



No More Death or Tears Isaiah 39.8

*Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days."
Isa 39.8*

The Point: Be aware of your present situation and do not neglect the future.

The Question: Why does God test the heart of his servant?

The best king of Judah was Hezekiah.

Three great acts

Restored YHWH worship 2 Chron 29.3
Water project and the Pool of Siloam 2 Kings 20.20
Invited Israel to join Judah in a Passover 2 Chron 30

Three great mistakes

Pays tribute to the king of Assyria for peace 2 Kings 18.13-16
He does not honor God for postponing his death 2 Chron 32.25
He shows off to the Babylonians Isa 39.4

God tests the heart

2 Chron 32.31
Matt 6.13

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Our text tells us the end of Hezekiah's story, but we need to see the story's beginning to make sense of the ending. *He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. For he held fast to the LORD. 2 Kings 18.5-6.* Isaiah, Hosea, and Micah prophesied during his reign, and 13 chapters of the Old Testament report his kingship.

The Bible says he was the best of the 20 kings that ruled Judah, from Jereboam to Zedekiah, no one in that 376 years was better or followed God closer. He held fast to the LORD and followed all the commandments. As a result, God made him prosperous and held him in honor. Scripture notes he is responsible for three great works.

His first act as king was to open the temple and cleanse it for worship. Then, he had the Levites carry out the idols and consecrate the buildings for sacrifice. As usual, when the leader shows himself to be righteous, the majority follows. Next, to prepare for a siege, he has a 1700 foot underground tunnel carved to bring water to Jerusalem. Finally, he invited all of Israel to join Judah at Passover.

Hezekiah is also noted for three huge mistakes. First, instead of trusting God, he capitulates to the king of Assyria and pays tribute; he strips the temple of its gold to pay a heathen king. Second, toward the end of his life, he did not honor God for his gift of 15 extra years. But, Hezekiah humbled himself, repented, and thus saved Judah from judgment for 99 years. Lastly, he showed envoys from Babylon the riches of his house and Jerusalem. All is well, and I won't see the destruction of my land.

God tests the hearts of his servants. So, Jesus reminds us in the model prayer, "lead us away from temptation." Pride is a sin common to everyone, rich and poor alike. The testing isn't so God will see what will happen—he knows. Instead, testing shows us what we need to shore up and improve in our spiritual house. Hezekiah could not resist showing off, and in 99 years, Babylon would carry all the treasure and prominent people, including the royal family. Look beyond the day; tomorrow is just a moment away.