



7

God Answers Prayer

Key Theme

- God is sovereign over all things.

Key Passages

- Isaiah 36:13–15, 37:5–7, 37:14–16, 37:20, 37:33–37

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe Hezekiah's dependence on God.
- Describe how God protected Jerusalem.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will use the signs posted on the walls to complete their Memory Verse Review Sheets. They will match the numbers on their sheets with the numbers on the signs and fill in the missing words. They will then read and/or recite the verse to the class or to each other.



Activity 1: God Answers Prayer Class Notes Booklet

Students will fill out the God Answers Prayer Class Notes booklet as you study the lesson. Pass out the booklets before you begin to teach.



Studying God's Word

The Assyrians were threatening to conquer Judah and telling the people not to trust in their God. Good King Hezekiah trusted the Lord and went to Him in prayer. God answered Hezekiah's prayer in an amazing way!



Activity 2: God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss

Students will play a game in teams to review the lesson material.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO



COME ON IN

- Print one Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Print and cut out the eight Memory Verse Review Signs from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Tape the Memory Verse Review Signs to the walls around the room.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student
- Eight Memory Verse Review Signs
- Masking tape



GOD ANSWERS PRAYER CLASS NOTES BOOKLET

- Print, cut, collate, and staple one God Answers Prayer Class Notes Booklet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the teacher guide for your use.

- God Answers Prayer Class Notes Booklet for each student
- Class Notes Teacher Guide
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



GOD ANSWERS PRAYER TRIVIA TOSS

- Print one set of God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM on cardstock (or glue them to construction paper).
- Print one God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Answers from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Tape a line on the floor and lay the Trivia Toss Cards in a grid pattern.

- God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Cards
- God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Answers
- Tape
- Beanbag



Memory Verse

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

As we begin this lesson, we are stepping back in time to the point where the kingdom was divided, but the focus is shifting to the Southern Kingdom. The first part of this quarter focused on how the Northern tribes turned from God and faced His judgment after He sent many prophets to warn them. Ultimately, the Assyrians conquered them and carried them off to foreign lands. As we talked about in Lesson 1, most of the kings of Judah led the people into idolatry, but a few sought to restore true worship of God.

One of these good kings was Hezekiah. Hezekiah was the thirteenth king in Judah and took the throne after his extremely wicked father, Ahaz. Ahaz had continued to worship false gods, even offering his children as sacrifices (2 Kings 16:1–4). He also looked to the king of Assyria for protection from the kings of Syria and Israel, offering him treasures from the house of God, rather than looking to God for deliverance (2 Kings 16:5–9). Hezekiah was nothing like his father—he “held fast to the Lord” and fought against the idolatry that plagued Judah (2 Kings 18:1–7). In fact, that passage tells us that “He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him.”

Here is where we meet the prophet Isaiah for the first time. Most people would recognize Isaiah as an Old Testament prophet, but few know a lot about his ministry. Isaiah ministered for over 50 years in Judah over the span of four kings (Isaiah 1:1). He was a contemporary of Hosea and Micah and penned some of the most lamentable judgments against Judah, as well as descriptions of the glories of redemption through the coming Messiah. One of Isaiah’s role during this period of history was to deliver a message of assurance to Hezekiah.

As Hezekiah began his reign in the Southern Kingdom in 726 BC, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was about to fall to the captivity of the Assyrians under Tiglath Pileser III (the king Hezekiah’s father Ahaz had made an alliance with) and Shalmaneser V. Next, Sennacherib took power in Assyria and began to expand his kingdom into Judah where Hezekiah had been reigning for 14 years (Isaiah 36:1). After taking several cities, Sennacherib sent to Jerusalem a delegation of officials, the Rabshakeh, along with a large portion of his army. The delegates delivered a message of boasting

from their king to Hezekiah: Whether you seek help from Egypt or God, I will conquer you and your God cannot protect you (Isaiah 36).

When the message was delivered to Hezekiah, he was distraught and sent a message to Isaiah, calling for prayer for deliverance from God (Isaiah 37:1–4). When the messengers delivered the threat to Isaiah, God gave them a message to deliver to Hezekiah—don’t fear Sennacherib; he will die in his own land (37:5–7). The Assyrian delegation returned to Jerusalem with another threat from Sennacherib and a boast against God (37:8–13). True to his character, Hezekiah cried out to God in a prayer that demonstrated his full reliance upon God, recognizing His sovereignty and mercy, and seeking God’s glory in the matter. Hezekiah knew that God could prevail and that He would be glorified as all the kingdoms of the earth would hear how He had delivered Jerusalem (37:14–20).

God is merciful and gracious. In response to Hezekiah’s humble request, God spoke a message of comfort and security through Isaiah. God would deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrians and strike down Sennacherib (Isaiah 37:21–35). God was about to display His sovereignty over the nations in a most dramatic way!

As Sennacherib’s great army, which numbered more than 185,000, camped near Jerusalem, there was surely fear and rumors flashing throughout the city. In 2 Chronicles 32:1–23, we learn that Hezekiah also worked to prepare a defense of the city, but he was not trusting in the might of the men of the city for deliverance, but called the people to trust in “the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles.” As God had promised, the Assyrian army did not even raise a shield or shoot an arrow at Jerusalem.

During the night, the Angel of the Lord moved through the camp of the Assyrians. As the camp awoke, they found quite a frightful scene—185,000 corpses lying in their midst! Imagine the fear and chaos that must have surged through the camp as those who were spared realized what had happened (Isaiah 37:36). Understanding his defeat, Sennacherib returned to Nineveh with his tail between his legs. Just as Isaiah had revealed, Sennacherib’s sons killed him as he was worshipping before his god, Nisroch (Isaiah 37:37–38). This was just another display of the absolute power of the one true God over the demons behind the false gods worshipped by the heathen nations.

In this account, we see the greatness of God displayed in His control over the affairs of man and His kindness to answer the prayers of those who trust in

Him and seek His glory. Hezekiah is surely an example we can look to, but God is the hero of the story. We can look to Hezekiah as an example of submitting to God in humility, not trusting in our own human strength, and seeking to bring God glory in all things. It is God who is the reason Hezekiah could do all of these things. God's glorious character is clearly on display in this account.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

As you think about the structure of the Old Testament, it might be a little confusing. The account we are looking at in this lesson is actually referenced in at least three different places: Isaiah 36–37; 2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chronicles 32:1–26. In each we get a slightly different perspective, but all align and demonstrate the same truths about God's character. The political intrigue surrounding the transitions of the kings during this period is the stuff of an epic miniseries. Ahaz had been in league with kings of Assyria, Tiglath Pileser III and Shalmaneser V, and the son of the Assyrian king was now coming against the son of Ahaz. At the same time, Assyria was assaulting the Northern Kingdom while they were seeking help from other nations rather than God.

Hezekiah was the king reigning in the Southern Kingdom when the kings his father had cooperated with were sacking Samaria. Then, Shalmaneser's son Sennacherib moved on to wipe out Babylon and Egypt. So major portions of North Africa, Asia, and the Middle East were controlled by the Assyrian Empire. It was then that Sennacherib made his fatal mistake—he boasted against the Lord. God had ordained Sennacherib's reign and dominance of the people he and his fathers had conquered (Isaiah 9:11, 10:12–16, 37:26–27; Proverbs 21:1), but his pride brought judgment from God.

When you factor in the 30 other nations that were involved in these conflicts at this time and all of their leaders, you only begin to scratch the surface of the amazing tapestry of God's sovereignty in the affairs of the nations of the world over millennia. Most of us have a hard time planning dinner tonight and making sure everyone has clean socks and a ride to soccer

practice, so to even think of God as understanding and coordinating all of these events should drive us to our knees in praise of our awesome God. We can look to the words of God recorded in Isaiah 40 to get a sense of His awesome character and power:

Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket,
And are counted as the small dust on the scales;

Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing.
And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn,
Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering.

All nations before Him are as nothing,
And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.

To whom then will you liken God?

Or what likeness will you compare to Him?
(Isaiah 40:15–18)

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

All-powerful, sovereign Lord, this is an encouraging account from the pages of Scripture. It reminds me that you are intimately involved in the affairs of men, from the politics of nations, to the tiniest newborn babe, even to every children's ministry worker and Bible teacher, like me. You weave together each life and event flawlessly to accomplish your perfect will. I am humbled to have a part in accomplishing your purpose for the students I will be teaching this week. May we all be convicted as we remember the times we have gone our own way instead of coming to you for help through prayer. Teach us to be like Hezekiah—full of hope in the face of hopelessness—because we know the one true God is on our side!

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete their Memory Verse Review Sheets by matching the numbers on their sheets with the same numbers on the wall signs and filling in the missing words on the sheet. They will then read and/or recite the verse to the class or to each other.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



God Answers Prayer Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God Answers Prayer Class Notes Booklet for each student
- Class Notes Teacher Guide
- Stapler
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print, cut, collate, and staple the six pages of the God Answers Prayer Class Notes Booklet for each student. Students will complete the sentences on the sheets as you teach the lesson, then take the pages home to color and share with family. Use the Class Notes Teacher Guide as you review the lesson later.

Our class notes are a little different today. They are put together in booklets. You will

fill in the blanks, and then take the pages home to color and share with your family.

After filling out each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it. Use the Class Notes Teacher Guide to review each point.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we study today and fill in our class notes, we will learn that King Hezekiah was a good king who trusted the Lord and went to Him in prayer at a very difficult time. And God answered Hezekiah's prayer in an amazing way!

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

When the kingdom was divided after King Solomon died, two nations formed. They were Israel and Judah. *Point out the division on the History of Israel Poster and Lesson 1 Lesson Theme Poster.*

The past several weeks we studied the history of the Northern Kingdom—Israel. We learned that all of the kings were evil. None of them worshipped the one true God alone. The Lord finally judged them by sending their enemy, the Assyrians, to take over their land. *Refer to Lesson 4 Lesson Theme Poster.* The Northern Kingdom of Israel was no more.

Now we are going to study Judah—the Southern Kingdom. Most of the kings of Judah were evil, but there were some good kings. Today we are going to study one of the good kings of Judah. His name was King Hezekiah. The Bible tells us that he trusted the Lord. He fought against idolatry—the worship of false gods. The Bible says that there was no other king like him in Judah. He was the best king to reign in Judah! Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

But he was having a hard time because the Assyrians—the same nation that destroyed Israel—were trying to come in and take over Judah. The wicked king of Assyria, King Sennacherib, was threatening King Hezekiah and the people in Judah.

So, let's read what happened! Turn to Isaiah 36. Isaiah was another prophet of God. And God used him to speak to King Hezekiah! First we will read what the King of Assyria was telling the people of Judah. He was threatening the people of Judah. Listen to what he said! I'll read Isaiah 36:13–15. *Read Isaiah 36:13–15.*

Isaiah 36:13–15

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

This was a message from the King of Assyria. But someone named the Rabshakeh was the messenger for the King. He usually travelled with an army of many men. Look on page 1 of your God Answers Prayer Class Notes Booklet. You will see a picture of him.

? Who was the Rabshakeh speaking for? *Isaiah 36:13. The king of Assyria.*

The Rabshakeh was speaking for the king. He was speaking to the people of Judah and was hoping the people would see the army, get scared, and listen to him.

In Isaiah 36:14 the messenger says, “Do not let Hezekiah deceive you.” Deceive is another word for lie. The messenger from Assyria was telling the people that their king was lying to them!

? What did the Rabshakeh tell the people about their king, Hezekiah? *Re-read Isaiah 36:14b. He would not be able to deliver them.*

That’s right. He told the people that King Hezekiah would lie to them and not be able save them from the wicked king of Assyria.

? The messenger also told the people they should not trust in someone. Listen carefully and tell me who that was. *Re-read Isaiah 36:15. Do not trust the Lord. Do not believe King Hezekiah.*

? Now look at page 1 on your class notes booklet. What did the messenger from Assyria tell the people in Judah? Will someone read that for me? *Assign a reader. Lord. So how will you complete the statement?*

? And what was the name of the messenger? Who can read that from page 1? *Rabshakeh.*

Discover the Truth

The Rabshakeh, or messenger of the king of Assyria, gave a terrible message. Assyria wanted to conquer Judah. The king wanted the people in Judah to turn away from God. He told lies about good King Hezekiah. He told the people not to listen to Hezekiah. He said their king was deceiving them—lying to them! But Hezekiah was a good king. He loved the Lord. Everything the Rabshakeh said was a lie!

But the Assyrians were a mighty nation. They were mean and vicious. They had conquered or taken over many lands already. They were wicked and did not serve the true God. They wanted the people of Judah to turn away from their God, their king, and their nation.

? How could Judah possibly stand up to such a mighty nation? Do you think King Hezekiah gave up and surrendered? *Allow discussion.*



READ THE WORD

Well, we will find out what King Hezekiah did when he heard this bad news. Did he prepare his army? Did he ask his servants and friends for advice? Turn to Isaiah 37. We’ll read Isaiah 37:5–7 to find out. *Read Isaiah 37:5–7.*

Isaiah 37:5–7

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

Turn to page 2 in your class notes booklet.

► Re-read the verses as you ask the questions so the students can hear the answers right from the Scripture.

? **Hezekiah sent his servants to someone. Who was that?** *Isaiah 37:5. Hezekiah sent his servants to Isaiah.*

? **Who was Isaiah?** *Allow discussion.*

Well, our memory verse is from the book of Isaiah. And the lesson today comes from the book of Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet of God. And that is who King Hezekiah sent his servants to when he heard about the threat from Assyria.

? **Isaiah gave the people a message to take to King Hezekiah. Who gave Isaiah that message?** *Re-read Isaiah 37:6 emphasizing "thus says the Lord." The Lord.*

? **What was the Lord's message through Isaiah? It is in the same verse.** *Isaiah 37:6. Do not be afraid of what you heard.*

? **The Lord spoke to the people through His prophet Isaiah. The people wondered what they should do. Look at page 2 of your booklet. Who can read that for me?** *Assign a reader.*

? **And how would you fill in the blanks on page 2?** *Do not.*

? **Who was the prophet of God King Hezekiah went to?** *Isaiah.*

Isaiah told the people not to be afraid. Isaiah spoke for God. And the people must have felt better. But, the king of Assyria wasn't finished! He sent another letter to Judah. What did it say? Again, he told them not to trust God! We are going to take your land, he said. We are going to destroy you no matter who your God is!

? **Look at page 3 of your class notes booklet. It shows King Hezekiah holding the letter from the king of Assyria. How will you complete the sentence? Can someone read that for us?** *Assign a reader. Trust.*

Again, King Hezekiah had to do something! What would he do? His nation was in trouble! Let's find out. I'm going to read Isaiah 37:14–16. *Read the passage.*

? **Where did King Hezekiah go after he read the letter from the king of Assyria?** *Isaiah 37:14. To the house of the Lord.*

? **What did King Hezekiah do in the house of the Lord?** *Isaiah 37:15. He prayed to the Lord.*

? **He went to the house of the Lord to pray. Look at page 4 of your class notes booklet. Who is that pictured?** *King Hezekiah.*

? **How will you complete the statement on page 4?** *Prayed.*

? **Good. Now who can read that for us?** *Assign a reader.*

King Hezekiah went to the house of the Lord and prayed. He turned to God in his time of trouble. The Bible tells us about his prayer. Let me read it to you. *Read Isaiah 37:20.*

Isaiah 37:14–16

Isaiah 37:20

- ? So, what did Hezekiah ask from God? *Save us!*
- ? And what did Hezekiah want all the kingdoms of the earth to know when God helped Hezekiah and Judah? *That He is the Lord, Him alone.*

Discover the Truth

Hezekiah trusted God. He knew where to go for help. First, he went to God's prophet Isaiah. Then he went to the House of the Lord to pray! Hezekiah prayed that the Lord would save them. And when the Lord saved them, all the kingdoms of the earth would know that God is the Lord of all and the only true God!



READ THE WORD

So, what happened next? Was there a battle? Did King Hezekiah finally get his army ready? Did the king of Assyria threaten them again? Did God answer King Hezekiah's prayers? We'll have to read a little more to find out. Listen as I read Isaiah 37:33–35. This is the Word of God as He spoke through His prophet Isaiah to King Hezekiah. And it is written right in the Bible—God's true Word. *Read Isaiah 37:33–35.*

Isaiah 37:33–35

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Who was Isaiah speaking for? *Isaiah 37:33. The Lord.*
- ? Who was the Lord talking about? *Isaiah 37:33. The King of Assyria.*
- ? What did the Lord say about the king of Assyria? *Isaiah 37:33a. He shall not come into this city. No arrow will be shot.*

No arrow would be shot. The Assyrians would not come into the city. They would return the way they came. The Lord would defend the city and save it.

- ? That brings us to page 5 of your booklet. What did God's prophet Isaiah tell King Hezekiah? How would you finish that sentence? *God. Can someone read that for me? Assign a reader.*

That's right. God defended them and their city. And He did it in a very spectacular way. God is amazing! And if we read about the things He did in the Bible, we will NEVER forget that. Listen to what God did to protect His people in Judah from the Assyrians. *Read Isaiah 37:36–37.*

Isaiah 37:36–37

- ? Who did God send out? *Isaiah 37:36. The Angel of the Lord.*
- ? And what did the Angel of the Lord do? *Killed the Assyrians.*
- ? Yes. And the Bible even tells us how many were killed that day. Did you get it? Can anyone tell me? *Isaiah 37:36. 185,000.*

God defended the city all by Himself. King Hezekiah and his men did not need to go to battle!

- ? Someone tell me how you will complete page 6 of your booklet. And read it to me. *Angel. Assign a reader.*

Discover the Truth

What a message! King Hezekiah didn't even have to go to battle. God answered his prayer and won the battle in the night. God has the power to do that and more. I love when the Bible tells us about how amazing and powerful God is. I love it because I know that He is a God I can trust and one who won't let me down.

- ? What is the attribute of God that means that God is all-powerful? Do you know? *Allow discussion. Refer to Attributes of God Poster.*

God is a great and powerful God. He is omnipotent! And He was pleased to answer Hezekiah's prayer and to destroy the Assyrian army and save Judah.



OMNIPOTENT

(Refer to Attributes Poster)



God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss

MATERIALS

- God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Cards
- God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Answers
- Tape
- Beanbag

INSTRUCTIONS

Print one set of the God Answers Prayer Trivia Toss Cards onto cardstock. Tape them to the floor face down. Students will divide into small teams. They will toss a beanbag onto a lesson question taped to the floor. Pull the question from the floor, ask the question, allow students to answer it, and award the team with the number of points listed on the question. Use the answer key to confirm answers. Allow another team to answer if Team One doesn't know the answer. If no one gets the answer, give the answer and put the card back on the floor.

- ? Is everyone ready for a fun review of today's lesson? *Yes!*

We are going to play a form of beanbag toss! Were you paying attention? We'll see. Work together with your team to come up with the correct answer. One person at a time will toss the beanbag onto a card. If you answer the question correctly, your team will earn the number of points on the card. *Play the game.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Today we read about how Hezekiah turned to God when his nation was about to be taken over. He prayed to God, trusted Him to save them, and wanted God to have all the credit for the victory. God wants us to turn to Him, too. He is the omnipotent, sovereign God of the universe. We can trust Him to answer our prayers and help us in times of trouble.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

This true account from the reign of King Hezekiah in Judah was about how the Assyrians, a very powerful nation at the time, wanted to take over Judah. Hezekiah was a good king. He trusted and depended on God for wisdom, guidance, and protection. Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. He knew that God was powerful enough to protect them. So he went to the Lord in prayer when Judah was threatened. And God answered in a mighty way! The Lord sent an angel in the night to silently destroy much of the Assyrian army.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Hezekiah trusted the one true God. But this was a time when he could have been really scared. The Assyrians were evil and wicked. When things looked really bad and hopeless, Hezekiah didn't lose hope in God. He knew what to do. He turned to the Lord in prayer, and asked for help.

And God was faithful, wasn't He? He showed His kindness and His power by answering Hezekiah's prayer. Hezekiah didn't forget who His God was. He knew God was the one true God.

There may be times when things are going bad for you or your family. Well, it is easy to get sad, afraid, or frustrated. But, God wants us to turn to Him instead of getting upset. God wants us to trust Him and believe in Him—that He will be faithful to us. He is always faithful, and we can trust His perfect will. But we must trust Him, pray to Him, and put our lives in His hands.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for being so powerful and big.
- Thank God that we can pray to Him when we are in trouble.
- Pray that we will give all honor and glory to the one true God.

