

Hezekiah's Pride & Jerusalem's Demise

Isaiah 39:1-8

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Introduction

Perhaps you know what it is like to be so full of gratitude for God's grace that it seems your zeal will never be dampened!

- Hezekiah seemed to feel this way after he was delivered from a death that he thought would separate him from God forever (Isaiah 38)
- But as with us, it was only a matter of short time until pride set in.
- Of such pride after a great deliverance, we must beware.

I. There is a prevailing danger that God's gracious favour can make you proud.

A. Pride is easily stirred up by the attention we get from others when God has blessed us.

1. Such is the case with Hezekiah in Isaiah 39.
 - a. Hezekiah finds that his fame has spread all the way to Babylon!
 - b. Merodach-Baladan, the king of Babylon, was a remarkable man.
2. The passage shows us that Hezekiah was quite flattered by this man's attention.
 - a. He was so pleased that he showed the embassy all of his possessions (v. 2)
 - b. It was right for Hezekiah to be kind to this man who was kind to him.
 - c. But Merodach-Baladan's flattery blinded Hezekiah—or his pride did.

B. Oh brothers and sisters! Beware of flattery! Beware of pride!

1. I am quite certain that Hezekiah did not set out here to do evil—but his pride was stirred up and it blinded him.
2. How careful we must be!
 - a. A personal confession
 - b. It is easy to form improper alliances when we are blinded by flattery.
 - c. Does this not happen all the time?
 - 1) It happens to churches:
 - 2) It happens to individual Christians...
 - 3) In Chronicles, we are told that the LORD left Hezekiah in order to test him and show him what was in his heart.

II. See how the LORD addresses pride and ambition!

A. See how He graciously sends His Word to those He loves

1. As soon as Hezekiah's pride arises, the LORD sends Isaiah to him!
 - a. The Bible continually shows us how zealous the LORD is for the preservation of His elect people.
 - b. And you see how faithful Isaiah is to go to Hezekiah.
 - 1) I am sure it was not easy to go to him at this time!
 - 2) Brothers and sisters, you must not fear to go to your brother either when you see that pride has overtaken him.

TRANS> All this is an expression of God's great love and care for us.

2. How necessary it is for His word to come to us!
 - a. Pride and ambition, responding to flattery, had completely blinded King Hezekiah.
 - 1) Hezekiah probably had fully justified what he was doing in his own mind.
 - 2) Hezekiah's blindness is seen in the way he first answered Isaiah (v. 3-4)
 - b. Surely you all know about such blindness.
 - 1) You have seen it in those around you (to whom you try to minister)
 - 2) You have surely seen it in your own heart

TRANS> How glad we ought to be that God sends His word to us to open our eyes!

- But this is not all the LORD does!

B. The LORD also chastens us to break our pride.

1. The LORD shows you how serious your sin is by severely chastening you.
 - a. Look at what He sentences Hezekiah with (v. 5-7)
 - b. This is a very serious punishment indeed!
2. But it is a necessary judgement to bring light to a darkened mind.
 - a. This one sinful act becomes the occasion for the complete overthrow of the theocracy!
 - b. Like you and like me, Hezekiah needed to see his sin.
 - c. The LORD used this to prepare for the revelation of His mercy in Christ in chapters 40-66.
3. My friends, do you all see your need of Jesus Christ?
 - a. Do you see the judgement that would fall upon you according to your righteousness?
 - b. Understand that the whole nation was not punished only because of Hezekiah's sin. They all contributed to it (2 Chron 35:14-17)

III. By the grace of God, you will be able to respond to God as Hezekiah did.

A. I want you to see in the first place that he receives the Word of God from Isaiah.

1. Often when prophets go to rebuke kings, the prophets are not received.
2. But you see that Hezekiah did not rage against Isaiah and his rebuke.
3. When God's grace is at work, those who are rebuked are humbled and awakened.

B. See what Hezekiah says about the words that Isaiah spoke to him (v. 8) and pray that this will be your response when the word of rebuke comes to you

1. First, he confesses that the word which Isaiah has spoken is good (it is just)
2. Secondly, he recognises the mercy of God in the judgement!
 - a. The word is good because there will be "peace and truth in my days."
 - b. This is a token of God's grace and favour that is always with His people.
 - c. You need to hold on to this mercy in times of deepest chastisements.