

## OVERWHELMED!

Have you ever been overwhelmed by what seems an impossible situation? Maybe you have just lost your job, or lost a loved one or your business has just gone bankrupt and you stand a good chance of losing your home. The more you play through the possible scenarios in your mind, the more you become overwhelmed.

In Isaiah 26 and 27 we read of Sennacherib king of Assyria coming up against King Hezekiah of Judah. Sennacherib's army was enormous. Isaiah 27:36 indicates that the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 of the Assyrian army and that wasn't the whole army.

As overwhelming as the situation may have appeared, this wasn't the real problem. The real problem was how Hezekiah was going to face it.

In Isaiah 37 we can read some first-hand instructions on how to deal with a situation that is, humanly speaking, overwhelming:

**1** We should bring our problems to God first – verse 1. Whilst this statement may seem obvious, it is amazing how often we will do everything other than go to God first. What we must see is that it is good to talk things over with other Christians, but it should never become a substitute for going straight to God. Why? Because only the Lord can do a work in our hearts. Only the Lord can turn our overwhelming feelings of fear into triumphant faith.

**2** We need to listen for God's message – verses 2, 5 and 7. When a child of God is assailed by overwhelming problems through the attacks of the enemy, we need to see that in effect it is God who is being attacked.

As Sennacherib's senior officer spoke words of intimidation, arrogance and bluff, he was looking to discourage. When we look to God for His message, He speaks words of encouragement. Isaiah comforted his people from verse 6 when he says: "Thus says the Lord: 'Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard...'"

Whatever your problem God's promise is "Do not be afraid".

**3** We need to seek that God is glorified in the situation – verses 4, 16-20. Hezekiah's primary concern was that the Assyrians had questioned God's person, character and ability. So when he opens up in prayer the first thing he does is to declare that "You are God". By doing this Hezekiah and his people are encouraged to get their focus right.

I believe that this is a key element in knowing victory over any problem that besets us. Focus on the problem and it will always overwhelm us. Focus on God and the problem never seems as overwhelming as we first thought.

As Hezekiah lays out all his concerns before God he reminds his people that the Assyrians worshipped dead idols, but Israel worshipped the one and only living God.

**4** Once we have prayed we must trust God to work. In Isaiah 37:3 Hezekiah readily recognized that Israel was helpless to defend itself. As Israel waited for God's provision the angel of the Lord fought their battle for them. Sennacherib was humbled by the living God. Ironically, Sennacherib perished in the temple of the idols he worshipped, by the hands of his own sons.

I have found that I have had to learn this lesson again and again, that there is no replacement for simple trust in the living God.

– CARL CARMODY, EDITOR CHALLENGE

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## PRAISE :

- Praise the Lord for the continued growth we are seeing from the distribution of the paper overseas and the commitments to Jesus Christ that are coming in.
- Praise the Lord for His provision of a new Editor for the work. Dr Jonathan Newell who heads up a ministry in Malawi has indicated that he and his wife and 3 children will be leaving Malawi next July and has accepted the role as Editor for Challenge for February 2014.
- Praise the Lord for the warm reception received from our first fully contextualized edition of the Indian Challenge newspaper which is called Divya Destiny. You can check out this edition at [www.challengenews.org](http://www.challengenews.org)
- Praise the Lord for the establishment of our USA Board. Andrew is very encouraged with the quality of people who have accepted a position on the Board.
- Praise the Lord for a number of new orders coming through for our Australian edition.

## PRAYER :

- Please continue to pray for the Trezona family (Ohio, USA) as they look to purchase their own home. The home they are currently renting is now under offer.
- Pray for wisdom for Andrew Trezona as he moves forward with Challenge USA, in finding partners in various locations that have a vision and passion for the paper and for the collection of testimonies for the paper.
- Prayer is needed for finances to replace one of our vehicles. We require a reliable vehicle especially when promoting in country areas.
- Please pray for the upcoming trip (October 15-29) to Alice Springs, Cairns and Mount Isa for Carl as he promotes and develops the Challenge.
- Please pray with us as we look to the Lord for the best avenue to take in terms of the Newell family moving to Australia. There is an enormous amount of work involved so getting the right visa is imperative.
- Please pray for the ongoing funding for the running of the Perth office, for personal support, for the supply of Challenge paper globally and for project funding in these countries.
- Please pray for ongoing funding for our Southern African editions of the paper.
- Please continue to pray for our Australian farmers who give generously to the work of Challenge through the wheat bin. Much of this funding goes towards the African editions of the paper.

*Olivia Buuba: "I would like to thank the management who planned for us this good news to people and encourage them in every situation they are going through. Thank you very much."*



## MY RESPONSE

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