

exacted a great amount of tribute from him before God intervened. Although gold and silver were no longer found in his treasury in abundance, "the fear of the Lord" was Hezekiah's treasure, as Isaiah points out in the latter part of the verse.

Recapitulation

The remainder of the chapter follows in general the same course of thought as has been briefly presented in verses 1-6. In verses 7-9 we see the situation of the land while Sennacherib and his army are there. We begin with the lamentation of Hezekiah's representatives who, as described in 2 Kings 18, went to Lachish, where Sennacherib's army was gathered, presented him with a great amount of tribute, and asked for honorable terms of peace. Instead of giving them such terms, Sennacherib sent his representative to Jerusalem to demand "unconditional surrender." It can well be imagined that the ambassadors who went seeking for peace returned weeping bitterly, as all Jerusalem was filled with terror and expectation of utter destruction at the hand of Sennacherib and his mighty army. Verse 8 tells of the end of all communication and travel in the land during more than two years, while Sennacherib's army was encamped at Lachish or in the Philistine plain. This period is vividly portrayed in Isaiah 37:30, where the people are described as unable to leave the city long enough to sow or reap but only occasionally able to rush out for a short time and gather what had grown by itself. They had constantly to be ready to rush back to the city at any moment, when they might see the advance of a raiding party from the Assyrian army. This continued, as described in that verse, for more than two years. It is no wonder that the land mourned and languished, as described in the ninth verse of the thirty-third chapter. The attractive portions of the country, Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan and Carmel, no longer produced fine wood or pleasant fruits. All were like a wilderness in the great misery of war and destruction.

Verses 10-12 picture the determination of God in the face of this terrible condition to give deliverance. Verse 10 points out that the time has now come when the Lord is determined