

THE STORY CHAPTER 16: THE BEGINNING OF THE END HOW TO PRAY THROUGH FOR A BREAKTHROUGH

Introduction: Chapter 16 covers the time when the Northern Kingdom falls to the Assyrians and the ten tribes become lost tribes forever because of idolatry. It is the time when the Assyrian army wipes them out and plans to do the same to the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but God intervenes through the prayers of Hezekiah, one of only 5 good kings during the 208 years after David. Though it is a dark time, the prophet Isaiah begins his ministry and prophesizes incredible hope and restoration and how God will bring everlasting salvation out of the ashes of past failures. We are focusing today, especially on the story of Hezekiah's prayer in the face of Assyria's attempted invasion.

1. Hezekiah was deemed one of the "good Kings." What did he do that pleased the Lord? What can we learn from his example? In what way did he deal with idols, and overcome the temptation to replace God as King?
2. Dale mentioned in his sermon the idea of a "successful failure," one in which failure is redeemed because of what we learn or how we change. Why was the failure of the Northern Kingdom a "failed failure" and the failure of the South to some degree a "successful failure?" What is a failure in your life that you are claiming will be a successful failure because of how you respond to God?
3. Even when things seemed absolutely hopeless in this story, prayer made the difference. What is an example of how this has been true in your life? How have you seen prayer change things or change you? What is an example of a present problem or situation in your life that seems too big, too hopeless, and too overwhelming that you would like the group to help you apply this lesson in prayer about?
4. Dale mentions the difference between just "praying about" something and really "praying through" something like Hezekiah did. Can you see areas where you may be giving up on prayer too quickly or are in need of making a fresh prayer commitment to pray through to victory? What lies or discouragements of the enemy might you need to confront to be successful in this?
5. Five ways to pray through, for a breakthrough were mentioned. What is one that stands out to you?
 - a. Make prayer your first option, expect it to be the game changer
 - b. Honestly admit your need to God, remove the idols, and surrender the burden of the situation to God
 - c. Pray from God's perspective, confront the lies of the enemy, let God become bigger in your heart than the problem
 - d. Enlist the help of prayer partners
 - e. Let prayer be a two-way conversation and expect God to give you a word for the situation
 - f. Make a declaration of faith.

As an application of this lesson have a time of prayer. Take some of the things that have been mentioned as crisis or impossible situations in people's lives. Take time as you pray about these things to apply the five ways to pray through for a breakthrough that have been mentioned. Take time admitting your weakness, telling God how much you need Him, asking for His forgiveness as you remove idols from your heart. Pray prayers surrendering your worries with thanksgiving to God. Lift up the perspective of God by claiming promises and affirming who He is. Pray for each other. Listen to God and share with each other any words or whispers you feel the Holy Spirit might be speaking. Make declarations of faith for what you believe in your heart you can expect God to do.

BECAUSE YOU ARE MY KING

O Lord God,

Because you are my king this battle isn't mine it's the Lords.

Because you are my king no weapon formed against me will prosper

Because you are my king I am the apple of your eye, your shield protects me and your mighty hand delivers me.

Because you are my king the attack of the enemy will result in the advance of your kingdom, my setback will become your breakthrough

Because you are my king, your kingdom will come and your will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven

Because you are my king I will operate in your divine wisdom and guidance.

Because you are my king I will not fear.

Because you are my king I and all I have is your property and you have "no trespassing signs" all around me.

Because you are my king I will rest and rejoice at the table you set before me in the presence of my enemies.

Because you are my king I know I have the resources of heaven available for whatever needs I have or face on earth.

Because you are my king I have authority to speak whatever you give me to speak in your name and when I speak and pray in your name all of heaven and earth will be moved to bring to pass what you have led me to ask.

Because you are my king I am royalty, I am a beloved son/daughter, who has been born into your family to rule and reign, seated with you in heavenly places.

Because you are my king you will crush Satan under my feet.

Because you are my king righteousness, peace, and joy is the atmosphere I live in.

Because you are my king goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever!