

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 Kings 20:1-20 (ESV)

¹In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.' " ²Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, ³"Now, O LORD, please remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

In those days...

Hezekiah's life is going pretty well up to this point. 2 Chronicles 29-32 gives a detailed account of Hezekiah's reign over Judah. He became king at age 25 and ended his reign at age 54. 2 Chronicles 29 says Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that King David had done. It's pretty remarkable to have character comparable to King David. Hezekiah is the man everybody wants sitting at their table. He is a known man of prayer. He cleansed the temple. He restored the Levites and the priests. He restored temple worship including sacrifices according to Leviticus. He restored the Passover celebration. He restored the tithe to the temple. He removed false worship. We're told God had given Hezekiah great wealth because of his faithfulness as King of Judah.

It seemed like everything was going well. We're not really told that his dependence on God was tested prior to 2 Kings 20. Hezekiah is now 39 years old and in his fourteenth year as king. It was one of those years - everything that could go wrong seemed to go wrong. Judah was attacked by the king of Assyria. Hezekiah had become sick to the point of death. If he died, his family would lose the kingdom.

This was a stressful, painful year for Hezekiah. Maybe you've had a year like this. Maybe you're in a year like this. They are not fun. Hezekiah's dependence gets a pretty big test.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 Kings 20:1-3 (ESV)

¹In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.' " ²Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, ³"Now, O LORD, please remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

Hezekiah's dependence on God was revealed through his circumstances.

When a bad year couldn't possibly get any worse, Isaiah was sent to deliver a difficult message to the King. The bad year now becomes a bad day for Isaiah. Nobody enjoys delivering bad news, but Isaiah had to tell the King his life is coming to an end.

Isaiah loves his friend enough to inform him of his terminal condition. "Set your house

in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover." Not only does Hezekiah need to make sure his family is taken care of, but he needs to make arrangements for the Kingdom because his son has not been born yet.

Application #1

Do you love your friends and acquaintances enough to inform them of their terminal spiritual condition?

Before Hezekiah worries about setting anything in order, he rolls toward the wall and prays a stressful, agonizing prayer (1 Kings 2:4). Hezekiah's prayer shows his great dependence on God. His prayer also shows the depth of pain he is carrying.

The year kept getting worse. God, I did everything you asked me to do. Proverbs 10:27 says, "*The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.*" God, why is this happening? The answer to the question doesn't matter as much as Hezekiah's response to the situation. He trusts God's promises and prays for God's intervention in his life.

Application #2

How do you respond when God permits the end of something that is going well in your life?

Our circumstances either develop a dependence on God or a dependence on self. We trust God to get us through the hardship or we buckle down and try harder to make it on our own. Hezekiah's character allowed his dependence on God to be revealed.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 Kings 20:4-7 (ESV)

⁴And before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: ⁵"Turn back, and say to Hezekiah the leader of my people, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. (**underline those words in your Bible**) On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD, ⁶and I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake." ⁷And Isaiah said, "Bring a cake of figs. And let them take and lay it on the boil (**an ulcer**), that he may recover."

God's intervention was immediate.

God doesn't always bring deliverance. God doesn't always restore the situation. **God chose to restore Hezekiah physically, spiritually and emotionally**, but obedience was necessary.

God's intervention brought restoration to four areas.

1. The restoration of health - *I will heal you*
2. The restoration of worship - *On the third day you shall go up to the house of the*

LORD (Leviticus 13:13-18)

3. The restoration of life - *I will add fifteen years to your life*
4. The restoration of freedom - *I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria.* Without the restoration of freedom, Hezekiah would be captured, placed in prison and possibly executed making the restoration of his health and life incomplete.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 Kings 20:8-11 (ESV)

⁸And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?" ⁹And Isaiah said, "This shall be the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he has promised: shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?" ¹⁰And Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to lengthen ten steps. Rather let the shadow go back ten steps." ¹¹And Isaiah the prophet called to the LORD, and he brought the shadow back ten steps, by which it had gone down on the steps of Ahaz.

God's intervention was supernatural

The sign that God would intervene and restore Hezekiah was to *let the shadow go back ten steps*. Ten steps is more accurately translated as ten degrees on the sun dial. God's supernatural power stopped the rotation of the earth and turned direction long enough to provide the sign for Hezekiah. God stopped the earth again and put the rotation in the proper direction.

A request for a sign is not always a lack of faith. 1 John 4:1 says, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world." **Truth is anxious to be confirmed. Lies do not want investigated.**

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 Kings 20:12-15 (ESV)

¹²At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. ¹³And Hezekiah welcomed them, **(he should have stopped right here)** and he showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. **(very out of character for Hezekiah prior to this moment)** ¹⁴Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?" And Hezekiah said, "They have come from a far country, from Babylon." ¹⁵He said, "What have they seen in your house?" And Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."

Hezekiah's pride shifted his dependency

2 Chronicles 32:23 says, "many brought gifts to Jerusalem and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward."

We would be safe to assume Hezekiah's ego had gradually inflated. The more attention a person gets, the more attention a person wants. Somewhere along the line, Hezekiah's ego changed his character. **Pride derails spiritual growth.**

All of us would like a re-do with something. Isaiah confronted Hezekiah with three questions.

- **What did they say?** - Hezekiah didn't answer this question. Guilt conceals information.
- **What is there state?** -The answer would increase his influence and ego. It took about 45 days to travel from Babylon. His influence had grown.
- **What did they see?** - This answer also inflated the ego and pride of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah would have been wise to own his actions with the words of 2 Samuel 24:10, *"I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly."*

Instead he doesn't admit any wrong doing. There is no indication he thought his actions were foolish. He wasn't sorry he got caught. His behavior is more typical of a teenager than a 39 year old man in his 14th year as king. He had become a man with a prideful, arrogant ego in a very short period of time.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 Kings 20:16-21 (ESV)

¹⁶Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁷Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the LORD. ¹⁸And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." ¹⁹Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?" ²⁰The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah and all his might and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²¹And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

God's intervention is derailed by sin

Hezekiah's sin brought two judgments upon his family.

1. **His wealth would be taken** - *nothing shall be left*
2. **His sons would be taken** - Sons actually means descendants. The royal line would be carried to Babylon and serve another king as eunuchs. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among this group (Daniel 1:3-6).

2 Chronicles 33:1-2 says, *"Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD."*

There are at least two principles for us this morning.

1. Is God working to restore or refine an area of your life that you're not cooperating with?
2. Does your life reflect dependence on God or dependence on self?