



Dealing with Spiritual Deceivers

Preface: *There are many books, websites, and other resources documenting those persons and organizations who, by biblical standards, are undoubtedly spiritual deceivers. But as the old saying goes, "Give someone a fish and feed them for a day, teach someone to fish and feed them for life." Hopefully this provides a starting point for developing the biblical tools by which the faithful can discern the methods and activities of the faithless.*

Granted we need to heed **ALL** of God's Word, but we especially need to take heed of things which are repeated in Scripture. The Holy Spirit is trying to impress upon us something of particular importance whenever something is referred to in God's Word more than once as evidenced in the Old Testament by the books of Kings and Chronicles, and in the New Testament by the Gospels. But there is a particular Old Testament event which is recorded **three** times in order to emphasize it's particular importance: the king of Assyria's invasion of Judah. (2 Kings 18-19, 2 Chronicles 32, and Isaiah 36-37) We will examine the account in Isaiah in order to better understand the greater lessons provided for engaging spiritual deceivers in the arena of spiritual warfare.

Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them. And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field. Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him.

– Isaiah 36:1-3

If we are paying attention to the details we would immediately recognize the significance of Rabshakeh making his appearance at "*the*

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 1 of 17](#)

conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field". This is the exact same place Isaiah stood to deliver a legitimate message from the King of Heaven. (Isaiah 7:3) This makes sense if you consider that the very definition of deception is making the false look legitimate. They most often attempt to associate themselves with people, places, and things which at one time or another were legitimately used by and associated with the One True God.

Point of Application: Spiritual deceivers in outward appearance imitate God's authority and ways. They love to associate themselves with the legitimate in order to make themselves appear legitimate.

Then Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, "What is this confidence that you have? "I say, 'Your counsel and strength for the war are only empty words.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me? Behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on 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 rely on him."

– Isaiah 36:4-6

The first point of attack begins by addressing Hezekiah's attempt to make a kind of mutual defense pact with Egypt. Not only did God specifically legislate in His Word against making treaties with foreign governments but the message was delivered earlier through Isaiah himself of the dangers of such an arrangement. (Isaiah 30-31) Additionally, throughout Scripture Egypt is the repeated symbol of the old life often accompanied by warnings which teach that when God's people "return to Egypt" they are returning to the old life. But the important thing to note here is this cleverly chosen starting point. They not only stand in a place and in a way known to have been a legitimate beacon of God's Word in order to look legitimate themselves, but God's people are often open to their attacks because they can point to real and undeniable sin.

Point of Application: Just because a spiritual deceiver uses some truth in their message and highlight actual issues of sin does not

"Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 2 of 17

automatically make them any less a deceiver. There is no such thing as "truth by association". But the allowance of personal sin is often a gateway to spiritual deception.

"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 has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'?"

– Isaiah 36:7

A significant part of the revival that took place under Hezekiah previous to this was to destroy places of false worship, what are here called "*high places*" and "*altars*", and directions to the people to instead worship exclusively at the altar in the Temple. People of that day associated these places as belonging to "the god of the land", whatever god was thought to possess that territory. By destroying those places and ordering that worship take place only in the temple, the Assyrians reveal they do not really know God's ways or that Hezekiah has been rightfully following them.

Point of Application: Spiritual deceivers often initiate their agenda by attempting to reinterpret right worship as somehow being wrong worship as a first step towards establishing a greater false belief system. This is why things like music and church services actually matter. What begins as "odd" or disconcerting changes in worship practices often foreshadow the deeper deception to come. Since error leads to greater error, they will often start with something "small" like how worship is conducted before infiltrating the "bigger" things.

"Now therefore, come make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.

– Isaiah 36:8

This is an interesting characteristic about spiritual deceivers. Because they themselves are inherently greedy and obsessed with material wealth, they think everyone else is too. All too often we don't find out about their attempts to buy off people until much later when it's too

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 3 of 17](#)

late or only from the advantage of hindsight looking back, but it's almost always present. The real problem here is for the true shepherds of God's people because it's against a good leader whom this kind of activity is often directed. This particular bribe as rendered in this verse is particularly noteworthy for the fact that God specified in His Law that a king of Israel were prohibited from stockpiling horses for himself. (Deuteronomy 17:15) Horses in the ancient world were used exclusively as tools of the military rather than for general commerce. So this enticement is wrong on a number of different levels.

Point of Application: The spiritual greed of spiritual deceivers is revealed by the depth of their earthly greed. They are more than happy to "share the wealth" if it wins you over.

"How then can you repulse one official of the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Have I now come up without the LORD'S approval against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'"
– Isaiah 36:9-10

This is also a very interesting characteristic of note where spiritual deceivers are concerned. They never claim to be acting on their own but always assert that they are acting in concert with God's will and authority. Just like Rabshakeh they have no problem telling you, "God told me to do this". In Assyria's case this would be hilarious if it weren't so tragic. The truth is that God **DID** allow them to conquer certain other nations as a tool of His judgment. But the Assyrians failed to learn the lesson of what God did to those nations through them and are themselves about to undergo that same judgment for doing the exact, same things. It's not unusual to discover that someone who has become a biblically verifiable spiritual deceiver was, at one time, in possession of a legitimate and thriving ministry of God. Some spiritual deceivers were never right from the beginning, but others began right and went astray later. They themselves are deceived because they project the authority of earlier, godly activities onto their subsequent, ungodly deviations.

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 4 of 17](#)

Point of Application: Just because someone claims to be speaking and acting in concert with God's will and authority (or even in His name) does not automatically make it so. Just because they were in alignment with God's will earlier in life does not automatically mean everything they subsequently do is likewise sanctioned by Him.

Let's review the basic, early warning signs associated with spiritual deceivers:

- Spiritual deceivers in outward appearance imitate God's authority and ways.
- Spiritual deceivers will incorporate some actual truth side-by-side with their message to give it the air of believability. They often accurately address our own personal issues of sin to fool us into believing the rest of what they say might be right.
- Spiritual deceivers often reinterpret right worship as somehow being wrong worship as an early step towards establishing a greater false belief system.
- Spiritual deceivers' earthly greed is an indication of their spiritual greed. They think everyone is just like them.
- Spiritual deceivers often start out right in life and believe that their earlier faithfulness still extends and covers their latter unfaithfulness. They often truly believe their authority derives from God because they have been given over fully to the deception themselves.

Just look at how many of these qualities are so obviously present in the notable false personalities of our time like Benny Hinn, C. Peter Wagner, Todd Blakely, Rick Warren, etc., etc., etc. So many of these people actually started out right, they all adopt language and appearances associated with Christianity, there is always at least

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 5 of 17](#)

some biblical truth woven amongst their teaching, but they are often betrayed by their pursuit of earthly wealth and power and their manipulation of worship practices as a gateway to eventually ejecting the right and true message of the Gospel. Remember, we're not talking about religions completely foreign and actively opposing Christianity but people working to take over the church from within and make it into their own image. Just like Rabshakeh they don't just misrepresent the things of God but horribly distort God's Word. If we stopped right here we could probably make a very long list of present-day spiritual deceivers.

Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to Rabshakeh, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak with us in Judean in the hearing of the people who are on the wall." But Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, doomed to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

– Isaiah 36:11-12

This is one of the sure-fire ways by which pastors and good spiritual leaders can know that they're actually up against a spiritual enemy. They may initially approach a church leader to get them on their side or under their control, but if met with resistance will not hesitate to go public. They know that when a good leader is personally successful in withstanding the wiles of spiritual deceivers that the leader can often be overcome by turning the congregation against him. And they will purposely misrepresent the situation as teetering on the brink of disaster if their voice is not obeyed just like Rabshakeh. When the religious authorities of Jesus' day couldn't fully persuade Pilate to crucify Jesus on his own, how did they ultimately sway him? They incited the crowd and they made up a situation whereby Jesus was purported to be a threat to the Roman government.

Point of Application: Spiritual deceivers like to bring about changes by manipulating the group rather than relying on the truth. They won't hesitate bringing to bear the pressure of the group. They most often appeal to the groups fears.

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 6 of 17](#)

Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean and said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. "Thus says the king, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you; 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." 'Do not listen to Hezekiah,' for thus says the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern, 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. Beware that Hezekiah does not mislead you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they delivered Samaria from my hand? Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD would deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

– Isaiah 36:13-20

- In the initial attack they discouraged reliance on an outside source such as Egypt which was actually wrong and a sin to begin with; here they attack the legitimate, true leadership.
- In both attacks they seek to diminish the credibility of the true leadership present.
- In the initial attack they attempt to bribe leadership and, when it failed, extend the bribe to the group as a whole.

Spiritual deceivers always try to court and sway public opinion in their favor. They always seek to discredit true leaders as part of their move to elevate themselves and take over those positions. It's just like the Apostle John said, "*They loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God*". (John 12:43)

But something else happens here which eventually becomes visible when it comes to all spiritual deceivers. During their initial foray they claimed to be in God's will, to be carrying out His Word and ways, to have received His instructions directly. But now they begin to speak

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 7 of 17](#)

about the God of Israel as just another of the many false gods they defeated up to this point. This is an important milestone where spiritual deceivers are concerned: sooner or later the message begins to change; sooner or later the true attitude about God comes out; sooner or later the false teaching is not so easily masked by interweaving it with actual truth here and there. They begin to bring outside influences which, in reality, have absolutely no biblically justifiable basis.

Point of Application: Spiritual deceivers reveal themselves by their attempts to use other religions and alternative spiritual practices to demote God's place among the people. They mix in non-biblical truths and practices to weaken true faith and obedience and even begin to challenge the very authority of the Godhead.

A good example of this is when, seemingly all of the sudden, Kenneth Copeland rails on about how *anyone* could have been sacrificed on the cross, that it didn't have to be limited exclusively to Jesus. Copeland and others actually assert that they themselves could have done the very same thing on the cross and the results would have been the same. Always keep in mind what the Apostle John admonished...

*Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.
– 1 John 2:22*

Those who deny fundamental aspects of the Father, Son, or even the Holy Spirit betray the true extent not just of the deception they want to propagate, but the self-deception they themselves have been given over to.

*But they were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him." Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of Rabshakeh.
– Isaiah 36:21-22*

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 8 of 17](#)

One of the most important lessons we can learn when it comes to undertaking spiritual warfare is to never give in to our initial, knee-jerk impulse to respond from the flesh. We may **think** we know exactly what needs to be said or done but in truth we need to follow David's example and in all things first inquire of the Lord. Remember the instance where the Apostles themselves could not cast out a demon (Matthew 17: 14-23) but after doing so Himself Jesus advised, "*But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.*" When we first encounter spiritual deceivers our first and foremost response should be to seek God's counsel, not to follow our impulse and reply from the flesh.

Point of Application: Don't risk giving credibility to spiritual deceivers by responding from the flesh; always seek the counsel of the Spirit.

And when King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and entered the house of the LORD. Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke and rejection; for children have come to birth, and there is no strength to deliver. Perhaps the LORD your God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.'"

– Isaiah 37:1-4

What is Hezekiah's initial reaction? It's important to understand that tearing clothes and wearing sackcloth isn't merely a fashion statement. In Old Testament biblical terms these are dramatic and visible actions associated with mourning and truly seeking repentance. Remember, there are elements of truth woven in amongst the clutter of the deceiver's overall message. The fact is that Hezekiah **did** sin in seeking the aid of Egypt, and it's true that some of the things Assyria originally carried out were, indeed, in alignment with the will of God. Hezekiah recognizes something intrinsic for all believers, that we should have our own house in order before tackling the larger issues

"Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 9 of 17

involved with those attacking the house. Jesus said, "**First** take the log out of your own eye, and **then** you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye". (Matthew 7:5) Jesus never said under no conditions could we ever be justified in addressing issues of sin in another person's life, but qualified that the most important first step toward that end is to first address our own sin.

Point of Application: We should never engage the enemy without first engaging the Lord. Securing spiritual stability is critical before engaging a hostile foe.

But there's also a crucial element of discernment provided for us by Hezekiah. From an earthly point of view, everything the Assyrians were doing could be interpreted as an attack on God's people in general and Hezekiah as God's leader specifically. But Hezekiah places it all in the proper perspective by confessing that this is really a reproach against God.

Point of Application: Things may happen to us in the course of this life, but we have to recognize when in fact they are actually attacks on God's name and kingdom rather than our own. We may be in the line of fire but we're not actually the primary target.

So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD, "Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. Behold, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own land. And I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.'"

– Isaiah 37:5-7

Time and time again throughout Scripture the initial admonition by God is, "*Do not be afraid*". Yes it is absolutely necessary to be prepared and ready where holding up God's Word and truth is concerned, but so often we lose sight that what God demands of us personally as we go through these encounters is a personal response

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 10 of 17](#)

of faith and endurance while He accomplishes the ultimate redress of the situation.

Please note that I am not advocating we stand by and say nothing and just blindly go on with life. I'm just pointing out what should be our first and initial response, to first repent sincerely of our own sin and seek God's counsel as to how to best proceed. In the case of Hezekiah God planned a supernatural intervention. In similar instances throughout Scripture God instead provided the proper response and actions on the part of the individual or group involved. A good example to keep in mind is when Jonathan considered attacking, by himself, a far superior enemy (1 Samuel 14) and sought the Lord's confirmation so that he would know, "*The LORD has given them into our hands*".

In context I think what is being addressed is the difference between famous, well-known spiritual deceivers which we must publically and routinely expose against the measure of God's Word, versus those who arise and work within our local body. We need to be able to clearly and biblically enlighten believers who express an interest in the mega-personalities of television, book, and Internet fame whose materials are readily available but with whom we rarely come into personal, face-to-face contact. It is far more likely that the most dangerous spiritual deceivers we will have to deal with in the course of our everyday life is the wolf in sheep's clothing trying to make inroads in our local church. If Rick Warren does make an appearance at your Bible study you will have the opportunity to deal with him directly. But it's far more likely that it's one of Warren's followers who is giving your group the direct grief.

Point of Application: We should never limit our request of God to what **WE** should do, but without fear seek the full counsel of God.

Then Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. When he heard them say concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, "He has come out to fight against you," and when he heard it he sent messengers to

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 11 of 17](#)

Hezekiah, saying, "Thus you shall say to Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, destroying them completely. So will you be spared? Did the gods of those nations which my fathers have destroyed deliver them, even Gozan and Haran and Rezeph and the sons of Eden who were in Telassar? 'Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, and of Hena and Ivvah?'"

– Isaiah 37:8-13

As always, the truth eventually comes out. How is the true nature and intent of the spiritual deceiver revealed? "*Do not let **your God** in whom you trust deceive you*". Previously in verses 10 and 18 they called God "*LORD*", but now they call Him "*your God*" revealing He really isn't their God at all. And they further assert that their system is actually superior to God's system because they no longer actually believe their initial successes were due to the One True God, but have now been given over so completely to their own self-deception that they think they're self-made men. They think they've done it all themselves.

There were probably earlier warning signs which should have caused people to see the truth, but when Jim Jones of The People's Temple, who eventually led hundreds in a coordinated mass-suicide, flung His Bible to the ground and explained to his followers that they could not get to God except through him, they should have left immediately. The day David Koresh began teaching the Branch Davidians that only he alone was their salvation, they should have fled the building. There is case after case after case, even with some of the well-known figures of this present time who ultimately and finally betray the undeniable truth of their deception when they replace Christ with themselves. I'm fascinated by how often I've seen Joel Osteen holding a Bible while he talks but seldom if ever referring to it. Both the deception of their so-called "ministry" and their own personal self-deception has come to full, public term.

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 12 of 17](#)

Point of Application: Spiritual deceivers eventually reveal that they hold no special regard for God. In fact, like the final person of the Antichrist to come, they eventually and publically reveal their intention of replacing Christ Himself.

Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. Hezekiah prayed to the LORD saying, "O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to all the words of Sennacherib, who sent them to reproach the living God. Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated all the countries and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, LORD, are God."

– Isaiah 37:14-20

There are very significant differences in the way that Hezekiah characterizes and defines the situation from that chosen by the enemy. Hezekiah admits that Assyria has been successful, but not for the same reasons for which it has boasted. Hezekiah recognizes that the gods defeated by Assyria to date were, in reality, no gods at all. Hezekiah also recognizes that this attack is, in reality, against God: "...listen to all the words of Sennacherib, who sent them to reproach the living God". And it's important to note that what Hezekiah ultimately desires is quite contrary to the desires of the deceivers, that "all the kingdoms of the earth may know that **You alone, LORD, are God**". In other words, Hezekiah does not ultimately seek to defend his own name and glory but that of the One True God.

Point of Application: In spiritual warfare our chief concern is for the name and person of Christ, even at the expense of ourselves. The solution we should be seeking is something that vindicates and holds up God's name rather than our own. Don't worry so much about what they say about you but what they say about Him.

"Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 13 of 17

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent word to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, this is the word that the LORD has spoken against him:

*"She has despised you and mocked you,
The virgin daughter of Zion;
She has shaken her head behind you,
The daughter of Jerusalem!
Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
And against whom have you raised your voice
And haughtily lifted up your eyes?
Against the Holy One of Israel!
Through your servants you have reproached the LORD,
And you have said, 'With my many chariots I came up to the heights of
the mountains,
To the remotest parts of Lebanon;
And I cut down its tall cedars and its choice cypresses.
And I will go to its highest peak, its thickest forest.
I dug wells and drank waters,
And with the sole of my feet I dried up All the rivers of Egypt.'
Have you not heard?
Long ago I did it,
From ancient times I planned it.
Now I have brought it to pass,
That you should turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps.
Therefore their inhabitants were short of strength,
They were dismayed and put to shame;
They were as the vegetation of the field and as the green herb,
As grass on the housetops is scorched before it is grown up.
But I know your sitting down
And your going out and your coming in
And your raging against Me.
Because of your raging against Me
And because your arrogance has come up to My ears,
Therefore I will put My hook in your nose
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will turn you back by the way which you came.*

– Isaiah 37:21-29

How does God Himself confirm the source and character of the conflict? In verse 23 He specifically states that the Assyrians have, indeed, undertaken blasphemy and reproach of Him and that it is against the One True God that they have directed their pride. God grants that they have had earthly success to date not because of the

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 14 of 17](#)

Scripture taken from the New American Standard Bible Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by [The Lockman Foundation](#). Used by Permission. All other content, materials, etc. on this site are Copyright ©2009 by [Walk with the Word](#). Permission for personal and/or not-for-profit use freely granted. Any questions or comments concerning [Walk with the Word](#) should be directed to Servant@WalkWithTheWord.org

works of their own hand but because of God working beforehand. Look at how God contrasts their own ridiculously extreme opinion of themselves to the point that they actually come to believe they are somehow on the same level or exceeding that of God. The first sin of Satan which he introduces in the Garden of Eden and relentlessly pursues until the end in Revelation is first and foremost pride. And that is always the core problem at the center of every spiritual deceivers' character and work.

Point of Application: When a person or group is consumed by and motivated by pride, our direct attempts to confront them are often only marginally effective because they see themselves as being in a higher position over us and not subject to God at all. This is why we earnestly need to seek God's intervention so that an effective response to pride can be effectively mounted.

"Then this shall be the sign for you: you will eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." "Therefore, thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, 'He will not come to this city or shoot an arrow there; and he will not come before it with a shield, or throw up a siege ramp against it. By the way that he came, by the same he will return, and he will not come to this city,' declares the LORD. 'For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake.'"

– Isaiah 37:30-35

What is the provision God makes for His faithful remnant? What is the hope we can glean for their present situation? God makes provision so that they can return to their work and life for Him. He will not allow the enemy's efforts to permanently interrupt them. Having clung to the Lord, they will fully recover and continue in His name because faithfulness always overcomes faithlessness. They don't win because their argument is worded better, they are ultimately successful because they consistently walk in faithfulness to His Word and ways.

["Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 15 of 17](#)

Point of Application: If the enemy cannot achieve total destruction, they will attempt to render us ineffective by choking our resources. People who cling to God in spite of the circumstances experience the fact that He is greater and can overcome them. God's remnant is always enough to fully carry on His work and is never therefore rendered ineffectual as long as its faithfulness remains intact. Remaining personally faithful is one of the chief weapons we have against spiritual deceivers in particular and deception in general.

Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, all of these were dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home and lived at Nineveh. It came about as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.

– Isaiah 37:36-38

Something we need to understand is that it is most likely we will successfully defeat the enemy where his attacks are concerned, but we should not be surprised if we cannot win them personally over to God's side. When spiritual enemies are defeated, they often continue to fail to learn the right lesson and instead of submitting to the One True God, retreat yet again to other false gods. Have you noticed how often it is the same people who run from one false teacher to another, from one false spiritual movement to another, from one doctrinal error to another? We can be successful defending our own flock, but it is not at all assured that we will win back to the Light those who have been given over to the darkness.

Final Point of Application: The enemy can appear frightening in its size, intensity, and ferocity, but it always relies on fear and intimidation to overcome their lack of truth. They are always betrayed by their speech and actions, which are not in alignment with God's Word. In reality, they are attacking God through us, actually waging a battle with Him. In the end, with God's help, we can withstand the attack and even see them removed from our immediate environment,

"Learn about the Second Coming from the First", Page 16 of 17

but we should not be the least bit surprised should they leave us to continue the battle against someone else.

In His Love,

Servant@WalkWithTheWord.org

Note: This teaching is [available online](#) in the form of a small group Bible study for leaders to share with those they are discipling.