knew where to look for Germany's U-boats. They were then able to force the U-Boats to surface so that they could sink them. The allies were getting ahead of Germany because they knew what was coming.

The point being is when you know the adversaries plans, you can prepare. It will turn the tide in war, and this means everything to us. That is why we go through Scripture from story to story to story. We are cracking the code. We are cracking the Enigma. We are getting to know how Satan is going to move against us. It doesn't get more valuable than that, and the key to it is the stories that we study in Scripture. Like last week, today you're going to get another taste of that when we look at the story between Hezekiah and the King of Assyria.

I want to take you to Isaiah 36:1—¹ **Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah.** I want to stop here so we can put this in context. We are looking at the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah. Something monumental happened six to nine years earlier. That was when the king of Assyria took Israel captive. That happened in 721 B.C. The king of Assyria just plucked Israel up and took her out of her land. So that happened around the sixth year of Hezekiah; now here we are in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

So what does it say? **That Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them (Isaiah 36:1).** Moving on to Isaiah 36:2—² **Then the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh [A title for a five star General or a high ranking governor. He would be a direct representative of the King] with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. And he stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field.**

There's some history here between Assyrian and Judah that is worth mentioning so that you understand why the King of Assyria has risen against King Hezekiah. This history goes back to Hezekiah's father, Ahaz. When Ahaz was king, the relationship between the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah was not great. Israel rose up to go to war with Judah, but they didn't do it alone. They went and grabbed the king of Syria, not Assyria but Syria. Together they went to attack Judah. Hezekiah's father Ahaz freaks out a little bit, and he runs to the King of Assyria and pleads for help. He empties out the wealth of the temple and his own house to entice the King of Assyria to help. The king of Assyria takes the deal and comes and repels Israel and Syria.

King Ahaz, however, was an evil king. He was nothing like his son Hezekiah. When Hezekiah came to power, he started to change how everything was done in Judea. He wanted to put the nation back on track with God. He went throughout the land and tore down the high places that had been erected. He did this because the people were only supposed to worship the LORD thy God in the city of Jerusalem at the temple. However, throughout Judea, they had erected all these high places which Hezekiah went and tore down.

So now in our story, we find the King of Assyria coming to attack Hezekiah. When Hezekiah's father Ahaz had paid him off to help him in war, it created a relationship that was not good. The King of Assyria thought that his leverage over Judea is going to continue. It is a mobster mentality; you just pay me, and I'll take care of you. Then you are going to continue to pay me.

This is when Hezekiah rebels. This is where the problem comes in. This is where we are at in the story in Isaiah 36:1. Hezekiah has the attitude, "I'm done with that. I've torn down the high places, and I'm getting Judah back on track. We are not going to be subject to the King of Assyria any longer." Well, the King of Assyria comes out against the fortified cities of Judah and starts taking them down. Hezekiah kind of freaks out and tries to pay off the King of Assyria again. This incident is not recorded here, but if you go to 2 Kings, you can read about it.

So Hezekiah does what his father did. He depletes the temple funds. He even strips the gold off the doors of the temple to pay him off. Hezekiah basically says, "I should not have rebelled. I'll pay you whatever you want. Just go away." The king of Assyria is not going to turn away, and so this brings us up to speed as we come to Isaiah 36:3—³ **And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him [The Rabshakeh].** Now keep in mind these men are King Hezekiah's trusted men. They are high ranking officials in his kingdom, and they are very wise God-fearing men.

Continuing in Isaiah 36:4-5—⁴ **Then the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What confidence is this in which you trust?"** ⁵ **"I say, you speak of having plans and power for war; but they are mere words. Now in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me?"** I have got to tell you something; when I read these words, I feel the darkness coming out from them. It is like I'm listening to Adolph Hitler. These words are filled with darkness and wickedness. These are the words of the devil himself.

I want you to think about what's being said here. Ask yourself this "Has the devil ever come to me and spoken into my heart or whispered in my ear, 'You speak of having plans and power for war. You say you have this undeniable faith in Yeshua and through His name you have the power to wage war against me. But these are mere words.'"

That example is how the devil is going to come at us. He loves to tell you that you can never be healed, "Didn't you hear what the doctor said? You have an incurable disease. You have stage four cancer. There is no hope for you. You can try to cry out for Jesus, but they are mere words. There is no real power."

Satan tells people there's no hope for them in their marriage. He tells them their spouse has too far gone. He whispers into your heart and ear that it can't happen. He tells you that you may pray, but those are just words, and there's no real power. He tells you not to bother praying for people because when you pray, you're just speaking words. He tells you there's no effect that you're going to make on that person by petitioning the LORD.

These are the lies that Satan peddles among us today, and I want you to see this for what it is. This is precisely what the King of Assyria is doing to Hezekiah. It is deeply profound; it is deeply spiritual. I want to warn you; do not underestimate the power or the influence of propaganda in war. A great example is Hitler during World War II achieved the inconceivable of slaying over six million Jews in such horrific fashion. Hitler did this through the power of persuasion. He did it through the tongue.

This is something that you want to pick up on. You need to understand just how powerful the adversary is, and what a great effect he can have on you as he whispers his filthy lies into your ears. He's going to run this campaign on you.

The Rabshakeh goes on in Isaiah 36:6—⁶ **Look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him.** ⁷ **But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar?'**"

The Rabshakeh is trying to cry foul. He is trying to discredit Hezekiah's righteousness. The further we get into this, the more mind-blowing the deception gets.

Moving on to Isaiah 36:8—⁸ **Now, therefore, I urge you, give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria.** If you want to know what this is all about, here is your answer. The Rabshakeh wants pledge. Satan wants us to pledge our allegiance to him; this is what he's after. Do you remember the dialogue we looked at between Yeshua and Satan? What did Satan say? All these things I will give to you if you will just bow down and worship me. In other words, give me pledge, and I will pay handsomely for it.

Isn't that fascinating? That is the very same thing we see happen now. Look at the very next thing that the Rabshakeh says in Isaiah 36:8 is— **and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to put riders on them!** The Rabshakeh is willing to pay Hezekiah for the pledge. Satan too is willing to give you the desires of your heart. But know this; in the end, you'll be cutting the check. It will come at the expense of your soul.

Moving on to Isaiah 36:9—⁹ **How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen?** So basically the Rabshakeh is telling Hezekiah and his men, "You do not have the power to overcome me. You do not stand a chance. Your only option here is surrender." As we continue in the passage, you're going to see just how persuasive and to what depths the enemy is willing to go to ensure victory, to ensure that we surrender.

Look at what the Rabshakeh says next in Isaiah 36:10—¹⁰ **Have I now come up without the LORD.** I want to stop right there. When he says—**have I now come up without the LORD**, he is not talking about a false god. In the Hebrew, this is not Moloch, Baal, or Asherah. It is not any of the false gods that Scripture mentions. It is יהוה *YHWH*. He is talking about the LORD.

Then he goes on— **against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'** " The Rabshakeh is telling Hezekiah's men—**The LORD [יהוה] said to me, go up against this land and destroy it.** Talk about the power of persuasion! It doesn't get scarier than this. The fact that Satan is willing to come to us pretending to be a messenger of the LORD is frightening.

Last week we discovered that Satan was willing to use Scripture against us. Now we see it's not just that; he's coming to us in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

We as believers need to be looking out for this kind of activity where the demonic hosts of wickedness are coming forth masquerading as ministers of the LORD. They are whispering into your ears that they have come to impart the will of God to you and have come to impart truth to you. How scary is that? Let that sink down.

The Apostle Paul captures the whole concept well in 2 Corinthians 11:13—¹³ **For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.** Do you understand the wolves in

sheep's clothing don't go around telling you about Buddha or talking about Allah? They go around proclaiming Jesus. They proclaim that they are His followers, and they are our brothers or our sisters. This is what they do.

Paul continues in 2 Corinthians 11:14-15—¹⁴ **And no wonder! For Satan himself, transforms himself into an angel of light.** ¹⁵ **Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness.** Notice it does not say, "Ministers of immorality." They're coming as ministers of righteousness—**whose end will be according to their works.**

In war, there are double agents. There are also double agents in spiritual warfare. They are going to attempt to seduce us to get us to succumb to the will of Satan all while using the holy name of Yeshua. Satan does this under the guise of Yeshua to disarm you.

This is a real threat no matter how hard it is for you to believe the threat is real. The danger is imminent which is why Paul is writing this. Why does Yeshua have to talk about false prophets and warn us? Why does Peter have to warn about it too? Because the threat is real and is going to be among us. We need to expect that and be looking for it.

Getting back to our story of Hezekiah's men and how they are going to respond to the Rabshakeh and the King of Assyria. Isaiah 36:11—¹¹ **Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it.** I do want to stop here and point out something. These men of Hezekiah are wise. They are what you would call watchmen on the wall. They are moving craftily. You'll see that in a moment. They ask the Rabshakeh to speak to them in Aramaic.

Now for those of you who don't know Aramaic, this was the diplomatic language of the Near East at that time. It was not the common tongue of the Jewish people living in Judea. They spoke Hebrew. Not everyone spoke Aramaic at this time. The context of the text proves this. Certain people would have had to speak Aramaic because of the nation surrounding them such as Hezekiah's representatives. They are involved in foreign diplomacy. They needed to be bilingual or even trilingual to be able to cohabitate with other nations and be able to trade freely.

So Hezekiah's men say to the Rabshakeh, "No. No. Stop. Speak to us in the Aramaic language for we understand it. Don't speak to us in Hebrew so that the people on the wall understand what you are saying." Why would these men ask such a thing? It is crucial you understand the art of spiritual warfare, and you understand propaganda.

These watchmen are not willing to give Satan a platform to speak to the people. Understand something about communities, the watchmen on the wall are to rise, and they are not to provide a platform for the evil one to speak to the people. That's one of the primary functions of the watchman on a wall. A watchman will intercede. He will cut the adversary off, and that is precisely what is happening here. We do not give a platform for the enemy to speak.

How does the Rabshakeh respond to this request? Well, he doesn't exactly comply—**But the Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?"** (Isaiah 36:12).

He seems to be taken a little bit of a tone here if you notice. He started to tell them they were going to eat and drink their own waste. This whole thing is getting worse. This is where the argument just turns bad.

Continuing in Isaiah 36:13—¹³ Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew [He did not comply with the request], and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! This is something you need to understand; HaSatan wants an audience. He wants a platform. Why? Because he knows how powerful his tongue is and how infectious it can be. It spreads like cancer, and the Rabshakeh knows this. He wants to stir pandemonium. He wants to stir fear in the hearts of the people.

Of course, the watchmen don't want that. So we continue in Isaiah 36:14—¹⁴ Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you [He wants the people to hear this], for he will not be able to deliver you; ¹⁵ 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."

So in a very clever fashion, the Rabshakeh comes forth and sows doubt among the people by warning them, "You cannot let Hezekiah deceive you. You are going to fall if you allow Hezekiah to turn you back to the LORD by ensuring you 'The LORD will take care of us.' "

The Rabshakeh set this up in a very twisted and perverse fashion. He is claiming that he is the one who came in the name of the LORD and is doing the will of the LORD. Do you see the level of deception? This exchange is going to be taken to the next level as we continue to read.

Isaiah 36:16—¹⁶ Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make peace with me by a present and come out to me. Over and over and over again we see this mentality. The people are told that the king of Assyria is willing to pay for their peace, or what he proclaims to be peace. However, listen to this next statement—and every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree. For you to truly appreciate what was just said or how the Jewish people would have heard these words, you would find this statement rang in the ears of the Jewish people. This very statement was already written down. It had previously happened earlier on. We can see this in 1 Kings 4:25. When King Solomon came to power, something happened. There was total peace in Israel. What does the text say? 1 Kings 4:25— And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

So the Rabshakeh is playing off of this, "You have received what God has promised. You have received total peace." Do not think that the Rabshakeh's statement is a coincidence. We are starting to see Scripture flying around here where the Jewish people would have heard this and thought to themselves, "Well we know what that means. We've experienced that. Well, this sounds good in that every man is going to sit under his vine and fig tree. That sounds like the words of the LORD." We can also find the same context in the age to come. Look in Zachariah 3:10—Everyone will invite his neighbor Under his vine and under his fig tree.

The tongue of the adversary will have you so twisted and confused it is mind blowing. This is why we need to investigate him. This is why we have to break the code so that we can see him coming.

The Rabshakeh continues in Isaiah 36:16-17—and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; ¹⁷ until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of

bread and vineyards. So the entirety of the pitch here is, "I will give you what you were promised. You're going to experience peace and shalom. Eventually, you're going to be relocated. You are not going to lose anything." That is the same pitch that Satan gave to Eve in the garden, "You're not going to lose anything. You have only to gain by eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil." The same thing is happening here. Just surrender and all will be well.

Moving on to Isaiah 36:18-20—¹⁸ **Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." Has anyone of the gods of the nations delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ¹⁹ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? ²⁰ Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"** "

Here we have the ugly head of pride. Pride is the very reason the adversary was cast out of heaven. This sound a lot like Isaiah 14:13 where we have Satan exalting his throne above the stars of heaven; exulting is throne above God. Do you see the fear and intimidation that is being sown right now? The Rabshakeh is saying, "There is no one that can deliver you from my hand, and I offer you an olive branch. Surrender and you'll live; otherwise, you have nothing to live for but death." That is the pitch.

I'm going to tell you right now; fear is one of the most powerful, most dangerous, and the most effective weapons that we as believers will ever have to combat. Absolutely. It is powerful. Fear is the master controller. If Satan can sow fear into our hearts and whisper fear into our minds, he can then gain total control over us. I liken it to wrapping strings around our limb, and then the puppet master takes over. As Satan sows fear, he is sewing these things around your limbs, and he starts to move you wherever he wants you to go because fear equals control. That's what it equals.

Out of all the ways Satan can get to us, fear is the one that I have personally witnessed take more people captive. Think about Israel. Why didn't Israel go up and take the land? Because they saw the Nephilim; they saw the giants. They did not believe they could do it because Satan struck fear in their hearts. Fear prevented them from obeying God. I want you to think about that; it prevented them from obeying God.

Well, we've seen this before. Why did King Saul disobey? Saul was a king anointed of God. He prophesied through the Holy Spirit. He was called to be king over Israel. He was given all these things, and everything he had was stripped from him. The Holy Spirit was taken from him. His kingship was taken from him, and we were told this in Chronicles 7:13 that the mercy of God was taken from him. All this happened because he was disobedient. But this disobedience was the product of something. What was the root of his disobedience? It was fear. When you think about that, it hits you like a ton of bricks! It was fear that led to disobedience.

Let me show you just briefly what I am talking about. I want to take you to 1 Samuel 15. Saul had been commanded to kill everything the Amalekites had both man and beast. Saul doesn't do that. He spares King Agag, and then he saves the best of the sheep and the oxen. Satan came in and whispered in his hear, "This is a good thing. You want to do this because we're going to offer this to the LORD."

Well, how does Samuel reply to Saul? 1 Samuel 15:22-23—²² **So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and**

stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."

How does Saul respond to this? This is what he says as recorded in 1 Samuel 15:24—**Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.** That disobedience was a product of something else. Saul feared the people, and he obeyed their voice.

What's the moral here? Satan is going to try to run the same game against every single one of us. He is going to try to control us through fear.

Think about all the various fears. Here are just a couple. Fear of death (violence/ illness). Fear of what others think (insecurity). I've seen so many people suffer from being so insecure. Satan has them so wrapped up in bondage they can't see it. Satan has believers wrapped in bondage to the point they become so insecure about themselves that they shy away from the community. They shy away from participating. What does Satan want to do? He wants to isolate people. This is his desire. He sows fear, and he just pulls strings because fear is control.

Fear of darkness. People have different fears of the darkness, and this could be related to demonic forces. We as believers in Yeshua, as sons of the Living God, are not to fear these things. We are not to fear the adversary in any way. If you fear the adversary, that is not good. We are called to fear the LORD God and Him alone.

Fear of hunger (lack of provision). Here's a perfect example of this. God's Fourth Commandment is you shall rest on the Sabbath day. And yet when an employer calls someone wanting them to work on the Sabbath day, they become worried. They want to keep the Sabbath day, but they're worried regarding where their provision is going to come from. They reason, "If I don't go to work on Saturday, my boss will fire me." Satan has sown fear into the hearts of people to prevent them from being obedient and doing what God has called them to do according to Scripture.

The LORD said— **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you (Matthew 6:33).** Satan purges that out of your mind and gets you focused on the idea, "If I don't make money, I won't be able to buy. I won't be able to pay my rent, or I won't be able to make the house payment." Or maybe it could be that you won't be able to buy all the materialistic things that your flesh desires.

Fear of abandonment. The fear of being alone is one that I see plaguing people to the point that they are looking for a companion, and when they can't find one, they begin to compromise. They started out with a list that included someone who is a man or woman of God. Someone who fears God. Soon their thought turns to, "I have not found anyone like that, so I'm going to scratch a few qualifiers off the list." This is when they start to compromise. Pretty soon they find somebody that they're unequally yoked with, and things go horribly wrong.

This is all fear being sowed into us. Remember what I talked about last week regarding Satan provoking us to be disobedient to the will of God? Over and over again Satan keeps playing these games with us. It is all in the mind; this campaign doesn't end.

We all struggle with fear. The difference is how you respond to that fear. Do you give up control or do you take control? To give up control is to surrender. We're not called to do that.

In the 1960's, there was something known as the Cuban missile crisis. Russia started to move missiles into Cuba. That was not good because Cuba is something like 90 miles off our coast. We also had missiles in strategic locations that we could use to attack Russia. We were on the brink of war.

President John F. Kennedy addressed the nation in the Cuban Missile Crisis Speech. Toward the end of his speech, he says something that is so profound. This is something that we need to take away as believers in Yeshua because you are going to witness the heart of a warrior. Look at what President John F. Kennedy said. He said— **The path we have chosen for the present is full of hazards, as all paths are—but it is the one most consistent with our character and courage as a nation and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom is always high.**

I want you to think about that. I showed you these quotes from the Revolutionary War, and we find that nothing changes in war. When it comes to freedom and liberty, the cost to walk in freedom and liberty is high. Yeshua said that unless you forsake everything you have, you cannot be His disciple. It doesn't get higher than that. The cost of freedom is high.

The speech continues—**and Americans have always paid it.** I ask you this; are the Christians, the believers in Yeshua, willing to pay it?

He goes on to say—**And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender or submission** (John F. Kennedy, Cuban Missile Crisis Speech, October 22, 1962). What a profound statement! What a heart of a warrior.

I want you to consider this; every time Satan starts to sow fear in you regarding something you do not want to do, rise and do it. Rebel against Satan because most likely there is something the LORD wants you to do. Think about it. If Satan comes at you and tries to sow fear in your heart, it is for a purpose. It is for his plan and his kingdom. It is not for the Kingdom of God. You are being prevented from doing something powerful.

The Apostle Paul incited Timothy regarding fear. Look at these beautiful words found in 2 Timothy 1:7—**For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.** If we follow this to its logical conclusion, we will find that if you are dealing with fear in your heart, it's not of God. That fear isn't from the LORD. It is from the adversary. What God has given us is power. No longer are we to walk in fear. We are free. We walk in liberty. We are not controlled by fear. We should want the power of Yeshua.

Look at Romans 8:15—**For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."** What is fear? Fear is the spirit of bondage. Be honest with yourself. What fears are controlling you? When you realize the answer to that question, you now have to admit that the fears in your life have you in bondage. That's a hard thing, but it's a reality. We need light casting out the darkness.

Every one of us is confronted with fears of some kind. They may be different, but we all struggle with fear. To purge out fear, we're given the recipe. We are given the formula in 1 John 4:18—**There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear.**

This is scary. According to Paul, if I have fear I'm in bondage. Then in 1 John we are told that if we have fear we have not been made perfect in love. This is bad. Perfect love will cast out fear. How do you get perfect love? By being in an intimate relationship with Yeshua. There's no other way. He is **—the Way, the Truth, and the life (John 4:16).**

That's what we need. We need to get in a relationship with Yeshua. Stop being seduced by the adversary whether through immorality, fear, or whatever the desires of your heart are. We need to get in an intimate relationship. I know for a fact, the closer you get to Yeshua, the fear will leave your body. The fear you will have of Him will trump the fear you have of the world.

With that said, I want to take you back to our story and see how Hezekiah and his men respond to the Rabshakeh sowing fear and attempting to intimidate them. We need to pay close attention to this. Isaiah 36:21-22—²¹ **But they held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him."** ²² **Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh. Moving to Isaiah 37:1-2—¹ And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. ² Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.**

So in looking at how Hezekiah responds to the Rabshakeh's warning, the first thing that Hezekiah does when he hears what I would call "great swelling words of despair and fear" is to go up to the house of the LORD. He goes to meet with God. Not just that, but we find that Hezekiah sends his men to Isaiah the prophet. He wants to bring the prophet Isaiah in on the matter.

That is fascinating because right here we're given the formula of how we are to respond to the attacks of the adversary. It is simple. Drop to your knees; run to the LORD and then consult the prophets. This is exactly what Hezekiah was doing.

You want to talk about wisdom in warfare. Remember the context here is war. So Hezekiah sends his men to meet with the prophet, and the prophet has good news. The prophet sends the men back to Hezekiah with good words telling him, "Don't be afraid of the King of Assyria because the LORD Himself is going to take care of him."

It is amazing. Think about what the prophet tells Hezekiah. When I read the Word, Bible, everywhere I read the LORD, in the end, is going to take care of us. He is going to deal with the adversary. Read Revelation 19. Yeshua has a sword coming out of His mouth, and He is going to strike the nations. The same thing is happening here.

Well, after Hezekiah receives word from Isaiah, he then gets a message from the Rabshakeh. The Rabshakeh sent a letter to Hezekiah giving the same speech that was giving to his representatives. It is a

lot of huff and puff, "Nobody's going to deliver you from the king of Assyria's hand. Nobody can do that. Don't trust in God because He will not help you." So Hezekiah receives this letter from the Rabshakeh, and what does he do? Isaiah 37:14-15—¹⁴ And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it, and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. ¹⁵ Then Hezekiah prayed to the LORD.

Prayer is one of the most powerful weapons we have at our disposal. If you're going to fight in spiritual warfare and rise against the host of wickedness, you're going to have to learn how to pray. That's not an option. You're going to have to learn how to pray. When righteous men and women go to prayer, I promise you this; mighty things happen in the spiritual realm.

To help you appreciate what I'm saying and to support this, I want to briefly take you to the book of Daniel 9. In this chapter, Daniel offers up one of the most powerful prayers you will ever read in Scripture. In fact, I've used the book of Daniel chapter nine as a central hub to put my prayer notes. There are two main ones and a third that is the prayer of Yeshua.

I want you to understand something; there's a reason that we say the LORD's Prayer at the end of every one of these spiritual warfare messages. It is because Yeshua was teaching us how to go to war. We say it every week. If you are wondering why we are saying the LORD's Prayer, don't question because the weapon of our warfare that is so mighty and powerful is prayer. You need to know how to pray.

I want to take you to Daniel and show you what happens when men of God get on their knees. Daniel 9:20-23—²⁰ Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹ yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. ²² And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³ At the beginning of your supplications, the command went out.

Several things to note from these verses. Gabriel is the same Gabriel that went to Zacharias and told him, "You're going to bear a son; you should call his name John (the Baptist). He will go and pave the way for the Messiah." This is the same Gabriel that went to Mary and said, "You're going to bear a son; you should call Him Yeshua." This is the same man we are told about in the Book of Enoch. We are told he is over all of Paradise, and he's over the Cherubim.

Second, the command did not go out at the end of his supplication. The minute Daniel's knees hit the ground, the minute he opened his mouth to pray, the heavens thundered, and the voice of the LORD spoke, "Go to my servant Daniel." Think about the power of prayer. We don't have to persuade the LORD. The moment we drop to our knees and start to speak, the LORD takes care of it. The LORD moves. The hosts of heaven start scrambling because the LORD is giving commands. That whole concept is so powerful.

Let me build upon this in Daniel 10:12—¹² Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God. You want to know how

to humble yourself? You want to know how to have power in prayer? Humility is the key. Humble yourself before your God.

Continuing in Daniel 10:12—**your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.** The Rabshakeh wants to tell you, “Don’t bother praying. The things that you say are mere words.”

That is a lie from the pit of hell. When you drop your knees in humility turning to God and crying out to Him, calling upon the name of Yeshua with your whole heart, from what I read in Scripture the host of heaven start scrambling all over the place because the voice of the LORD is speaking. Gabriel came because of Daniel's words. That's amazing! Think of the power and the beautiful, intimate relationship that you can have with the LORD. The only reason Gabriel showed up was because of Daniel's request.

That puts it on a whole other plateau for me regarding understanding the power of prayer. Satan will tell me, “All the words you are saying are blah, blah, blah. You’re just going through the motions because you have been taught to do this. Nothing will come out of your prayer.” Well, I assure you if you listen to the words of Satan, nothing will come out of your prayer. If that's what you think, nothing will come out of your prayers.

So let's bring this all full circle. When Hezekiah was being threatened with destruction by the intimidating speech of the Rabshakeh, which required Hezekiah to surrender, Hezekiah didn't cave to the pressure. He did not surrender. He went to his prayer closet and fought this battle on his knees. That's how we need to fight in this war.

When you read the story, we're told this is the exact reason the battle was won. Prayer is the very reason that an angel went to Daniel. Look at this in Matthew 21:22—**And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.** Yeshua said the same thing in John 14:13—**And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do.** It's the power of the name of Yeshua. Whatever you ask in His name, believing, we will receive.

For us as a community to transform from the inside out, you need to believe this. If you want healing to take place, bondages broken, and fear stripped out of your heart, this is what has to happen. You have to believe and call upon the name of Yeshua. He will move mountains.

Let's go to Isaiah 37:21 and see why Hezekiah's prayer was answered—²¹ **Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria.'** Moving to Isaiah 37:33-36—³³ **"Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: 'He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor build a siege mound against it. ³⁴ By the way that he came, By the same shall he return; And he shall not come into this city,' Says the LORD. ³⁵ 'For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake and for My servant David's sake.' "** ³⁶ **Then the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses--all dead.**

This is why we turn to the LORD. This is why we turn to prayer. When we pray to Him, we will receive the victory. But Satan wants to tell you, "You don't have time for prayer. Don't make time for prayer because you are too busy running here and there."

We're going to talk a little bit more about prayer next week because I'm not done with the topic of prayer.

I want to close with this verse. This is a verse that we should memorize because we need to become well acquainted with it as the world starts to deteriorate. Psalm 50:15—**Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.**

There are three specific things mentioned in that verse. When we are in trouble, we call to Yeshua. What is the effect of calling upon Him? He will deliver us. What is to happen after that? We are to go out and give Him glory.

Shabbat Shalom