

Series: Isaiah
Title: The Trial of Plenty
Text: Isaiah 39: 1-8
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2 Chronicles 32: 22: Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and guided them on every side. 23: And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth. 24: In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign....27: And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; 28: Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. 29: Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him substance very much. 30: This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

Isaiah 39: 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. 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. 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. 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. 5: Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 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. 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. 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.

I. OFTEN THE TRIAL HAS JUST BEGUN *AFTER* WE THINK THE TRIAL HAS ENDED.

Hezekiah's sickness was an obvious trial to him. We tend to get real humble when the trial shows us our utter weakness. During the attack by the Assyrians, during his sickness, Hezekiah had been greatly humbled by the LORD. (Isaiah 38: 17.)

Hezekiah was a chosen child of mercy by God's grace. Christ was Hezekiah's Surety. In Christ Hezekiah had eternal life, was washed from his sin and the LORD would remember Hezekiah's sin no more. The LORD declared this to Hezekiah (David type) (Isaiah 37: 35.)

What mercy Hezekiah was shown? The LORD delivered him from the Assyrians. Many gifts and honors were brought. The LORD performed a great miracle in delivering Hezekiah from death. All Hezekiah's sins were forgiven in Christ. But no sooner had Hezekiah said, "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" (Isaiah 38: 20) and we find this sad account, "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit *done* unto him; for his heart was lifted up" (2 Chronicles 32: 25.)

You see, when Hezekiah was recovered, the trial had just begun:

2 Chronicles 32: 31: Howbeit in *the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.*

Not that God did not know what was in Hezekiah's heart. God knows the heart. But that Hezekiah might know not to trust his own heart.

Jeremiah 17: 9: The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Illustration: Bullfrog

After we think the trial is over, when we begin to obtain new joy, new security, new toys—we prone to swell up in pride like a bullfrog. Afflictions of every kind are prone to be forgotten very soon—vanity and ambition are blinding and deceitful.

Hezekiah was a faithful man. A wise man—Lord said, none like him. But Hezekiah was no sooner restored to health than he was lifted up in pride. But what grace for God to show us what is in our hearts!

Malachi 3: 3: And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Understand this brethren: Not only has Christ Jesus come and purged all his children of sin. But from heavens throne, through the Holy Spirit, through his control over all providence, God the Father continually puts every believing child through the fire of trial.

- To make us to see the vanity of we are.
- He purges us from trusting the vanity and ambition of our own hearts
- That we might trust none but the Lord Jesus Christ alone
- That by faith in Christ only, we might offer up unto the LORD God—not the filth of our hands—but Christ alone, that *we might offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*

The Lord said

John 15: 4: Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Psalm 139: 1: «To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.» O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. 2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. 24:...lead me in the way everlasting.

II. EVERY THING THE LORD GIVES THE BELIEVER IN THIS WORLD IS FOR THE GLORY AND FURTHERANCE OF GOD'S NAME.

We are to use them for his name. And not to look anywhere else for assistance but our God.

The LORD is the salvation of his people. **2 Chronicles 32: 22:...the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and guided them on every side.** Hezekiah was a trophy of God's grace before the eyes of all the people. **2 Chronicles 32: 23: And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to**

Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth....29:...for God had given him substance very much. But what did Hezekiah do?

First—Hezekiah hoarded up what God gave him instead of putting it to use:

2 Chronicles 32: 27: And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold...28: Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. 29: Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance:

Secondly, Hezekiah entertained an alliance with Babylon.

Isaiah 39: 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. 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. 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.*

Babylon represents the mother of harlots—falsehood--a religious people. They worshipped the sun—remember the LORD moved the sun back 10 degrees—Babylon “**sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land**” (2 Chronicles 32: 31). Such is all false religion—they worship the secondary effects, not God who brings all things to pass. the gospel tells you what God has, is and shall do and through the Spirit the believer is brought to obedience by the Lord. Falsehood focuses on what man has, is and ought to do and leaves a sinner thinking secondarily of God.

Be very careful. Babylonian religion will appeal your power, position and prestige—pride--because it wants your treasures, not you-- **And Hezekiah was glad of them**--not long after Babylon carried them captive.

Listen to this question by Isaiah: **Isaiah 39: 4: Then said {Isaiah}, What have they seen in thine house?**

What a question? What have they seen in thine house?

- Have you declared to them the glory of God?
- Have you told them that God is our salvation? That God has freely saved us by his grace?
- Have you told them for whose sake God did these things—the LORD said, “for mine own sake and for my servant Christ’s sake.”
- Have you told them the utter uselessness of your own flesh—no strength in you, no strength in them?
- Have you told them that these riches pale in comparison to the unsearchable riches you have in Christ Jesus?
- Do they behold a man spending and being spent for the glory of God or a man heaping up treasures for himself? Did you make it appear you are in leagues with God are willing to be in leagues with these Babylonians?

Isaiah 39: 4:...And Hezekiah answered, All that *is* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

Application: When our hearts are lifted up in pride these are two great dangers we face:

1. Thinking our possessions are our salvation

2. And pride is easily beguiled by falsehood

Do you remember how Hezekiah fell on his face begging God to intervene when Assyria came up against Judah? He would have been pleased for God to take all the treasures in Judah if he would just save them? Do you remember when Hezekiah was sick unto death?

Isaiah 38: “Like a crane *or* a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail *with looking upward*:...”

Do you remember how you fell on your face during your trial? What about now that you have been delivered? Before, if we would have gone into Hezekiah’s house we would have seen a man utterly dependent upon God, now we see a man utterly set on pampering his flesh and acting as if he is own provider.

Now he is glad Babylon has come to Judah! Do you remember Hezekiah’s father?

- Remember Ahaz—turned from Lord to Assyria
- Hezekiah—from Lord to Egypt.
- Now Hezekiah is glad Babylon has come to court Judah

Example: Later, when the Lord delivered Israel out of Babylon—the Lord blessed them with much substance—and they went to building their own houses—but that time the Lord stirred them up by his Spirit so that they built the Lord’s house and refused to enter into leagues with the adversary.

Haggai 1: 2: Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD’S house should be built. 3: Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4: *Is it* time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house *lie* waste? 5: Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. 6: Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag with holes. 7: Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. 8: Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

Ezra 4: 1: Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel; 2 Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye *do*; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. 3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

Application: We must have the Spirit of God chastening us and keeping us for it is the Lord who saves, the Lord who guides, the Lord who gives substance very much and the Lord must make us to know that all is given of the Lord to be used in the service of the LORD, and for us to know the Lord will provide and ***not Babylon.***

III. THE LORD WILL CHASTEN HIS CHILDREN AND HIS CHILDREN WILL GLADLY RECEIVE CORRECTION.

Isaiah 39: 5: Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 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. 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.

Paul was given a thorn in the flesh. So was Hezekiah. Hezekiah lived the rest of his days knowing that his children and all his possessions would go into Babylonian captivity because of what he did. But the Lord taught him not to be confident in carnal things.

Where the Spirit of God dwells in a believer, he makes the believer teachable and makes him to submit to the word of the Lord. A scorner will hate you when you tell him the truth. He may make excuses which sound like his only care is the glory of the Lord but the real issue is the heart. But a wise man will love you (Pr 9:8)

2 Chronicles 32: 26: Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, *both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

Isaiah 39: 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.

Hezekiah is not thinking selfishly here, “for there shall be peace and truth in my days”—but he acknowledges that the peace and truth given him in his days is more than he deserves from the hand of God for all his sins. And because Hezekiah was a child of mercy, the Lord never withdrew his lovingkindness from Hezekiah—he never would—for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom 11: 29.)

Review:

1. Remember the trial may be just beginning when you think the trial has ended and you begin to prosper. Be on guard against the deceitful heart—we are so proud by nature. Consider it great grace when God shows us what it is in our heart so that we trust only Christ for acceptance.
2. Remember when God prospers you that you are still as utterly dependent upon God as when you were chattering on your face before him like a crane. Use what he has given us for his glory because that is why he has saved us and called us and has given us all that we have. Beware of the compliments of Babylon—they may speak of prospering you when they really intend to plunder you.
3. When the Lord shows you that crafty, subtle foe of your flesh, quickly turn to the Lord—confess our sin and ask his forgiveness. Can’t you just imagine how ashamed Hezekiah was for this? He had just said how he would praise the Lord continually and this quickly he stumbled.

Still, in Christ and by the Spirit of God keeping him, this is the man of whom the Lord says, “He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him.” (2 Kings 18: 5.)

Lord, leave us not to ourselves.

Amen!