

2Kings 18:1–8

Hoping in and Praising the Perfect Savior of Imperfect Saints

Wednesday, March 1, 2023 • Read 2 Kings 18:1–8

Questions from the Scripture text: In what year of which king's reign, did which other king, where, begin to reign (v1)? How old was he (v2)? How long did he reign? Who was his mother? What did he do (v3)? In Whose sight? According to what who had done? What did he remove (v4)? What did he cut down? What did he break in pieces? What had who done to it until that day? What had they called it? Whom did Hezekiah trust (v5)? To what extent? What is this trusting called (v6)? From what does someone who "holds fast" to Yahweh not depart? What does he keep? Who was with him (v7)? Where did he prosper? Against whom did he rebel? Whom did he subdue (v8)? How far?

What does the initial summation of Hezekiah's reign teach us? 2Kings 18:1–8 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **although we all fail much, there is a walking with the Lord in overall principle that marks those whom the Lord is saving.**

A glowing summary. Hezekiah receives quite the commendation here. He receives not only a "did what was right in the sight of Yahweh" but even the "according to all that his father David had done" (v3). Like David, "he removed the high places (v4a). Indeed, he does better than David, because Nehushtan (an Egyptian name) had long since gone from instrument-of-God to idol-of-Israel during the time of David, but it wasn't until Hezekiah that its use for worship was eliminated (v4b).

Hezekiah's faith is very instructive to us for what a saint looks like on earth. A saint trusts in Yahweh (v5) as both God over all, and covenant God ("God of Israel"). A saint holds fast to Yahweh (v6). A saint follows Yahweh. A saint keeps Yahweh's commandments. A saint knows the presence of Yahweh. A saint knows the prospering of Yahweh. In particular, we do all of these to/with the Lord Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, as beloved children of the Father.

A governing summary. We are going to read of a couple significant failures of king Hezekiah. Toward the beginning of his reign, he is going to give Assyria all of the silver of the house of Yahweh and the gold off of the doors and pillars of the temple of Yahweh. Toward the end, he is going to foolishly show off to the Babylonians and demonstrate a disregard for his descendants.

So, it is helpful to us to read this extremely positive summary of Hezekiah and his reign. It reminds us that the Lord is patient with His imperfect saints. This doesn't excuse our sin, but it does enable us to think and deal gently with ourselves and others. For, the true repentance that He does give us is real, despite its imperfections; and, we must not fail observe and appreciate this work of His grace.

And for some believers, though glaring imperfections exist, yet they may be exemplary saints. The governing, over-arching summary of a believer's life may be of how the work of grace in his life differentiated him even from many in the church.

A gracious summary. By reminding us that our governing view of a believer's life is to consider His gracious work above all, the Lord is gracious to us. He graciously gives us reason to be gentle in how we think of others and ourselves. By giving His grace due glory, we may be patient and even-handed with where they fall short.

He graciously gives us reason to be hopeful in how we think of ourselves and other believers. Though we may have fallen spectacularly, and may feel even now the potential that would still fall, yet His grace is the greater story of the believer's life, and this gives us reason to hope as we pray for them and serve them—and reason to hope as we ourselves pursue holiness.

He graciously gives us reason to be vigorous in pursuit of holiness. If God's gracious work in us is the main story of our lives, and if there are some believers about whom Scripture teaches us to see this as a more consistent and more completed work, then this should be great motivation for us to seek that consistency and maturity. Do we not desire that others would be more encouraged by an account of His work in our lives? Do we not desire to give more occasion for His praise? Then let us pursue integrity, consistency, and maturity of holiness with all that we are!

When you think about your own trusting, holding fast to, following, obeying, and walking with the Lord, what would you say have been positive and negative highlights so far? How is this helping you to praise God for what He has already done? How is this helping you to pursue more of His work in you?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for Your merciful and powerful work in the life of Hezekiah. And thank You for teaching us, through Your summary of His life and reign, to focus upon Your gracious work in the life. Forgive us for how our many stumblings and remaining sin have often detracted from the display of Your grace in us. Forgive us for when we have not pursued holiness and maturity, because we have so little desired Your grace to be glorified in us. And forgive us for when we have seen our stumblings or other saints' stumblings as a bigger story than Your grace in our lives. Work in us by Your Spirit to correct these things we ask, through Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH433 "Amazing Grace"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Second Kings 18 versus 1 through 8. These are God's words

Now it came to pass in the 30 year of Jose Alas, son, of Elah king of Israel. That Hezekiah the son of a has king of Judah. Begin to rain. He was 25 years old when he became king. Any rain, 29 years in Jerusalem? His mother's name was Avi the daughter of Zachariah.

And he did what was right in the sight of Yahweh. According to all that, his father David had done. He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars. Cut down the wooden image and broken pieces. The bronze. Serpent. That Moses had made for until those days, the children of Israel burned incense to it.

And called it in the hushtan. He trusted and y'all. Thank God of Israel. So that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah. Nor who were before him. For, he felt held fast to Yahoo. He did not depart from following him. But kept his commandments, which Yahweh had commanded Moses.

Yahwe was with him. He prospered wherever he went. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. He subdued the Philistines as far as Gaza and it's territory. From Watchtower to fortified city.

So far the reading of God's inspired in an errant worked.

From this passage, we learned to appreciate and praise God's. Perfect grace and imperfect saints. Hezekiah is here described as. Trusting in Yahweh and holding. Fast to him and not departing from him, but keeping his commandments. In a way that no one before or after him was like, Which is also said of Josiah.

And that reminds us that God's work and each one is different. There is a. Play in which Hezekiah was More godly than anyone before, or after him? And a similar but different way in which Josiah. Was more godly than anyone. Before, or after him. The interesting thing about Hezekiah, receiving this summary, Of his life and his reign.

Is that in the particular accounts of his life and his reign? He begins and ends. Or not very beginning. But once towards the beginning of his rain and wants towards the end of his rain, there are Very disappointing episodes. You read in the summary that Part of his trusting and y'all and holding fast to Yahweh is rebelling against the king of Assyria.

Being prospered by walking with the Lord. And yet, when he rebels against the king of Assyria the king of Assyria, Response militarily. And what we're going to read is, That he gives the king of a cereal, all of the silver from inside the temple. And then he gives the king of Assyria, he melts the gold off of the doors of the temple.

And off of the pillars of the temple. Which he had just read overlaid with gold himself.

Worship of the Lord. And so, he's going to forgive that to the king of Assyrian, say sorry, I have sinned against you and

Isn't that he's going to strip and empty the temple of Yahweh.

To seek the favor of an earthly king.

And then after for the sake of his name, the Lord destroys the king of Assyrian. Then we'll hear all about that and I'm coming passages. The new power Babylon will arise. And Hezekiah. Is going to? Show off. To Babylon. All is in the King's Treasuries and all that is in.

All the treasury. Of Judah. In part and pride. I'm sure and parked. To communicate to Babylon, you know? You should really have a strong Western Ally and you can't do better than Judah.

And so it's interesting that there are these two huge incidents Of failing. Been sinning. And yet the summary focuses, not on the remaining sin. Not on these. Scandalizing, spectacular moments. Of the display of that remaining sin. Put on the grace of God. That had restrained, his sin. And produced in him faith and love and obedience.

Because that grace is real. And that faith is real. And that love is real. That obedience is real despite It's imperfections. You see, whether we looked at ourselves or Whether we look at another believer, In him and genuine work of grace has done. And, Of whoms. Some Their lives are much more up and down, and But much more down than up.

But there are others who The Lord works in them. To give them their lives as a walking with him and to trusting in him. And as universe 5, says trusting and verse 6 has holding fast to him Following him for six. And having y'all play with him. That there is such a thing in this life.

Not as an, not as a perfect saint But there is such a thing in this life as someone Whose life as a whole despite their feelings, despite moments of spectacular sin. Whose life as a whole can be described as. Trusting in Yahweh. Holding fast to Yahweh. Following Yahweh. Keeping Yahweh's commandments.

Having Yahweh with him. And so that's what we seek from God. And as he gives it to us more and more, That's what we think about. When we look back at our lives. How good and gracious God has been That's what we look for. Is, we look forward in our lives.

That's what we pray for when we pray for other believers. And there will be times when other believers send greatly against us. We don't overlook. The significance of that. We don't take it as an excuse for their said. Certainly not to take us an excuse for arts and And yet, when we're talking about a believer about whom that has that is the general.

Truth. About their life.

The primary thing that we do. Is we honor God. By recognizing what he has done.

So, Let us learn. To a door. God And not to be too depressed or detected. I'm on our own feelings to repent of them quickly. And desire that he would get more praise. Since he does receive real praise for real work of real grace. In our lives. This shouldn't make a shrug and say, well, I'm converted.

So my life is generally a story of God's grace and he receives praise for that. So it's okay if I said no There are those who are distinguished by the The consistency and intensity of the gracious work of god and maturing them and sanctifying them. And God's name receives honor by having done that in them and we want him to be honored.

So it doesn't make us shrug our shoulders that are sent at all. But it does. When we are tempted to be. Dejected or depressed over our sin. Make us to say the greater story is the grace of God. And from here forward, I desire of it. He who receives praise.

For the fruit of such gracious work in my life. Would receive more, praise. For more fruit of more grace. It pushes us towards your pants. But then when we look at others lives as well, Their believers. We honor God for what good. He has done and we desire that they would have more reformation and more sanctification so that God receive more parade.

For more gracious work. And we don't indulge us in Soria's spirit hostile spirit, critical spirit and embittered spirit Doesn't mean that we Treat their sin, a small. But it does mean that we treat God's graces bigger. So that he will be the primary one. About him, we think. And at his praise, we aim Aiming at his praise, will be the primary thing.

How we think and how we respond. And every situation. So small passage, but is very important before we get into Some of the details that we're rightly going to criticize and Take us warnings from Hezekiah's life. That we noticed that the summary statement, Just wonderfully positive. Because although, there are no perfect saints in this world.

There is a perfect god, who is working by perfect grace. And we should seek and praise the fruit of that grace. Weather in ourselves. Door and other believers.

So, let's pray. Our Father in heaven. Truly, you are gracious and merciful towards us. And truly, you rightly. Teach and model for us. The praise of. Your power and your mercy. In the work of your grace. In your people. And so we do. Pray that What you did and what you have received by.

The life of and reign of Hezekiah. You would do similarly now and receive similarly In our lives. We do not ask that we might fall. But knowing oh, Lord, that we will. Feel much in many ways. We ask that your grace would restrain our sin. That your grace would grow us in Christ.

If your grace would receive praise.

For what you do, in our lives as a whole. And that you would give us eyes. To see you first mines to think. First about you. That we might have hope and that we might give you honor. By not missing your grace. Granted we asking Jesus name. Amen.