

Hezekiah's Faith and Folly

Isaiah 38-39 (cf. 2 Kings 20; 2 Chron. 32:24-33)

In Isaiah 38-39 we see two contrasts in Hezekiah's personal life— His FAITH and His FOLLY.

I. **Hezekiah's FAITH** (vs. 1-11).

➡ **God RESTORES His servant.**

- A. A **deadly plague** (v. 1—*"sick unto death."*). This sickness came *"in those days,"* i.e. during the time of the Assyrian siege.
- B. A **distressing pronouncement** (v. 1—*"Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live."*). A preacher's messages is **not** always positive.
 1. God's message came through the prophet (v. 1 cf. 19:6, 20; 20:5; Heb. 1:1).
 2. The message of Isaiah to Hezekiah is applicable to us today— Death is sure (Heb. 9:27). What would you do if you knew your death was imminent?
 3. Will your house be in order when you die? [Do you have a "will"? Have you witnessed to your lost loved ones?] Are you ready to die? (cf. Amos 4:12—*"Prepare to meet thy God."*)
 - When confronted with the impending reality of death people should consider what is really important in life. The closer I get to the grave, the less appeal the things of this world has on me.
- C. A **desperate prayer** (vs. 2-3). Hezekiah prays and weeps.
 1. Hezekiah pleads on the basis of how he lived. Often, O.T. saints would pray, "Lord, because I did this for You, You should do this for me." (cf. 2 Sam. 22:21-27; Neh. 13:14, 22, 29, 31; Ps. 7:8-9; 18:20-24; 143:12; Jer. 15:15). This is NOT how a N.T. should pray! We pray on the basis of what Christ has done for us—not what we have done for Him!
 2. God hears his prayer and sees his tears. It has been said "Prayer changes things." Actually, prayer lays hold on God,

Who changes things. God will sometimes “change” His plan on the basis of someone’s prayer or conduct (cf. Jonah 3).

D. A **divine pledge** (vs. 4-8, 22).

1. The promise—God heals Hezekiah and promises to add 15 years to his life. However, it is during this 15 year period

- vs. 16-20—Hezekiah's attitude changes from

II. **Hezekiah's FOLLY** (Isaiah 39 cf. 2 Kings 20:12-19; 2 Chron. 32:25-31).

➡ **God REBUKES His servant.**

- ➡ Hezekiah was a man of prayer (37:1, 15; 38:2)... *EXCEPT* in this situation. Instead of praying like he did when confronted by the enemy, he fails to pray when things were going well (v. 1—"At that time"). We are usually less cautious after a great victory. "*Then cometh the devil...*" (Luke 8:12). We must pray and be vigilant in the good times as well as the bad.
- A. The **VALUABLES** in the house (vs. 1-2; 2 Chron. 32:23, 27-30). Material prosperity can be a problem—It may produce pride.
- B. The **visit** of the ambassadors (vs. 1-2). Travelled over 200 miles.
 - The ambassadors from Babylon came to inquire of the miracle of the sun turning back 40 minutes. Babylonians were astrologers (cf. 2 Chron. 32:31).
- C. The **VANITY** of the king (v. 2 cf. 2 Chron. 32:24-25). Sometimes it is best to keep your valuables to yourself and not show them off (Luke 2:19, 51). Question: When you show others your prosperity, what is your motive? Do you do it to "show off." Will your prosperity tempt others to envy?
 1. A *prideful* act—"...his heart was lifted up" (2 Chron. 32:25)—Secret pride; vain glory (Gal. 5:26). Essentially, Hezekiah was on an "ego trip."
 - Hezekiah failed to give God the glory who gave him everything (cf. 2 Chron. 32:29).

Some may become proud because they drive a nice car... live in a beautiful house... or wear a fine suit of clothes. How foolish! If there is any glory, the glory belongs to the manufacturer of the car, the architect of the house and the designer of the suit. Likewise, everything we have comes from God and the glory is His, not ours (1 Cor. 4:7; 1 Tim. 6:17).

 - **SONG**: "*All the Glory Belongs to Jesus.*"

2. A *pointed* admonition (Isa. 39:3-7). A preacher must preach both the *goodness* of God (38:4-5) and the *severity* of God (39:5-7; 2 Tim. 4:1-2).
 - “*What have they seen in thine house?*” (v. 4). This is a good question for every Christian to consider. What do people see when they look at you and your house? Do they see devotion to God? Do they see humility for God’s blessings in your life? Or do they see the things of the world and “*vain glory*” (Titus 2:7).
 - What the ambassadors did NOT see: Hezekiah’s humility... the splendor of the Temple (only the King’s house)... the preacher (Isaiah).

D. The **VERIFICATION** of the heart (2 Chron. 32:31).

- This was a TEST from the Lord.
1. When God left Hezekiah to himself. What you do when left to yourself? That is the test!
 2. The test was concerning Hezekiah’s “*heart*” (2 Chron. 32:26).
 - Out of the heart proceed the issues of life.
 - God wanted Hezekiah to see what was in his heart (Jer. 17:9). God must show us our pride because pride conceals itself (Obad. 3).

E. The **VERDICT** of the Lord (39:6-7). Heavy words! Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled about 125 years later (2 Kings 25; Jer. 52). God’s judgment may be slow in coming, but it is sure to come.

- **NOTE** (v. 7): “*thy sons*” are actually Hezekiah’s great-grandsons who will be eunuchs in Babylon (cf. Daniel 1:3, 6-7).
- Your sin will affect more people than you realize. The consequences of your sin may extend to several generations of your family.

SUMMATION (v. 8): Submission to God’s Word is the proper attitude towards *anything* God says, even if it is a word of rebuke (Rom. 8:28 cf. 1 Sam. 3:13-18).

"There shall be peace and truth in my days" (v. 8). Hezekiah recognized God's grace in Isaiah's message. God could have made things very difficult for Hezekiah during his remaining days. But instead, he is assured there will be peace. This is the grace of God. When God deals with you about your sin, be sure it is better than you deserve.