

Isaiah

The Lord Is Salvation

**God's
Promise
To
Hezekiah**

Isaiah 38:1-8

Lesson Forty-Five

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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God's Promise To Hezekiah

We have been studying the situation in Judah during the reign of King Hezekiah. In our last lesson, we talked about Sennacherib and the defeat of the Assyrian army. It is probably before that time that Hezekiah got really sick. Read Isaiah 38:1-8.

As a matter of fact, King Hezekiah was about to die. Another version of this story is in II Kings, chapter twenty. There, we also read that Isaiah told Hezekiah that he should prepare for his death. He said, "you are going to die, you will not recover."

Hezekiah was not ready to give up. He turned his face toward the wall and began to pray. He was crying when he reminded God that throughout his leadership of the nation, he had led with his whole heart committed to truth and goodness. What a great testimony.

Now, we know that Hezekiah was not perfect, and that he had ignored the advice of God's prophet Isaiah. He had chosen to depend on a military alliance with Egypt rather than trusting God to save his people.

But, we must assume from the story that God accepted his word and his plea for recovery. In the story as told in II Kings, we read that before Isaiah could get away from the King's palace, God stopped him. (He must have left before Hezekiah finished his prayer.) God told Isaiah to turn around and go back and deliver a message to the king. God identified Himself as the God of King David. He called King David Hezekiah's father. Remember, the kings of Judah were all descendants of King David. The kings of Samaria, the northern kingdom were not.

The message to Hezekiah was "I have heard your prayer and seen your tears..." God does hear prayer, and He knows what is in our hearts when we pray. He knew that Hezekiah was really serious about his prayer and his good intentions as he served God as the king. God saw his tears and accepted them as Hezekiah's seriousness about this prayer. Isaiah then became Dr. Isaiah and prescribed a medication to be placed on the sore that was killing Hezekiah.

The next thing Isaiah said to Hezekiah was that God would add fifteen years to his life. He would not die immediately. He would recover and reign for several more years. God repeated a promise given earlier and Isaiah told Hezekiah that God would get rid of the Assyrians...He would save His city, Jerusalem.

Did God change His mind about Hezekiah dying? No. Hezekiah would have died if he had not called out to God, and given God reason to save him. The situation changed and God could use King Hezekiah to do what God wanted to get done.

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Hezekiah believed Isaiah's words, but wanted to know for sure. It is clear from the story in II Kings that Hezekiah asked God's prophet for a sign that this was from God. Isaiah told Hezekiah that God would give him a sign.

Some have estimated that Hezekiah was only about 38 to 40 years old at this time. The sign God promised was about the sun that was, at that moment, going down. They must have been standing in a courtyard where king Ahaz had constructed a sundial. It must have been made to look like steps. The shadow cast by the sun, as it moved across the sky, told the time of day. The shadow cast by the sun never varied. But, Isaiah said that God was going to do something unbelievable. The shadow was going to move backward. As a matter of fact, it was going to move back exactly ten steps. We have another record of God changing the activity of the sun. In Joshua 10:13, God stopped the sun for a while when the people of Israel needed time to defeat their enemy. Well, here we have a really drastic picture of daylight savings time.

The Bible doesn't tell us exactly the time period involved here. But it was long enough for Hezekiah to be convinced that God was the one making the promise of a longer life. Babylonian, and some say that Chinese histories tell of an unusual solar event about this time in history.

Just how that movement of the shadow was accomplished is not in the Bible. There is only one reasonable explanation...God moved the sun or the earth to make a believer out of Hezekiah. It is impossible to imagine Hezekiah questioning God ever again.

The promise that God gave along with the promise of extended life for Hezekiah can get lost if we focus too much on the miracle. God also promised Hezekiah that He would defend the city and defeat the Assyrians. With the terrible threat that we have been reading about in earlier chapters, we know that this promise meant a great deal to Hezekiah and that he would quickly share it with everyone.

It would do all of us a lot of good to read God's promises in His book and depend on Him to keep His promises.

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

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Scripture Memory: "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes." Isaiah 38:3

Lesson Goal: To show students that God forgives and blesses those who are faithful to Him.

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Student Worksheet

Judah Saved—Isaiah 37: 30-38

As the teacher goes through the lesson, listen for answers to these:

1. What message did Isaiah deliver to Hezekiah when he was very ill?
2. Why would King David be called King Hezekiah's father.
3. What did Isaiah do about Hezekiah's sore?
4. How many extra years was Hezekiah given by God?
5. What was the sign God gave Hezekiah to assure him that God would do what He said?
6. _____, and _____ histories tell of an unusual solar event about this time in history.
7. It would do all of us a lot of good to read God's _____ in His book and _____ on Him to keep His promises.

Scripture Memory: "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes. Isaiah 38:3

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.