

# KINGDOM ADVANCING PRAYER

Mark: 1:35 & Matt: 11: 11-12

*From the desk of Elder Michael Scantlebury*

## Divine Momentum and The Fear Of Man

**“For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.” Galatians 1:10**

As we continue our press in this season of “Divine Momentum”, we must realize that the enemy will seek ways to curb or stop our forward press. And there are several ways he will attempt to do so. In our last letter, we looked at principles of divine momentum in the lives of Gideon, Joshua and Jesus, and today we want to explore one of the ways the enemy tries to stop it.

I will like to bring to mind the Old Testament prophet, Elijah, who did great exploits for the Lord in his season of divine momentum. The apostle James got tremendous insight into this prophet’s life and the reason for his success, until he bowed to the “fear of man”; released through Jezebel.

Effective, fervent prayer is one of the most powerful ways to defeat any spirit of fear the enemy may seek to throw at us. Effective prayer is an awesome weapon that we are to use in bringing forth the purpose of the Lord. James declared:

**“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” James 5:16b**

This is an awesome, powerful scripture, and in its context, the Lord highly esteems the activity of prayer from a righteous man. The Bible goes on to clarify a “righteous man” as one who has a nature similar to ours – with all the temptations, past failures, successes, etc – and prays earnestly in the declared will of God.

However, we need to understand that the devil does not take too kindly to these kinds of individuals and he will make any and every attempt to silence us as we press forward earnestly and aggressively in the plan and purpose of the Lord. He will seek to tempt us to become fearful of man, the very same way he did Elijah. After he killed the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, Jezebel threatened his life and he became fearful and ran and hid, wanting to die. (**1 Kings 19: 1-4**).

Today we want to re-visit one of the classical attempts by the devil to stop an aggressive forward advance of the people of God against him. Let us take a look at King Hezekiah and the attempts the devil makes through Sennacherib, king of Assyria, in the book of Isaiah.

**In Isaiah chapters 36 & 37** we read the enthralling account.

Hezekiah was one of the great reformers in Israel. He destroyed all the high places in which the children of Israel trusted, and brought the people into a new commitment to the laws of God, thereby rebelling against the king of Assyria, Sennacherib. This action enraged Sennacherib and he moved on Hezekiah.

In chapter 36 we see six major areas of attack that the enemy used against Hezekiah, which he is still using today, against anyone who decides to advance the Kingdom of God in the earth.

1. He came up against all the fortified cities of Judah (Praise) and took them. The enemy still seeks to seize and destroy our fortified places of Praise and Worship – Isa. 36:1.

2. His next attack is to seek to destroy our confidence. He, through his agent (demons) Rabshakeh, asked the question in **Isa. 36:4** “What confidence is this in which you trust?” The obvious answer is, “the Lord of hosts”! Remember **Heb. 10:35** whenever this kind of attack comes. When he does not get any answer we see him moving on to his next tactic of trying to shatter our confidence by intimidation.
3. He declared to them that it was because of their dependence on Egypt (a type of the world), and because of past sins, they were in this trouble. This is one area that you need to be very sure about. It is one thing for the Lord to bring conviction to us, but it is quite the opposite when the devil brings accusation. Conviction from God is designed to lead us to repentance, but accusations from the devil are designed to cause us to doubt and lose our confidence in God. Our source of conviction must be the Lord and no one else. Not the devil. Not our own minds. **Isa. 36:6**
4. When accusations about us being worldly, or about past sins do not work, then he employs this next attack. He seeks to put doubt in our minds about the basis of our spiritual activity. This is very important, as Hezekiah destroyed the high places that were previously places of great significance to the people of God. **2 Kings 18:4** declares “He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the **bronze serpent that Moses had made**; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan.” Every time there is a new move of God’s Spirit, we are called to enter into strong kingdom advancing prayer in order to accomplish it, and at times there is a need to dismantle religious structures and man-made programs and activities. All hell then breaks loose. **Isa. 36:7**
5. He will then seek to convince us that the Lord sent him to stop us from engaging in kingdom advancing prayer. Of course, we know that he comes at times as an angel of light, but we are not to be enticed by that. Instead, we are to keep our focus steadfast to the task of blasting his kingdom and establishing the Kingdom of Heaven here and now. **Isa. 36:10**.
6. He will then try his final and most sinister attack – **Isa. 35:14-18**. He will make every attempt to separate leadership from the people. He will try to place doubt in our mind about leadership capabilities, and, as with any warfare for the new move of God, there will be hardships, pressure, oppositions and even some seeming failures and disasters at times. It is a WAR! The victory belongs to us! In this attack he will seek to get us to compare ourselves with the failures of past camps/ministries, in an attempt to destroy our confidence. But, just like Hezekiah, we need to put things in their proper perspective – **Isa. 37:18-20**. Of course the enemy can demolish the works of man's hand (a type of religious activity) in which the Lord takes no pleasure or delight. However, he cannot destroy the ordained WILL of ALMIGHTY GOD!

As we stand firm in the move of God as Hezekiah did, the power of prevailing prayer will continue and the prophetic unction will increase, which will release divine power and angelic activity on our behalf, and will completely rout any demonic stronghold – **Isa. 37:36-38**.

Let me encourage you, praying saints: our prayers are very effective in the plan and purpose of God, and any attempt by the devil to silence, intimidate or frustrate us must be met with swift and firm action. Let us keep our position of effective prayer, as we maintain our confidence in the Lord and co-labour with Him in bringing His purposes to pass in the earth. Be confident and know that the Lord will increase the momentum that He has given us. This is the time to keep focused and steadfast and maintain a high level of expectancy for the Lord to continue showing Himself strong on our behalf.