

Isaiah- Lesson 7

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What is one new thing you learned or idea to which you were exposed?

One new thing I learned deeper from a very familiar topic this week through the exposure of the readings was the topic of prayer. In Dr. Constable's Notes on Isaiah regarding verses 21 to 22 of chapter 37, he expresses, "The Lord explained that it was Hezekiah's trust in Him, expressed through his prayer, that led to his receiving information about what He would do. Hezekiah would see the Lord's hand at work more clearly because he had prayed" (233). It is not that Hezekiah earned God's working through his prayer, and Dr Constable explains this idea further on prayer by commenting, " "...The heart of prayer is not its petitionary content but the acknowledgment of God"" (233).

Why should we pray? If God is sovereign and nothing can change His plans, why pray? This lesson on prayer to me this week emphasized that prayer is more about relationship than a religion that gets a god or God to do what we want Him to do. The nature of prophecy is so that God's people can always turn back to his heart. When that is successfully accomplished, anything can be changed; not because we willed it. But because it has always been God's original will and heart to pour out His blessings and good plans upon us for His glory only.

John N. Oswalt also writes, "The other issue is whether he *wants* to do anything for them. These verses insist that God has not cast them off because of their sin" (460). Even though Israel

has blatantly sinned against God, the nature of God forgiving and using Israel is ultimately and completely dependent upon who God is. That is the basis and motivation for prayer. Not for us to gain anything from God but to simply gain Himself at all times whether in our success or brokenness. So many times I pray with a mindset of trying to earn or change God's heart and plan for my life or the topic of intercession. But, prayer is through repentance, openness, and humility encountering God's character and original heart for all times, situations, and people.