

# The Book of the Prophet ISAIAH

## Chapter 39

**Theme:** After his near-death experience and consequent glory and riches, Hezekiah sinned due to pride.

### Outline:

- 1-2 Hezekiah Proudly Received Ambassadors
- 3-4 Hezekiah Confessed His Fault to Isaiah
- 5-7 Isaiah Prophesied Babylonian Captivity
- 8 Hezekiah Comforted by Present Mercy

**Preparatory Reading:** II Kings 20; II Chronicles 32.

### Related Links:

- A. *King Hezekiah: His Life and Lessons ...* <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/hezekiah-lessons.pdf>.
- B. *Comparative Table of Three ...* <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/sennacherib-three-witnesses-compared.pdf>.
- C. *Condemnation of Human Pride ...* <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/pride2.pdf>.
- D. *Proverb Commentaries about Pride ...* <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/topics/all.php?topic=96>.

### Introduction:

- A. The events of these four historical chapters occurred rather closely together in time (Isaiah 36-39).
- B. This event in Hezekiah's life – his receiving of ambassadors from Babylon – is recorded three times.
  - 1. The major events of Hezekiah's life are in the Bible thrice (II Kgs 18-20; II Chr 29-32; Is 36-39).
  - 2. We do not get extra material here in Isaiah 39, for the accounts in Kings and Chronicles add details.
- C. It is precious to have another chapter not requiring work to know the exact event and event's setting.
  - 1. Some of the previous chapters in this book were so obscure as to require much study for context.
  - 2. Here we may learn of this godly man's sin by pride and God's forgiveness of him for repentance.
- D. Hezekiah was a great king – one of Judah's four best – to be highly esteemed entering the chapter.
  - 1. He was a great king, better than almost all, for he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.
  - 2. He is compared favorably to David, which puts him in the very elite company of God's favorite.
  - 3. He aggressively corrected religious corruption, even breaking Moses' brazen serpent. *Nehushtan!*
  - 4. He trusted in God more completely in God's perfect judgment than any other king before or after.
  - 5. He clave to the LORD ... stuck to Him tightly ... keeping His precepts ... no matter circumstances.
  - 6. Because of the above, the LORD was with him and prospered him in everything he chose to pursue.
  - 7. His successes by the LORD's blessing included his rebellion against Assyria and ruin of Philistia.
  - 8. God summarized his efforts as doing that which was good and right and truth before Him (31:20).
  - 9. When he sought his God by worship and word, he did it with all his heart and prospered (31:21).
  - 10. His glory increased greatly after his sickness, as many nations brought gifts and presents to him.
  - 11. His wealth increased greatly, for God gave him substance very much, and he built stores for it all.
  - 12. He creatively improved Jerusalem's water supply by a system of canals, passages, and pipes.
  - 13. God clearly identified the three places where Hezekiah's acts and goodness were written (32:32).
  - 14. Far from Ahaz's burial, he was buried with honor in a chief grave of David's royal sons (32:33).
  - 15. The book of Proverbs states that Hezekiah was involved in production of Solomon's best (Pr 25:1).
- E. The best of men are but men, and even the great Hezekiah failed when God left him to reveal his heart.
- F. If God leaves you, there is nothing you would not do, but for His restraining grace and power in you.
- G. II Kings 20 is similar to Isaiah 39 here, but II Chronicles 32:23-31 provides a summary and extra facts.

***1 At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.***

- A. The events of these four historical chapters occurred quite closely together (Is 36-39).
- B. Babylon was a major city in the Assyrian Empire under the control and rule of Nineveh.
  - 1. Babylon would soon destroy the Assyrian Empire and utterly destroy its Nineveh.
  - 2. Historical research will reveal mounting trouble Assyria had controlling Babylon.
  - 3. It is easy to think the kings of Babylon appreciated Hezekiah for Sennacherib's loss.
- C. Yet, the cards and gift here are not for defeating Assyria but for beating a deadly disease.
  - 1. Keep in mind that along with recovering from a terminal disease was sun movement.
  - 2. Another account of this event indicates their inquiry about the sun (II Chron 32:31).
- D. Nice gestures by pagans and worldlings should be viewed as that – of pagan worldlings.
  - 1. We are allowed considerable liberty doing things with pagans (I Cor 5:9-10; 10:27).
  - 2. However, this world and its people are enemies of godliness (Jas 4:4; I Jn 2:15-17).
  - 3. Your friends will either corrupt or grow you – choose wisely (Pr 13:20; I Cor 15:33).
  - 4. Prosperity and praise are dangerous things (Deut 32:15; Pr 27:21; 30:7-9; Dan 4:30).

***2 And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.***

- A. Hezekiah was glad of them. He appreciated these ambassadors with greetings and gifts.
  - 1. Prosperity and praise are dangerous things (Deut 32:15; Pr 27:21; 30:7-9; Dan 4:30).
  - 2. But these blessings were even more dangerous with 15 years guaranteed to his life.
  - 3. They came to deliver a gift, not take a tour, but Hezekiah showed them everything.
- B. Instead of praising God and giving Him all the glory and himself none, he showed off.
  - 1. Hezekiah became very great in reputation and very rich in wealth by God and men honoring him; the combined results of God's several blessings exalted him highly.
  - 2. He could have greatly praised God for the many blessings of defeating Assyria, agricultural recovery without means, cured from illness, sun moving backward, etc.
  - 3. He could have shown them prophecies of Sennacherib's ruin, the history of Joshua stopping the sun, the ruin of Pharaoh and army when Israel came out of Egypt, etc.
  - 4. He could have used his praise band for exalting the accomplishments of Jehovah.
  - 5. The Spirit described Hezekiah's pride as not returning the benefit of God's kindness.
  - 6. Was it in his genes? His grandfather had done so (II Chr 26:16). It is in all our genes.
- C. While not explained here – the Lord had left Hezekiah to expose the pride of his heart.
  - 1. This additional information is found in the Chronicles account (II Chr 32:25-26,31).

2. By comparing three accounts, we know his sin of pride was with these ambassadors.
  3. Recall David's case, where God turned him over to Satan (II Sam 24:1; I Chr 21:1).
  4. Your heart is very deceitful, so you must pray against it (Jeremiah 17:9; Ps 19:12).
  5. Wise men know they cannot stand against temptation without the Lord (I Cor 10:12).
- D. Anything and everything you are or have is a gift from God – glorify Him (I Cor 4:7).

\*\*\*\*\* *Hezekiah Confessed His Fault to Isaiah – Verses 3-4* \*\*\*\*\*

**3 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon.**

- A. Surely Isaiah knew exactly who the men were, for God had sent him with a prophecy.
- B. Hezekiah's words indicate his gladness at their visit from afar, as indicated (Is 39:2).
- C. Never be surprised when you think a sermon directly addresses your life or its events.
- D. God knows you better than you know you, and He directs His ministers in His word.

**4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.**

- A. Surely Isaiah knew exactly what the men had seen, for God sent him with a prophecy.
- B. Hezekiah honestly told the terrible truth – he had proudly shown them all his wealth.
- C. By comparing all three accounts, we understand he repented right there (II Chr 32:26).
  1. The guaranteed life and great success in anything he touched caused his heart pride.
  2. Hezekiah and Judah had proud hearts together but also repented (II Chr 32:25-26).
  3. God revealed this heart error by sending the ambassadors of Babylon (II Chr 32:31).
- D. God can withdraw grace, turn you over to Satan, or let you see Bathsheba. You will sin.

\*\*\*\*\* *Isaiah Prophesied Babylonian Captivity – Verses 5-7* \*\*\*\*\*

**5 Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts:**

- A. Judah had this bad judgment coming from the Lord for their carnal, halfhearted religion.
  1. The judgment was terrible – captivity in Babylon 70 years – but not of Hezekiah.
  2. The political history of Judah after this is terrible but for Josiah – Manasseh is next.
  3. Hezekiah showing his wealth was nothing in light of Judah's sins before and later.
- B. God was angry at Hezekiah for his pride, but He forgave him quickly for his repentance.

**6 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.**

- A. God used this event to prophecy that all the riches of Judah would end up in Babylon.
  - 1. Nebuchadnezzar came on successive campaigns and eventually took all Judah away.
  - 2. God had promised Moses and Hezekiah, and He fulfilled His word (II Kgs 25:1-7).
  - 3. The Babylonian captivity of the Jews of Judah was not because of Hezekiah's pride.
  - 4. Hezekiah showing his wealth was nothing in light of Judah's sins before and later.
- B. God was angry at Hezekiah for his pride, but He forgave him quickly for his repentance.

**7 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.**

- A. You know of Daniel and friends in Babylon, which fulfills this prophecy (Dan 1:1-7).
- B. Note carefully Isaiah's words – the judgment would affect Hezekiah's descendants.
- C. Manasseh, Hezekiah's son, was carried off to Babylon, but restored (II Chr 33:11-13).

\*\*\*\*\* *Hezekiah Comforted By Present Mercy – Verse 8* \*\*\*\*\*

**8 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.**

- A. You might think Hezekiah rather cold and cruel here without regard to family or Judah.
  - 1. Did Hezekiah mean? ... *Whew! As long as I am saved from judgment is what matters.*
  - 2. Did Hezekiah mean? ... *My sons and grandsons can suffer, as long as I can escape.*
  - 3. Did Hezekiah mean? ... *Go for it, LORD. Pound this evil, wicked family and nation.*
- B. But there is no reason to think such things of this godly man in his state of repentance.
  - 1. Hezekiah was noble and righteous, and we are told that he repented (II Chr 32:26).
  - 2. God lifted present anger from Judah and Hezekiah for repentance (II Chr 32:25-26).
  - 3. Hezekiah had shown for his whole reign a great concern for the nation and revival.
  - 4. His pride does not mean or require that he forgot praise of God and pursuit of truth.
- C. Consider all the current things in play in God's judgment and timetable for Jerusalem.
  - 1. The nation had wicked kings as Solomon to Rehoboam to Ahaziah to Joash to Ahaz.
  - 2. The nation was very wicked, as Ahaz's reign proves, for idolatry and confederation.
  - 3. The nation, even the remnant, were still bad even under Hezekiah, seeking to Egypt.
  - 4. Even in the siege, the attitude and actions of Jerusalem were corrupt (Is 22:11-14).
- D. Consider all the prophecies in play for God's judgment on Judah and city of Jerusalem.
  - 1. Moses had declared repeatedly they would be scattered for sins (Lev 26; Deut 28).

2. Isaiah had prophesied and would yet prophesy about captivity and rescue from Babylon (Is 1:25-31; 13:1,19; 14:1-8; 21:1-10; 39:6-7; 43:14; 45:1; 47:1; 48:14,20).
3. Consider these prophecies and others already in play to be fulfilled in God's time.
- E. Other men, even good men, spoke similar words when God deferred severe judgment.
  1. Consider that God showed such mercy to Ahab for repentance (I Kings 21:27-29).
  2. Consider that God showed such mercy to Josiah (II Kgs 23:25-28; II Chr 34:23-28).
  3. Eli, David, Job were resigned and submissive (I Sam 3:18; II Sam 15:26; Job 1:21).
- F. Isaiah, the prophet of God present, had already warned about greater judgment coming.
  1. As noted earlier for this verse, he had prophesied about Babylon before this chapter.
  2. Since Isaiah spoke of the Babylonian captivity, he likely explained 100 years until.
  3. When Hezekiah did not enhance the nation's revival, Isaiah must have left it certain.
- G. Why should we not think that Hezekiah's words were resignation and personal thanks.
  1. Did Hezekiah mean? ... *His plans to punish by Babylon are scriptural and righteous.*
  2. Did Hezekiah mean? ... *If the revival I started lasts for my life, I am grateful to God.*
  3. Did Hezekiah mean? ... *The LORD gave; the LORD will take away. Blessed be God.*