

Isaiah 38

¹ In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, "This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover."

² Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, ³ "Remember, Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: ⁵ "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. ⁶ And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city.

⁷ "'This is the Lord's sign to you that the Lord will do what he has promised: ⁸ I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.'" So the sunlight went back the ten steps it had gone down.

⁹ A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah after his illness and recovery:

¹⁰ I said, "In the prime of my life
must I go through the gates of death
and be robbed of the rest of my years?"

¹¹ I said, "I will not again see the Lord himself
in the land of the living;
no longer will I look on my fellow man,
or be with those who now dwell in this world.

¹² Like a shepherd's tent my house
has been pulled down and taken from me.
Like a weaver I have rolled up my life,
and he has cut me off from the loom;
day and night you made an end of me.

¹³ I waited patiently till dawn,
but like a lion he broke all my bones;
day and night you made an end of me.

¹⁴ I cried like a swift or thrush,
I moaned like a mourning dove.
My eyes grew weak as I looked to the heavens.
I am being threatened; Lord, come to my aid!"

¹⁵ But what can I say?
He has spoken to me, and he himself has done
this.

I will walk humbly all my years
because of this anguish of my soul.

¹⁶ Lord, by such things people live;
and my spirit finds life in them too.
You restored me to health
and let me live.

¹⁷ Surely it was for my benefit
that I suffered such anguish.
In your love you kept me
from the pit of destruction;
you have put all my sins
behind your back.

¹⁸ For the grave cannot praise you,
death cannot sing your praise;
those who go down to the pit
cannot hope for your faithfulness.

¹⁹ The living, the living—they praise you,
as I am doing today;
parents tell their children
about your faithfulness.

²⁰ The Lord will save me,
and we will sing with stringed instruments
all the days of our lives
in the temple of the Lord.

²¹ Isaiah had said, "Prepare a poultice of figs and
apply it to the boil, and he will recover."

²² Hezekiah had asked, "What will be the sign that I
will go up to the temple of the Lord?"

Isaiah 39

¹ At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of his illness and recovery. ² Hezekiah received the envoys gladly and showed them what was in his storehouses—the silver, the gold, the spices, the fine olive oil—his entire armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.

³ Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did those men say, and where did they come from?"

"From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came to me from Babylon."

⁴ The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?"

"They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

⁵ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord Almighty: ⁶ The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. ⁷ And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

⁸ "The word of the Lord you have spoken is good," Hezekiah replied. For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my lifetime."

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King Hezekiah of Judah took the throne at age 25 and ruled for 29 years (2 Kings 18:1-2) including his 15-year extension (Isa. 38:5). He was a righteous king who lived a fruitful life of great accomplishment (2

Chron. 31:20-21). Unlike his father Ahaz, he was jealous for God's name and tore down idols abolishing idolatry (2 Kings 18:4). He enacted sweeping socio-religious reforms (2 Chron. 29-31). Faced with Assyrian invasion, he prayed for the protection of both Jerusalem and God's glory and received a mighty miracle of victory (Isa. 37). But just on the cusp of midlife, he cried out to God in bitter disillusionment because he was sick and dying in the prime of life – and God answered granting 15 extra years.

For the most part Hezekiah's life was a model of faithfulness and trust in the Lord. But in the end (before his repentance) his heart swelled with pride (2 Chron. 32:24-26) and the Lord tested him (2 Chron. 32:31). Pride led him into Babylonian entrapment which played into Isaiah's earlier predictions of eventual Babylonian exile when everything in Hezekiah's storehouses and armory would be carted away, including his own family (Isa. 39).

And his self-focused side played another sour note that would impact his people and his extended family. The king's short-sighted faith seemed fixed on his own well-being and legacy rather than covenant faithfulness for the sake of future generations (Isa. 39:8). And all this, presented by Isaiah to remind us that the Bible's only true hero is **King Jesus**.

Pastor Bill

Disillusionment: We Need a Greater King



Isaiah 38-39¹

- disillusionment

Sickness & Death (38:1-22)

- miraculous deliverance

- fatal conclusion

Sin & Judgment (39:1-8)

- pride

- compromise

- godlessness

- selfishness

¹ Parallel accounts to Isaiah 38-39 are found in 2 Kings 20:1-21 and 2 Chronicles 32:24-33.