

# Lessons from the trials of Hezekiah (Quality: Good)

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] of the fall needed help. I thank you to draw your prayerful attention to Isaiah chapter 38 verses 19 and 20.
- Isaiah chapter 38 verses 19 and 20. The living, the living, he shall praise thee as I do this day.
- The father to the children shall make known thy truth. The Lord was ready to save me.
- Therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.
- I draw your prayerful attention first to the first three words in this chapter.
- [ 1 : 1 6 ] In those days. And then in our text, these two words. This day.
- In those days. This day. Those days. Were days of deep, great trouble and difficulty in all directions concerning this godly king, Hezekiah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- Briefly, you will well know that when Hezekiah came to the throne following the evil reign of wickedness by his father Ahaz.
- Hezekiah break down the images, break in pieces, even the brazen serpent that had been preserved all those years from the wilderness journey to which now Israel kind of had made it a god.
- He'd break it all in pieces. He set in order the Passover. He rebelled against giving tribute to Assyria.
- [ 2 : 5 3 ] And for 14 years of his reign largely prospered. The Lord was with him blessing him abundantly.
- Then trouble comes. The host of the Assyrians take possession of certain of the cities of Judah leaving Jerusalem largely isolated.
- Hezekiah in a moment of weakness. We have many moments of weakness. Weak in faith, lacking trust in our God.
- He sought to pay tribute to Assyria to stop them coming against him and indeed took silver and gold out of the temple to pay this tribute money.
- it did not eventually stop the Assyrian host who came in great power against Jerusalem speaking words of blasphemy.
- [ 4 : 1 1 ] And once and again you should well know the history there was temporary respite. Yet how soon the enemy came back.
- and here is Jerusalem defenseless, powerless against such a great multitude.
- And we read of how that they speak words of such blasphemy. And they said to Hezekiah what confidence is this wherein thou trustest.
- We have no confidence in the flesh. Our confidence is in God. Our complete trust in the Lord God of hosts.

and this evil man said neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord saying the Lord will surely deliver us.

[ 5 : 18 ] He said this city shall not and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah.

Words of blasphemy. Where are the gods of these other nations that we've conquered? They couldn't help them. No more can your God either. And perhaps the devil's getting at some of you like that this morning.

Where's your God? Where's your God? You're in trouble. You're perplexed. You see the sad and solemn state around.

You feel isolated. Where's your God? They held their peace. They answered him not a word.

There are times to be silent. There's a time also to speak. We need to pray over that and God will direct us when to be silent and when to speak.

[ 6 : 26 ] Hezekiah hearing these blasphemous words rent his clothes.

Sorrow sadness filled his heart. And where did he go? To the house of the Lord.

God. I've observed in my meditation upon this godly king how close he kept to the house of the Lord.

May we all keep close to the house of God. And when I say that is because in the house of God where we gather in his name the Lord has promised to bless his people.

And we read also of how that a letter later was sent and when he received this letter from the hand of the messengers Hezekiah took it and spread it before the Lord and went up to the house of the Lord to do so.

[ 7 : 49 ] Now I don't know your path but I'm sure of this that there have been times in your life many here where you've had to spread a matter before the Lord and you've come to the house of God perhaps not knowing what to do.

Your heart filled with sadness it may be even a literal letter itself unkind hurtful harmful and you didn't know what to do but you brought it and spread it before the Lord and Hezekiah went to prayer.

He sought the Lord of hosts the God of Israel that dwells between the cherubim. As it were he could see that great host of Assyrians coming against him but he looked above him.

He looked up to the Lord of hosts the God of Israel that dwells between the cherubim the place where the Lord says there will I meet thee and there will I bless thee.

He prayed. He acknowledged that their gods of these heathen nations couldn't save them from the hosts of the Assyrian but he committed himself into the hand of his God.

[ 9 : 30 ] God sent his servant Isaiah to speak. Isaiah to encourage. Isaiah to testify that God would be with his people.

That God would preserve them. That God would deliver them. Great was the enemy. Powerful was the foe. But if God before us who then can be against us?

And then we read the angel of the Lord went forth and smoked in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four score and five thousand.

And they arose when they arose early in the morning the dear inhabitants of Jerusalem as I understand it there they could see the enemy sway.

only with thine eyes shalt thou behold the reward of the wicked.

[ 10 : 34 ] But what if you are one of the wicked? That is without the grace of God the work of grace in your heart.

That was part of the picture of these three words in those days. Now it is not exactly clear as to whether it was whilst the Assyrians were coming against Jerusalem or whether it was immediately afterwards one or the other but it was in the same year at the same time as we might say the servant of Jehovah comes to Hezekiah and says thus saith the Lord set thine house in order for thou shalt die and not live.

What a word. Friend how would it be with your soul before God now if God spake that word to you and who can tell this night thy soul shall be required of thee for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ pause my soul and ask the question art thou ready to meet God am I made a real Christian washed in the Redeemer's blood have I union to the church's living head is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment that great gulf fixed prepare me gracious

God to stand before thy face thy spirit must the work perform for it is all of grace in those days put with the threatenings of Assyria even though God at this time it may well have been a granted deliverance but who could tell a further trouble but here was death now I do not feel that this dear man had no hope in God but he turned his face toward the wall and prayed unto the Lord do you know something of this as soon as you may be brought into a path of trial and I hope from time to time over your sin not just providential troubles spiritual troubles is there a turning of your face to the wall now that means that he wanted to be alone with

God it was secret it wasn't a display to others that might have been nearby but he prayed secretly alone to God his religion wasn't only in the house of God it was there but also he had this personal way to the throne of grace in his times of need what are we to understand then by the prayer of this man that he could say remember now oh lord how I have seen you how I walk before thee in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which is good in thy sight he wasn't boasting he wasn't parading what he had done in a wrong way he had a clear conscience before God in this matter and that word perfect means to walk uprightly it means to walk in the fear of the

[ 15 : 09 ] Lord he wept sore why the death of the saint is the time of the greatest rejoicing for the saint but here I believe we are taught this here was a man who felt his work was yet unfinished but there was no successor to the throne at this time he had no son and I believe here the dear man prophetically viewing the word of God knowing from this tribe the Messiah would come here he is burdened in his spirit the Lord sends his servant back with another word I have heard thy prayer

I have seen thy tears behold I will add unto thy life 15 years God does not change his will but God does will a change this was a time of testing to Hezekiah this brought out the work of God's grace in his heart this was manifest in his prayers this was evidence in his tears and this was seen in his great concern for the honor and for the glory of God and for the good of his people and waiting still for the fulfillment of the promise of God that a son should be born and that one should be raised up to the throne you will remember that

Manasseh his son was twelve years old when he came to the throne that was three years after the events that are before us in this chapter that Manasseh was born we are reminded as I speak of this of a word later in this prophecy and it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer and while they are yet speaking I will hear now I do not sing a song to a heavy heart you may say I have been praying and praying and praying but there seems no answer there seems no deliverance when the Lord is a sovereign makes no mistake there are times when he bids his child wait and watch when in the exercise testing and trial of your faith everything seems to go against an answer to prayer go again seven times when he answered that woman not a word she couldn't give up but there are times friend when oh through the

God's amazing love and compassion he hears as he always hears our prayer but answers their prayer even while we are yet speaking here was the promise not only a longer life but further deliverance that Jerusalem should be preserved and a sign a miraculous sign was given to confirm Hezekiah and God's blessing on the treatment prescribed even the poultice of pigs upon this malady upon the boil I cannot forbear just saying this we would think a boil not very serious I had a beloved uncle of mine a man of strength worked on the land he had a carbuncle and it was the means of his death we never know for him we had that good hope it was the glory but it's a warning it's a warning to us all but the

Lord had done great things for Hezekiah and we read of his writings it's good for God's children to leave a written record of the Lord's dealings answers to prayer and their life for the as we have in our text the father and of course the mother to the children shall make known thy truth leave behind a written record of what the Lord has done for your soul and may God give us grace with an open testimony in our life of thanksgiving and of praise unto our God for all that he is to us and all that he has done for us he he he now speaks of the low place that he had been in he speaks of the brevity of life compared to the shepherd's tent you see a shepherd's tent could be taken down in a few moments and there would be no evidence of a tent ever being there in the desert or on the land the end our end may come suddenly and without warning the earthly tabernacle this body of ours may be taken down by

[ 21 : 31 ] God in death in a moment of time light in here cut off like a weaver the thread cut off the work finished suddenly doesn't take a moment to sever the thread does it literally so God in his sovereignty takes song with such suddenness in a moment of time but I cannot pass over this weaver as I turned up to the back of my bible at home last night and came to these sweet words my life is but a weaving between my lord and me I cannot choose the colors, he worketh steadily.

Oft times he weaveth sorrow, and I in foolish pride. Forget that he seeth the upper, and I the underside.

Not till the loom is silent, and the shuttles cease to fly. Should God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why?

The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned.

With mercy, says the lines from Rutherford, and with judgment, by web of time he wove, and in the dews of sorrow, and lusted with his love.

[ 23 : 35 ] I bless the hand that guided, I bless the heart that planned when throned in highest glory in Emmanuel's land.

Thine eyes, he said, fail with looking up. Perhaps, as we've been reading of the songs and psalms of praise, perhaps as we have read this text in your hearing this morning, of praising God, the living, the living, you may be down in the valley, you may be under a cloud, you may be deeply in trouble, you may be sorely oppressed.

Oh Lord, I am oppressed. Undertake from it. What a mercy. When you're oppressed beyond measure, when you see no weight, when sin weighs heavily upon your soul, when everything seems to go against you, you've still got a God to go to.

Undertake from it. And I like this word, undertake. It means I'm right at the bottom, Lord, and there's none can lift me up, none can help me, none can bring me out of this trial.

Oh Lord God of heaven and earth, put forth thy power, make manifest of my poor soul, that even though I'm so low, even though I'm in such a dark place, that underneath are those everlasting arms that are thine.

[ 25 : 04 ] But thou hast, he said, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

Oh, you may say, but I can't say that. Are you praying for it? Is it the longing desire of your heart?

Is it the greatest blessing that you seek? Now look, friend, I anticipate just for a moment, the living, the living, the spiritual living, born again sinner, is a pardon sinner.

We need the witness of the spirit, we need the exercise of God-given spirit, wrought faith in our soul. To lay whole upon this rich blessing.

But there's no separation whatsoever from the new birth, the pardon of sin, and heaven at last.

[ 26 : 11 ] Thou hast in love to my soul. I'm trying to speak of our text, the living, the living. He shall praise thee as I do this day. Look, says he, there I thought I was overwhelmed by an enemy, there I felt it would be the grave, and there with all my sins and failures.

But the Lord, in love, and to my soul, has delivered it from the pit of corruption, the lowest pit, of loathsome, mary clay, where I was sinking, where I was lost, where there was none to help me.

And this word love, it means embrace me, gather me in thine arms, pick me up, pluck me out. Oh, the wonder of it.

And you see, this is evidence in the living, the living, the born-again sinner, as the psalmist says in another place.

He brought me up also out of the mary pit, out of the horrible pit, out of the mary clay, and set my feet upon a rock.

[ 27 : 22 ] Look, there you were in a sinking pit. There you were beginning to sink. There you felt you'd be overwhelmed. There you felt the wrath of God would sink you to hell. But the Lord, in his mercies, pulled you out.

He set your feet upon a rock. Look at the contrast, a pit of mire and filth, and sinking a rock with all its solidity. Establish my goings, and put a song, a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God, the living, the living.

He shall praise thee as I do, says the dear man, this day, that thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

And their sin, and their iniquity, will I remember no more forever. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as wool.

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. But what a solemn thing, if God has our sins before him. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins, in the light of thy countenance.

[ 28 : 41 ] Friend, where are your sins? Where are they? You say, they're all mine. They are. Are you going to die like that?

Or have you some sweet hope, longing desire in your heart, and some of us with the blessings of the Lord, those sins of mine, great, stained so deep, charged upon another, he took them.

He took them and counted them as his own. And there he died on that cross. And there he shed his blood. There he endured the wrath of God. There that blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth me from all sin.

The living, the living, he shall praise thee as I do this day. How many hear and say, yes, ah, why did Jesus show to me the beauties of his face?

Why do my soul, did he convey the wonders of his praise? This day, oh, friend, may our song be unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

[ 30 : 01 ] But the living, the living, this is the born again sinner. This is the one that is born from above. This is the personal, powerful work of heaven in a sinner's heart.

It signifies a first birth, that's the birth, a natural birth, in sin, shaken in iniquity, and the curse, far off from God, dead in trespasses and sin, in darkness, a slave to sin, a slave to Satan, a mass of sin, and deserving wrath.

But here is, was indeed, when God formed Adam from the dust of the earth in the image of God, that image was defaced, marred by sin.

But now, he is a new creature, he is a new creation, he is the work of God's grace in a sinner's heart, and it's after the image of God, partakers of the divine nature, all the wonder of it.

And my friend, it's the work of heaven, it's personal in your soul. You may say, how do I know it? Well, how do you know you're alive this morning?

[ 31 : 24 ] Of course you know you're alive. You children know you're alive, don't you? Well, you can move, you can hear, you can see, you can speak, you can eat, and much more.

You can think. So, a born-again sinner, he has ears to hear by faith, he has eyes open to see, spiritual sight given, a spiritual sight that reveals his sin and reveals the Savior.

He has spiritual affections, spiritual desires, he's got spiritual breathings, and we go back to the last meeting of the Friday night meeting.

Behold, he prayeth that the living, the living, the breath of prayer, that from heaven, wrought by the Spirit in the heart, and is the spirit evidence of a spiritual lie.

And, not long ago, if memory serves me right, I think it was here, it may have been elsewhere, but that matters not, we sung these lines, those feeble desires, those wishes, so we, did Jesus inspire us, and bids you still see, his spirit will cherish the life he first gave.

[ 32 : 52 ] Mark that, you never shall perish, if Jesus can save, the living, the living, he shall praise as I do, the father to the children shall make known the truth.

Oh, the solemn responsibility of godly parents, of fathers and mothers in Israel, of pastors and preachers in Zion, to make known, no, we cannot give spiritual life to the rising generation, but we're to make known these things.

Again, I turn to the psalmist, where the dear man of god bids us there to walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her boulevard, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation falling, for this god is our god forever and ever, and he will be our guide even unto death.

The living, the living, he shall praise thee as I do this day. It would be a wonderful Sabbath if the Lord should loosen some bonds here today, if there should be a song of praise rising up as never before from some poor burdened, sorrowful heart, and where there have been these songs of praises, that there may be the renewing of them, and a declaring to the children of what the Lord is to us, and the Lord has done for us, and the Lord has heard and answered our prayers.

The Lord was ready to save me. There I was ready to perish. There I was beginning to sink. There I felt that my sins, yes, that sink me to hell, just one unpardoned sin would sink me to hell and expose me to the wrath of God forever.

[ 35 : 08 ] But the Lord was ready to save me. salvation, providential, times of trouble and distress, but most of all this so great salvation, this finished work of Christ, this pardon of sin, save me, and it's an eternal salvation, it leads to heaven at last.

Therefore, we will sing my songs, to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

No neglect of the sanctuary. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves as the manner of some is so much more as you see the day approaching.

As I have named from time to time, the Lord sparing my life following that heart operation over 18 months or more ago, oh how those lines have been with me, while on earth our days are lengthened, may we give them Lord to thee, to be used of God, to seek the honor and the glory of God, to pray to be conformed to the image of Christ, to pray to be witnesses in this dark and evil world, to pray for grace to stand firm, to pray for grace to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, to be faithful even unto death, to live a life for the honor and the glory of God.

Lord, take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to thee, only reserved for Christ that died, surrendered to the crucified, all the days of our life, that Christ might be magnified in my body, whether for life or death, for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, so whilst here on earth, to speak of him, to live out Christ, if I may so put, such an expression, what I mean by that is this, that our lives may be a silent and yet a powerful witness of our love to Jesus Christ, whom we love, and whom we serve, and whom we seek to obey, and we will sing my songs, sometimes as we look at these songs, you know, there are sad songs, it wouldn't be wrong for me to say the lamentations of Jeremiah were a song, some of the songs of the songs, a sad song, but with hope, and there are times when in the night, in the dark hour, the Lord gives a song, turns our captivity, the harps are taken down from the willow, love, and there willow, and there willow, we do want reality, friend, you see, we can easily put on an outward show, we can have a mournful countenance, and yet be destitute of the grace of

[ 39 : 07 ] God, just as much as people can show and manifest a happy countenance, and yet that be all of the flesh, we want real things, vital things, work of the Holy Spirit in our heart, but oh, may we be helped to sing praise unto our God, is he not worthy, has not my Jesus done all things well, the Lord was ready to save me, therefore we unitedly will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life in the house of the Lord, and this will be a solemn exercise, it won't be fleshly excitement, it's sounding the heart with a solemn sound, the things of God are solemn, but they're blessed, there's a joy that's unspeakable and full of glory, oh yes, bless God, there are times when the Lord so blesses our soul that we leap as an heart and the tongue of the dumb sing and when we call upon all that is within us to bless and praise thy great and holy name, but it will be with reverence, it will be in godly fear, it will be to put the crown on the dear head of our saviour to ascribe all praise and glory unto him, our dear redeemer.

all the days of our life in the house of the Lord, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Lastly, and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, before the four beasts and the elders, and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.

That is a hundred and forty four thousand, a complete number, God's dear children, and by the grace of God they learned the song, the spiritual song on earth, which is the faltering first notes of the glorious anthem unceasing of praise for a never ending eternity.

So when this poor lispy, stammering tongue lies silent in the grave, then in a nobler, sweeter song I'll sing thy power to save.

[ 41 : 55 ] Amen.