



Sermon Summary

March 10, 2024

**Faith Forged by Trials
(2 Kings 18-20; 2Chron 32; Isaiah 36-38)**

When Hezekiah became king, he immediately instituted religious reforms and reestablished the worship of God and the removal of idols. About ten years later, Hezekiah also joined an alliance with the countries of Phoenicia, Philistia and Egypt to rebel against the new king of Assyria, Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:7). Hezekiah knew doing so would bring the retribution of Sennacherib. But little did he know how much would happen in his life in the short span of about a year, 13 years after the reforms and at about the midpoint of his reign over Judah.

Hezekiah the Suffer

When Hezekiah was about 39 years old, Isaiah told him God had declared he was going to die. Why would God cut short the life of a godly king who had restored worship of Him? It's possible Hezekiah needed to learn more before Sennacherib invaded. Hezekiah wept as he prayed and reminded God that he had served God faithfully. God heard his prayer and answered it by promising that Hezekiah would live 15 more years, and that Assyria would not destroy Jerusalem. A VERY important promise considering what was to come. As a sign of the promises God miraculously made the shadow of the sun go backward 10 steps. Isaiah put medicine on Hezekiah's infectious boil, and he was healed. Hezekiah praised the Lord for his healing by composing a poem of thanksgiving (Isa 38:9-20).

Hezekiah the Boaster

In the same year, Hezekiah received envoys from Babylon who came under the pretense of congratulating Hezekiah on his recovery. However, they likely came to convince Hezekiah to join in alliance against Assyria, and to gather intelligence in case they decided to invade Judah. Hezekiah showed him all the treasures of his kingdom, palace and the temple. God had greatly blessed him with wealth and health, but Hezekiah's pride (2 Chron 32:25) to show it off blinded him to the dangers of giving information to an enemy. Because of his pride, Isaiah told Hezekiah a day would come when all the king's wealth and some people of the king's realm would be carried off to Babylon. This prophecy was fulfilled 100 years after Hezekiah's death.

Hezekiah the Victor

Next Assyria invaded Judah and destroyed many of its towns. Sennacherib also wanted to conquer Jerusalem. He sent spokesmen to Jerusalem to broker a surrender. They threatened the people and blasphemed God. Hezekiah looked to God through Isaiah and God promised deliverance. Sennacherib sent a letter to Hezekiah telling him not to trust in God. Hezekiah took the letter to the temple and prayed. God heard his prayer for deliverance and answered it. God killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers and Assyria never did take Jerusalem.