

- Rabshakeh creates a false choice: resist and be destroyed or surrender and live comfortably. He leaves out the decisive option: trust the LORD. He assumes that because Judah cannot save herself, nobody can save her. But Judah's inability was precisely why she needed to trust God.
- Doubt often narrows our vision until compromise appears sensible and obedience unreasonable. Faith means refusing to allow our questions to overturn what God has clearly revealed: *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee"* (26:3). Hebrews 10:23 likewise says: *"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)."* Our confidence rests not in the strength of our faith but in the faithfulness of the God who has promised. True peace does not come from surrendering to pressure; it comes from trusting the LORD.

(vi) *Despair – Mocking the Living God, 36:18–20*

- Rabshakeh now reaches the climax of his attack. He argues that the gods of other nations could not save them from Assyria, so the LORD cannot save Jerusalem either (vv18–20). He names Hamath, Arphad, Sepharvaim, and Samaria. Despair distorts our view of the future. It takes what has happened in the past and turns it into an absolute conclusion. But past experience cannot cancel God's promises. Despair looks at the size of the problem; faith looks at the greatness of God.
- Rabshakeh makes a fatal error. He treats the LORD as though He were merely another powerless god of the nations. Samaria did not fall because the LORD was weak. Israel was judged for persistent rebellion, idolatry, and covenant unfaithfulness. Assyria was an instrument of God's judgment, not a power greater than God. The LORD is not one god among many. He is the living & sovereign God, Creator and LORD of every nation.
- Rabshakeh's final question is an open defiance of the living God: *"Who are they among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?"* (v20). It is one thing to threaten Judah; it is another to mock the living God. He thought he was putting Judah on trial. In reality, he had placed Assyria under the judgment of the sovereign God. Isaiah had already declared that God would eventually *"punish the stout heart of the king of Assyria"* (10:12). Rabshakeh thought he had spoken the final word: "Your God cannot save you." But he had not. God would have the final word.

3. Judah's Response – Silence Before God (36:21–22)

(i) *Obedient Silence, 36:21*

- After Rabshakeh's long speech, Isaiah records a remarkably simple response: *"But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not"* (v21). The people did not argue, retaliate, panic, or attempt to answer Rabshakeh's accusations. They simply obeyed Hezekiah's command. Not every accusation requires an answer, and not every battle needs to be fought with words. Scripture says: *"A man of understanding holdeth his peace"* (Prov 11:12). Christ Himself provides the perfect example (1 Pet 2:23). Silence is not always cowardice. Sometimes it is self-control and trust in God.

(ii) *Humble Distress, 36:22*

- The three officials returned to Hezekiah *"with their clothes rent"* (v22). They understood the seriousness of the crisis. Their torn clothes showed genuine distress, but they did not pretend to have an answer. They simply reported *"the words of Rabshakeh."* There is humility in this response. They recognized that the situation was beyond their ability to solve. Sometimes God allows us to reach the end of our own resources so that we recognize our dependence upon Him.

(iii) *Dependence – The Crisis Placed in God's Hands*

- Isaiah 36 ends without an answer to Rabshakeh. The Assyrians have spoken, Judah has remained silent, and the crisis appears unresolved. But the officials know where to take the problem: to Hezekiah, and ultimately to the LORD. Scripture commands us to speak truth, correct error, defend the faith, and proclaim the Gospel. But sometimes the most spiritual response is not another argument but to place the matter in God's hands and call upon Him in our trouble (Ps 50:15).
- Isaiah 36 therefore leaves Judah in the right posture—not trying to answer the enemy, but bringing the crisis before the LORD. The crisis was real. The enemy was powerful. Judah was weak. Yet none of these facts changed the character or promises of God. When God's people reach the end of their own strength, they must turn to the One whose strength has no end. The Assyrians have spoken. Judah has remained silent. The crisis is now in God's hands.