

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 2 Kings 20

We started our study through 2 Kings, the Sunday after Christmas - on December 27th

And for the past 6 months we have seen God reaching out to the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

Yearning for them to turn back to Him, to stop worshipping pagan idols

And for the most part, the most of the kings and the people of Judah and Israel – rejected Him.

They continued worshipping Baal, they continuing worshipping Molech and Asherah.

They continued to worship God the way they wanted – not the way God wanted to.

So after rejecting God's grace, judgment came upon the Northern Kingdom –

Judah wasn't far behind and then King Hezekiah took the throne.

King Hezekiah was different than the other kings.

A man of obedience – Hezekiah was a good king.

A man of faith – Hezekiah trusted God.

A man of humility – sackcloth and ashes

A man of prayer – spreading it out before the Lord.

A man of action – the reforms, building the tunnel.

The scriptures tell us that King Hezekiah did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

He put his trust in the LORD like no king before him or after him – and he laid his problem before the LORD and we saw last week how the LORD responded.

By sending an angel in the middle of the night - to kill 185,000 Assyrian soldiers that were ready to conquer Jerusalem.

God answered Hezekiah's prayer in His time and gave Judah victory.

In our study this morning, we are going to see how the life of King Hezekiah came to an end.

And in the same way that Hezekiah's life provides us with insight on how to deal with adversity and placing our trust in the LORD, we will see that even how he dealt with death will continue to do the same.

Let's pray...

[2Ki 20:1-21 NKJV] 1 **In those days** Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: **'Set your house in order,** for you shall die, and not live.' "

So the chapter begins by telling us that King Hezekiah was very sick.

We don't know what he was sick of – however, later on we will find out that his sickness involved a boil.

However, I asked you to make a note of the phrase, in those days –

Because when you read the phrase in context and when you look at the parallel verses in the scriptures that talk about this event (2 Chronicles 32)

In those days refers to the time immediately after God's amazing deliverance over the Assyrians.

The author of 2 Chronicles tells us that after they were delivered, King Hezekiah was exalted in the sight of all the nations – he was lifted up.

He was being showered with gifts – patted on the back for defeating the Assyrians.

It was a time of celebration throughout the kingdom, it was a time of prosperity, it was a time of answered prayer - and then there was a knock on the palace door – it was Isaiah.

And his message, "Hezekiah, the LORD has said "it's time"

Church, godly men and godly women are not immune to sickness.

Yes, we serve a God who heals.

But, we also serve a God that sometimes uses sickness for His glory.

God doesn't simply want us to feel good.

He wants us to be good.

And very often the road to being good involves not feeling good.

Isaiah also brings word to Hezekiah from the LORD to – set his house in order.

Church, God wants us to set our house in order.

We don't know when that day will come.

Who is going to take care of our affairs when we are gone?

We often delay these decisions in our lives because we don't like to think about them.

And many times – our failures to set our house in order – becomes a burden to our loved ones.

However, setting our house in order is not limited to our possessions or our physical bodies.

For the unbelievers, setting ones house in order means “Are you ready to meet God?”

Have you accepted the free gift of salvation by faith?

For the believer, setting your house in order means

- Are we walking in the path God has set for us?
- Are there people in our life that we still need to talk to about Jesus?
- Are there people we need to forgive?

If this morning, a word of the Lord came to us and said, set your house in order, I'm taking you home – How would we react?

Would we panic? Or are we walking with the Lord in such a way that we would be at peace about it?

2 Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, saying, 3 "Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done [what was] good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

Hezekiah responds to the news that he is going to die with grief.

He didn't want to die.

So he begins to pray.

And when we read his prayer, it almost sounds like Hezekiah is saying, “Lord – I have been a good little boy. This isn’t fair – by the way, did I mention what a good boy I have been?”

Now, before we start to judge Hezekiah on his actions – we need to remember that Hezekiah was still living under the Old Covenant – blessing and curses were based upon obedience and disobedience.

So Hezekiah is simply coming to God based upon what he has done for God.

And we see many prayers like this throughout the Psalms and the Old Testament -

The good news church is that under the New Covenant, we are blessed on the principle of faith in Jesus Christ.

Turn with me to Galatians 3

[Gal 3:13-14 NKJV] 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Our pleas are based on Christ’s righteousness – not our own.

We pray in the name of Jesus – not in the name of what we have done or who we are.

We also have to remember that under the Old Covenant – there was no confident reassurance of the glory in the life beyond –

But the reason we can rejoice is that we have it through Jesus Christ.

[2Ti 1:10 NKJV] 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, [who] has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

4 And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 "Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the **third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. 6 "And I will add to your days **fifteen years**. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David." ' " 7 Then Isaiah said, "**Take a lump of figs**." So they took and laid [it] on the boil, and he recovered.**

After Isaiah had delivered the Lord's message to Hezekiah, he begins to leave the palace and before he steps out, God answered Hezekiah's pray.

"Isaiah, go back and tell him I am going to heal him after 3 days – interesting."

And I will add 15 years to his life"

So the Lord also tells Hezekiah – through Isaiah to go to the temple and apply figs to the boil.

Now, I want to make it clear – the Lord never said that the figs were going to add 15 years to Hezekiah's life. He said, I will add 15 years to your life.

God heals through medicinal means.

He did it here to Hezekiah – with the figs

Jesus did it in the gospel of John when He healed the blind man with the clay and saliva.

And He continues to do it today through medicine as well.

God can use anything to heal.

8 And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What [is] the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD the third day?" 9 Then Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing which He has spoken: [shall] the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?" 10 And Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees; no, but let the shadow go backward ten degrees." 11 So Isaiah the prophet cried out to the LORD, and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.

A few weeks ago, I had given you Isaiah 7 as homework.

And God had promised deliverance to Hezekiah's wicked father, King Ahaz, from the Syrians.

After promising deliverance, God asked Ahaz "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God" I will give you confirmation right now – just ask.

And of course, Ahaz, in his false humility, didn't ask.

Hezekiah, unlike his father, he wants a sign – he doesn't want to wait three days to see whether or not he is going to be healed.

Give me confirmation!

Now, the Lord could have easily said, "I don't need to give you a sign. I said it – therefore it will happen and that is good enough"

But because God loves His children, He showed mercy to Hezekiah.

Hezekiah, I will give you confirmation I will even let you pick the sign.

Do you want the day to get shorter by 40 minutes or do you want the day to get longer by 40 minutes.

And Hezekiah asked that the day be extended by 40 minutes – just as the Lord had extended his life by 15 years.

And the Lord gave Hezekiah confirmation.

12 At that time Berodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 And Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures--the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory--all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

Here in verse 12, we are introduced to the king of Babylon at the time.

He sends a delegation to Jerusalem. Why?

1. Word had gotten around that about what had happened to the Assyrians. They want to look for themselves at the nation that stood up to the Assyrians.
2. Word had also gotten around that Hezekiah was sick.
3. They wanted to scope out the place.

So the Babylonians, they have come to butter up Hezekiah.

Verse 13 says that Hezekiah was attentive to them.

Isaiah 39 – tells us that he was pleased with them. He was glad that they had come.

He welcomed the attention that he was getting –

And what did he do?

He was so eager to impress them – that he showed them everything.

I want to remind you - that in our study last week, when Hezekiah received the letters from the Rab-shakeh, the messenger of the Assyrian king – after reading them, he went directly to the House of the Lord and spread it before the LORD.

But here, he receives this letter from the messengers of Babylon –

And because they were not threatening like the previous ones and because they lifted him up – Hezekiah doesn't even bother taking them before the LORD.

Now, why was it wrong for Hezekiah to show Babylon everything???

What's the problem with that?

First of all, everything that he showed to them belonged to the LORD.

The Kingdom wasn't Hezekiah's

The articles were not Hezekiah's

The gold wasn't Hezekiah's

Nothing in Hezekiah's possession was actually Hezekiah's.

And the same applies to you and me.

You see church; we tend to follow in the same footsteps as Hezekiah.

Difficulty brings desperation,

brings deliverance,

brings a calm,

brings a temptation

and ultimately, a great fall.

Hezekiah lost sight of God.

He failed to see the need to bring everything before the LORD.

He began to see the wealth and prosperity of Judah and attribute it to him being a great leader.

When in reality, he was only a great leader by the grace of God.

It was God's faithfulness in his life – it wasn't his ability to rule, or his strength or his smarts that made him a great ruler, it was God in his life.

He sought first the kingdom of God and God met him there.

He was nothing apart from the grace of God.

Church, when we forget that we are nothing apart from the grace of God, that is the beginning of the end.

Had Hezekiah brought it before the Lord, he would have found out the true intentions of the enemy.

14 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?" So Hezekiah said, "They came from a far country, from Babylon." 15 And he said, "What have they seen in your house?" So Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that [is] in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them."

When Isaiah shows up and confronts Hezekiah – Hezekiah tries to justify the error of his ways.

As if to say, "Don't worry Isaiah, these guys can't hurt us ..." Of course, Babylon is a "far country", but so is Assyria.

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: 17 'Behold, the days are coming when all that [is] in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the LORD. 18 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.' "

Isaiah then prophesied a rebuke to the king

The days were coming when all of the royal treasure would be carried away to Babylon

All that Hezekiah had been so proud of and used to impress the ambassadors would be taken away

Indeed, the Babylonians were impressed with what they saw, so much so, they were determined to have it for themselves, but even worse, not content to take the treasure, even Hezekiah's own descendants would be taken to Babylon and made servants to the king.

We will see this fulfilled next week as Manasseh, Hezekiah's son is taken into captivity for a short time and also, there were two other kings that were taken to Babylon including Daniel and his friends – as they were royal seeds.

19 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD which you have spoken [is] good!" For he said, "Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?"

Hezekiah's response to Isaiah rebuke –

First he accepts God's word –

But then he breathes a sigh of relief and in effect says, "Okay, judgement is coming and Jerusalem will be overrun by her enemies; but at least my days will be peaceful."

"My descendants are going to be deported and made slaves in Babylon, but whew; at least I'll be able to live out my life here in the palace in Jerusalem."

His response demonstrates that toward the end of his life – Hezekiah became self-centered.

All he cared about was his own personal comfort and success.

Turn with me to 2 Chron 32 – because we get a little bit more insight into this.

[2Ch 32:31 NKJV] 31 However, [regarding] the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, whom they sent to him to inquire about the wonder that was [done] in the land, God withdrew from him, in order to test him, that He might know all [that was] in his heart.

Here is what happened to Hezekiah,

Hezekiah, had been a good king and godly man because of God's grace.

Up to this point, all Hezekiah needed to do was to realize his own weakness and need and turn to God for help – and God responded to Hezekiah's faith and made him one of the greatest and most godly kings.

However, Hezekiah had lived in the blessing and grace of God for so long, he had begun to mistake it for his own innate goodness. He felt that he was special and powerful and godly in and of his own strength.

So God withdrew from him to test him.

Not because God wanted to see what he would do – because God already knew.

He withdrew from Hezekiah because he wanted Hezekiah to see what king of a man he was without God's blessing and grace.

He wanted Hezekiah to see into his own heart and realize how corrupt and weak it was apart from Him.

God's withdrawing from Hezekiah was not judgment; it was grace

It's grace when God reminds us of who and what we are apart from Him.

And God will bring us to a place of humility –

And the best way to humble ourselves is to remember the cross.

To remember who we are apart from Jesus Christ

That it was our sin that nailed our Savior upon the cross.

When we truly apprehend the message of the cross – that is when we will see an end to pride in our lives.

20 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah--all his might, and how he made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city--[are] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21 So Hezekiah rested with his fathers. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh as we will find out next week becomes the next king of Judah and is considered the most wicked king Judah had.

By the way, he becomes king at the age of 12 –

How many years was Hezekiah's life extended? 15

15 years were added by God's to Hezekiah's life – but in the end, we see that he wasted those 15 years.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word

and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

