

Research: II Kings 20:1 (to 1st), 2-5 (to 2nd :), 19 Healing of Hezekiah by Isaiah

Hezekiah

Hezekiah was one of the few kings of Judah who was constantly aware of God's acts in the past and His involvement in the events of every day. The Bible describes Hezekiah as a king who had a close relationship with God, one who did "what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God"

Hezekiah, a son of the wicked King Ahaz, reigned over the southern kingdom of Judah for twenty-nine years, from c. 726 to 697 BC. He began his reign at age 25 (2 Kings 18:2). He was more zealous for the Lord than any of his predecessors (2 Kings 18:5). During his reign, the prophets Isaiah and Micah ministered in Judah.

After Ahaz's wicked reign, there was much work to do, and Hezekiah boldly cleaned house. Pagan altars, idols, and temples were destroyed. The bronze serpent that Moses had made in the desert (Numbers 21:9) was also destroyed, because the people had made it an idol (2 Kings 18:4). The temple in Jerusalem, whose doors had been nailed shut by Hezekiah's own father, was cleaned out and reopened. The Levitical priesthood was reinstated (2 Chronicles 29:5), and the Passover was reinstated as a national holiday (2 Chronicles 30:1). Under Hezekiah's reforms, revival came to Judah.

Because King Hezekiah put God first in everything he did, God prospered him. Hezekiah "held fast to the Lord and did not stop following him; he kept the commands the Lord had given Moses. And the Lord was with him; he was successful in whatever he undertook" (2 Kings 18:6–7).

In 701 BC, Hezekiah and all of Judah faced a crisis. The Assyrians, the dominant world power at the time, invaded Judah and marched against Jerusalem. The Assyrians had already conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and many other nations, and now they threatened Judah (2 Kings 18:13). In their threats against the city of Jerusalem, the Assyrians openly defied the God of Judah, likening Him to the powerless gods of the nations they had conquered (2 Kings 18:28–35; 19:10–12).

Faced with the Assyrian threat, Hezekiah sent word to the prophet Isaiah (2 Kings 19:2). The Lord, through Isaiah, reassured the king that Assyria would never enter Jerusalem. Rather, the invaders would be sent home, and the city of Jerusalem would be spared (2 Kings 19:32–34). In the temple, Hezekiah prays a beautiful prayer for help, asking God to vindicate Himself: "Now, Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone, Lord, are God" (2 Kings 19:19).

God, faithful as always, kept His promise to protect Jerusalem. “That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!” (2 Kings 19:35). The remaining Assyrians quickly broke camp and withdrew in abject defeat. “So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem. . . . He took care of them on every side” (2 Chronicles 32:22).

Later, Hezekiah became very sick. Isaiah told him to set things in order and prepare to die (2 Kings 20:1). But Hezekiah prayed, beseeching God to be merciful and to remember all the good he had done. Before Isaiah had even left the king’s house, God told Isaiah to tell Hezekiah that his prayer had been heard and that his life would be extended fifteen years (<http://www.gotquestions.org/life-Hezekiah.html>)

II Kings 20:1, 2-5, 19

IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order;

In those days—*i.e.*, in the time of the Assyrian invasion. The illness may have been caused, or at least aggravated, by the intense anxiety which this grave peril created. Hezekiah reigned 29 years (2Kings 18:2), and the invasion began in his 14th year (2Kings 18:13). In 2Kings 20:6 he is promised 15 years of life, and deliverance from the king of Assyria. That Hezekiah recovered *before* the catastrophe recorded at the end of the last chapter, is evident from the fact that no allusion to the destruction of his enemies is contained in his hymn of thanksgiving (Isaiah 38:10-20)” (Ellicott’s commentary, www.biblehub.com).

“*Thus saith the Lord, Set thy house in order; &c.* — Make thy will, and settle the affairs of thy family and kingdom. This he the rather presses upon him, because the state of his kingdom peculiarly required it, for it is plain Hezekiah had not, as yet, any son; Manasseh, his heir and successor, not being born till three years after this time” (Benson Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

“In those days - Hezekiah seems to have died 697 B.C.; and his illness must belong to 713 or 714 B.C. (compare 2 Kings 20:6), a date which falls early in the reign of Sargon. The true chronological place of this narrative is therefore prior to all the other facts related of Hezekiah except his religious reforms.

The prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz - This full description of Isaiah (compare 2 Kings 19:2), by the addition of his father's name and of his office, marks the original independence of this narrative. The writer of Kings may have found it altogether separate from the other records of Hezekiah, and added it in the state in which he found it” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

2Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

“**Then he turned his face.**—*And he turned his face round*(1Kings 21:4). Hezekiah did so to avoid being disturbed in his prayer; and perhaps because grief instinctively seeks a hiding-place” (Ellicott’s Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

3I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is good* in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

“*Remember how I have walked before thee in truth* — Sincerely, with an honest mind. I am not conscious to myself of any exorbitances, for which thou art wont to shorten men’s days. *And Hezekiah wept sore* — “Under the law, long life and uninterrupted health were promised as the rewards of obedience, and premature death was denounced as a punishment” (Benson Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

“There is no Pharisaical self-righteousness here. Hezekiah is conscious that he has honestly endeavored to serve God, and to do his will - that, whatever may have been his shortcomings, his heart has been right towards God. He ventures, therefore, on something like expostulation. Why is he to be cut off in the midst of his days, at the age of thirty-nine, when such a wicked king as Uzziah has lived to be sixty-eight (2 Kings 15:2), and Rehoboam to be fifty-eight” (Pulpit Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

4And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

““The middle court” is probably the second or intermediate court of the royal palace. Isaiah had not gone further than this, when he was arrested in his course by a Divine communication” (Pulpit Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

5Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee:

“The captain of my people - This phrase (which does not occur elsewhere in Kings) is remarkable, and speaks for the authenticity of this full report of the actual words of the prophet's message (abbreviated in Isaiah 38:1, etc.). The title, "Captain נָגִיד nāgîyd of God's people," commonly used of David, is applied to Hezekiah, as David's true follower 2 Kings 18:3” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

“Thus saith ... the God of David thy father—An immediate answer was given to his prayer, containing an assurance that the Lord was mindful of His promise to David and would accomplish it in Hezekiah's experience, both by the prolongation of his life, and his deliverance from the Assyrians” (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

“I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears(comp. Exodus 2:24; Exodus 3:7; Psalm 56:8). There is not a cry, not a groan, not a tear, not a sigh of his faithful ones, to which the heart of God is not open, which does not touch him, move him, draw forth his sympathy. If he does not always grant our prayers, it is because we "ask amiss" - without faith, or without fervor, or things not good for us. Hezekiah's earnest, faithful, and not unwise prayer was, as such prayers always are, effectual” (Pulpit Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

19Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah,

Good is the word of the lord which thou hast spoken.

“*Good is the word of the Lord* — I heartily submit to this sentence, as being most just and merciful. All true penitents, when they are under divine rebukes, call them not only just, but good: not only submit to, but accept of the punishment of their iniquity. So Hezekiah did, and by this it appeared he was indeed humbled for the pride of his heart. Undoubtedly it was most grievous to him to hear of the calamities that should befall his children; but, notwithstanding, with a truly penitent and pious mind, he pronounced the sentence good, as coming from that Being who not only does nothing but what is right, but nothing but what is tempered with mercy and goodness, even when he punishes; and therefore a resigned submission to his will is highly reasonable and proper, and our absolute duty.” (Benson Commentary)

“Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken*. Hezekiah accepts the rebuke, thereby acknowledging himself to have been in the wrong, and submits without remonstrance to his punishment.” (Pulpit Commentary)