

2 Chronicles 32:24-33

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[0 : 00] Amen. So we'll start in verse 23, 23 to 33, but our text will be 24 through 33.

Let's put it in context for ourselves. That way we have a proper understanding. The first half of the 32nd chapter tells the all familiar accounts of when the king of Assyria came and besieged Jerusalem.

Hezekiah had been leading the nation that was the 14th year of his reign. If you remember, they've already opened up the temple doors. They've already reinstated worship. They've already put the priest back in place.

The Levites are serving. The people are bringing. They are walking in obedience. And after all of these good deeds, after all of this faithfulness, the king of Assyria came and camped around Jerusalem.

We have seen from our text and the parallel passages that are recorded for us in the book of 2 Kings and also in the book of Isaiah that rather than speaking and arguing with the enemy, Hezekiah did the right thing.

[1 : 33] He stopped up the springs. He cut off the supply. He fortified the walls. He had done all that he could do. And then he went before the Lord in prayer and even went before the Lord in corporate prayer.

So he prayed alone. And then when the letter came, he and Isaiah went before the Lord and prayed. And God intervened miraculously. The Assyrians ended up fighting among themselves. They all woke up.

And all the valiant warriors were dead. They went back home. And Sennacherib was slain by his own sons in the house of his false god. And the Assyrian Empire begins to crumble after that historically if you're looking at it.

And the Babylonians begin to rise up. That has a little bit of context for us in our passage. But that's where we left it off is God had delivered his people and set them free. And then Hezekiah's fame is beginning to spread as we see in verse 23.

And many were bringing gifts to the Lord at Jerusalem and choice presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all the nations thereafter.

[2 : 32] So the Assyrians had been a superpower of sorts. At least in that region, many nations had fallen to them. Many false gods had been captured by them. None could resist them. And we know why.

It's because God was raising them up for such a time as this. They were God's chosen instrument of disciplinary action upon the northern kingdom. God was using them according to his purposes and plans.

And they had become a superpower. But Hezekiah's resistance of them, not only that one time when they circled Jerusalem, but Hezekiah had cut off paying tribute to the Assyrians.

Hezekiah had broke away from his allegiance with them that his father had set up. And now Hezekiah becomes very popular. He becomes well known among the nations.

For he is the one who has stood fast even when the Assyrians have come. And that gets us to our passage because that one verse kind of gives us a little bit of context of what's going on that follows after.

[3 : 29] What Chronicles records for us is kind of a condensed version of what the 2 Kings passage and the passage in Isaiah record for us. So what we read here tonight, we can elaborate some based upon reading those parallel passages.

We won't turn to them, but I will trust that you will look them up and not just take me at my word. But I will kind of highlight for you a little bit what's going on because we've already seen it when we

preach through 2 Kings.

If the Lord carries and allows us to remain until we get to the book of Isaiah, we will see it again in Isaiah chapter 39. But we won't turn there tonight, but it helps us, those texts help us to understand the context of this passage.

So verses 24 through 33, I want you to see the subtle outcome of pride. The subtle outcome of pride. In those days, Hezekiah became mortally ill, and he prayed to the Lord, and the Lord spoke to him and gave him a sign.

But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received, because his heart was proud. Therefore, wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. However, Hezekiah humbled the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord did not come on them in the days of Hezekiah.

[4 : 50] Now those few verses really are kind of fleshed out in what happens, the verses that come after that. So this is what happens, but in the midst of this, these matters were going on.

Now Hezekiah had immense riches and honor, and he made for himself treasuries of silver, gold, and precious stones, spices, shields, and all kinds of valuable articles. Storehouses also for the produce of grain, wine, and oil, pens for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds for the flocks. He made cities for himself and acquired flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him very great wealth. It was Hezekiah who stopped the upper outlet of the waters of Gahan and directed them to the west side of the city of David.

And Hezekiah prospered in all that he did, even in the matter of the envoys of the rulers of Babylon, who sent to him to inquire of the wonder that had happened in the land. God left him alone, only to test him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his deeds of devotion, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. So Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the upper section of the tombs of the sons of David.

[6 : 03] And all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his death, and his son Manasseh became king in his place. 2 Chronicles 32, 24-33.

2 Chronicles 32, 24-33. We're looking this evening at the subtle outcome of pride. Now Hezekiah, as we have seen, based upon the declaration of the author of the book of Kings, no one clung to the Lord with all of his heart and all of his being, more than him who went before him or who came after him.

He is declared to walk faithfully in all the ways of his father David. He clings to the Lord and does not depart from him. We are not doubting his devotion. Even the author here tells us that at his death, he was greatly honored.

He is exalted among the people. He is lifted up as one who walked faithfully. He did wonderful things, not only militaristically for the nation, but also spiritually.

He restored worship. He called them back to the ways of the Lord. He is mentioned numerous times throughout the Old Testament. We find him not only in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

[7 : 10] We find him also in the book of Isaiah. He is referenced in the book of Jeremiah. And we also know that the book of Micah is written during that prophetic writing that Micah prophesies during the reign of Hezekiah.

He is mentioned repeatedly, and most of it is around how he responds to the word of the Lord. Yet we know that even being a type of Christ, it does not imply that he is perfect by any means whatsoever.

He is a type. There are certain things that we can look at and say, Yes, that's what we're looking for in a king. The king who will atone for the sins of the people. The king who will pay the full and final atonement for the sins of the people.

The king who would open up the door of worship for the people. The king who would intercede for the people. Who would be both priest and prophet and king. As we have seen that prophet and king pray and the Lord moves.

But in Christ, we have priest, prophet, and king, all three in one person. We have seen that being the type of Christ, he is pointing us to the one coming after him. But he's not perfect.

[8 : 08] He has his weaknesses just like everyone else. Because if we did not see his weaknesses, then we would have the tendency to want to exalt him to a place which he should not hold to. He is still just a man.

One of the grandest things about scripture is that scripture is honest in its application and its telling of the history of man. It is honest to the reality that these are imperfect people being used by a holy and perfect God in a mighty way.

And God even overrules their imperfections and failures though it doesn't excuse them. But still there's some things we can learn here about the subtle outcome of pride.

Not only is pride dangerous and scripture talks about it repeatedly. But we see here what we can expect from pride. What takes place when we allow pride to build in our heart.

I don't think that Hezekiah ever had wicked intentions. But if we read verse 23 right, we know that he becomes well known among the nations because of his resistance of the Assyrian Empire.

[9 : 13] We know that his popularity begins to spread. People are bringing many gifts to the Lord and to Hezekiah. And Hezekiah becomes a well known individual.

And pride finds its opportunity begins to creep into the heart. And we see this. The outcome of pride, number one, is that it diminishes the work of God. Pride in the heart of Hezekiah and pride in the heart of ourselves has the outcome of diminishing the work of God.

It says in those days. Now, just full transparency, I love it when scripture puts us that way, in those days. Because it is setting the context of when this took place.

When these events came about. I believe scripture is intentional in telling us this is happening and then in those days this happened. So during the time of the height of his popularity.

That's why we read verse 23. When everyone was hearing about Hezekiah. In those days, he became mortally ill. Now, we know the account when we read in 2 Kings.

[10 : 18] When we read in the book of Isaiah. That he is to the point of death. And the fact that Isaiah comes to him and tells him, set your house in order. Hezekiah, you're going to die. Hezekiah turns and he faces the wall and he prays.

And he's not making really any demands of God. But he restates how he has lived faithfully. And he committed his heart to seek after the Lord. And how God had promised. We find that promise recorded for us in the book of 2 Chronicles.

That the seed of David who walks faithfully would have a joy, a long life. And Hezekiah begins to remind God of this in prayer. And he's crying out. And it is really amazing.

If you go to Isaiah and you read in Isaiah 39. The song of Hezekiah. And you see his response that is not recorded in 2 Kings. How he begins to describe how he knew if he went to Sheol.

Or the place of the dead. That he would not be able to praise the Lord. Yet God had mercy and restored him. It even says in the song of Hezekiah. That God put my sins behind his back. And restored me.

[11 : 16] So that I may offer up praise to him. Now I believe that's Hezekiah's prayer time right there. I believe it honestly is coming from that moment. Because as Isaiah departs.

The Lord God speaks to him. And Isaiah comes back and says God has heard your prayers. He has seen your tears. He's weeping. And he has granted you. Hezekiah gets something that most people don't do.

He knows the number of his days. Isaiah says he has given you 15 more years of life. And what a promise. Right? He gives him this wonderful gift.

Not only of restoring his health. But telling him exactly how long he has to live. And you know they end up putting a cake of figs upon the bowl. That really has nothing to do. That's just something that Isaiah tells them to do.

We don't understand. Other than it's just an act of faith. The cake of figs didn't cure anything. But the sign or the wonder if you remember. Is the shadow on the steps.

[12 : 09] Moving back 10 steps. Now there's some questioning. I know we've all seen Sunday school drawings. And all this other stuff. But there's some questioning in the interpretation of staircase and steps there.

A little word meaning steps. Is it a staircase? Or was it like a sundial? And the clock was rolled back on the sundial? We don't know. All we do know is that the shadow moved back 10 steps.

Either on a little sundial. Or on a little staircase. And God was giving him this wonderful display of the fact. Because Hezekiah said how will I know.

Now pay attention. He says how will I know that I will again be able to go into the temple of the Lord. And Isaiah says by this you will know the shadow will pass back 10 steps. And God gives him this sign and does this wonderful work in his life.

His life is restored. But what we read here in 2 Chronicles tells us. But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received. You say well wait a minute.

[13:13] He offered that song of praise. Well sure in a moment he did. But he has 15 years of life left. Right? And it tells us that he gave no return. And we see this also in other passages.

We'll build time all together. Because notice even our text tonight. The messengers who came from Babylon. Which by the way took some time to get there.

Came because they heard of the wondrous deed which had been done. Right? So they'd heard not only that Hezekiah was healed. But that God had given him a miraculous sign as to his healing.

The fact that the son was dialed back 10 steps. It is a testimony to the power of the Lord God Almighty. And they hear of this wondrous deed.

But what we don't find. By the way. When the Babylonians show up. Is Hezekiah telling them anything about the Lord God Almighty. What we don't find is him declaring to them anything about this wondrous sign.

[14:14] The thing which attracted them was not the thing that was declared to them. Rather. Rather. He begins to show them. And we'll see this in just a moment. All of his treasures.

And his house. And his. And his. And his. Read the parallel passages in Isaiah and 2nd Kings. And just underline all the his. His. His. His. His.

His. His. His. His. He's telling one house that he did not show them was the house of the Lord.

Why? Because by this time, the work of God had been diminished.

And Hezekiah was the main thing. He was, in his own mind, the reason people were coming. See, the nation of Israel was declared to be a billboard and a testimony to a watching world.

God would not let their animals fail to give birth. He would not let their crops fail to yield fruitfulness. He would not let the rain fail to fall so that the nations around them would see the difference of them.

[15:21] And they would be drawn to the Lord God, not to be drawn to the people. If you see the promises of the covenant which God gives them at Mount Sinai, God declares that I will do this and you will be my people.

If you will be my people and I will be your God, then I will do these things. And the reason I will do them is so that others will notice. The point of God's miraculous provisions was to magnify the Lord God Almighty.

But what happens is when pride comes in, we begin to think that we are the main thing. And we diminish his work, though that is the very thing that is drawing and attracting.

Which leads us to the second thing. Not only does it diminish the work of God, it exalts the worth of the individual. Paul tells us in Romans chapter 12, what?

For each of us to be careful not to think more highly of himself than he ought. It's not that we don't think of ourselves. We ought to think of ourselves, but not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to.

[16:29] And this is exactly what happens with Hezekiah as he begins to think highly of himself. Even here, it says that Hezekiah had immense riches and honor. And he made for himself treasuries of silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and all kinds of valuable articles.

And he also made cities for himself. And he acquired all these lots because God had given him all these riches. And again, when the people come, he shows them his treasures, his storehouses, his provisions, all that is in his house.

And then when Isaiah asked him, what did you show them? He says, I have shown them everything that is in my house. He began to exalt himself and lift himself up higher than the God that they were to be proclaiming to the nation.

See, pride has a way of creeping in and changing the rightful position of magnification.

We ought to be magnifying the Lord God Almighty rather than magnifying ourselves. And we see it each and every day. In our own hearts, I see the tendency in my own life.

[17:40] We see the tendency in our own churches. But yet we understand here it is a subtle outcome. That we begin to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to. And we begin to exalt ourselves and exalt our worth.

And to lift ourselves above what we ought to be, our proper station. But yet we see that God is merciful and God is kind. We notice third, we won't be very long in this passage because it is so rich.

But I love the application we'll get to in just a moment. Not only does it diminish the work of God, it exalts the worth of the individual. And number three, finally, it lowers our watchful guard.

We don't see it here, but it tells us that even in the matter of the envoys of the rulers of Babylon who sent to him to inquire of the wonder that had happened in the land, God left him alone.

If you remember, when Isaiah comes to him and says, What have you shown them? Isaiah makes this, I mean, Isaiah asks Hezekiah, and Hezekiah makes this declaration. I have shown them everything that is in my kingdom.

[18:47] And if you remember the word of Isaiah, Isaiah says, I tell you the truth that those whom you have shown everything will come back and carry it all away.

See what has happened. Notice the difference. When the Assyrians came, you remember how we looked at this passage this past Sunday evening, how we ought to face the enemy.

The first thing that we notice is that Hezekiah recognized the enemy's presence. He saw them and began to take action. But now, because pride has crept in just a little bit, he believes that the Babylonians are really coming because they've heard about him.

He doesn't see them as a threat. He doesn't see them as the enemy. He doesn't see them as anyone who's going to carry anything away. Because pride gives us a false sense of security because we have exalted ourselves to being in control.

And he shows them everything he has. He doesn't stand guard. He doesn't notice the enemy coming and make preparations in advance. He doesn't secure. As a matter of fact, he opens up the door. And in opening up the door, what he has done is he's let the enemy come in.

[20:03] Now, we know that Isaiah says it's not going to happen during your life, but some of your sons will be carried away. And Hezekiah said, well, then it's a good word because it won't happen during my days. And we understand that.

Hezekiah says, well, it won't happen in my day. It'll happen to some of my offspring and some of those. But the Babylonians were the ones who came and carried away the nation of Judah into what we call the Babylonian exile.

And the way they got in the door, the temptation, was that Hezekiah can't let them come in and show them everything he had. And he had lowered his watchful eye because pride had convinced him he was secure.

He allowed the enemy to come in unchecked. Not only did he allow him to come in, he began to open up the doors and show him all of his treasures. He showed him everything that he had stored up. And now this is going to be that which brings them down.

But praise be to God, the account doesn't end there because if we go back up to verse 26, it tells us, and this is after that, because it tells us down here that God left him alone.

[21:11] Why? To test him that he might know all that was in his heart. Here's a question we have to ask ourselves just kind of in passing. Before we answer this, we need to know right.

In John 3, it tells us that Jesus didn't need anyone to tell him what was in the heart of man for he knew what was in the heart of every man, right? So when we come to this passage, we need to understand that God is not trying to find out what's in Hezekiah's heart.

God already knows that. He already understands the pride that has crept in. Much like when Jesus asked the rich young ruler, or the rich young ruler came and said, what do I need to do to inherit eternal life? Jesus tells him a few things.

He said, I've already done that. And then Jesus says, this one thing you've lacked going, so all that you have and give it to the poor and come follow me. And the ruler went away kind of downcast as he was a man with many possessions. Jesus showed him what was in his heart.

It was this clinging to these material goods. And so what we have going on here is that God has kind of left him alone, not so that the Lord God may know what's in his heart, but that Hezekiah may also know what is in his heart.

[22:14] It is a time of testing and sifting, much like what Peter would go through. God doesn't need anyone to tell him what's in the heart of man. But we also see the results of that because when we go back up to verse 26, it says, however, Hezekiah humbled the pride of his heart.

If we open up the book of Jeremiah, we find in the book of Jeremiah, I believe it is 29th chapter, I think. And in the 29th chapter is during Jeremiah's prophetic word.

He's given the fact that the Babylonians are coming, ironically, by the way. And he's telling them the Babylonians are coming and everybody needs to get ready because the Babylonians are coming.

