

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation**

#### **Part LVI: God's Training Of Hezekiah To Trust Him Humbly For The Future (Isaiah 38:1-22)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. God knows the end from the beginning, and because He can see so well into the future, He can graciously work to prepare us for temptations or trials that lie ahead of us in life's pathway that we might face them well.
- B. This was the case of Hezekiah's trial in Isaiah 38:1-22, and we view this passage for insight (as follows):

##### **II. God's Training Of Hezekiah To Trust Him Humbly For The Future, Isaiah 38:1-22.**

- A. God's Isaiah 38:6 promise to Hezekiah that He would save Jerusalem from Assyria means that the events of Isaiah 38 occurred before Assyria's invasion, but since the Isaiah 38 events relate to what happened in Isaiah 39 where Hezekiah proudly showed his wealth, Isaiah 38 and 39 are placed together, B. K. C., O. T., p. 1089.
- B. Accordingly, Isaiah 38:1-22 acts as a warning to Hezekiah against becoming proud in the future (as follows):
  - 1. The prophet Isaiah was sent by the Lord to Judah's king Hezekiah to announce that his current illness that possibly involved blood poisoning caused by an infected boil (Isaiah 38:21) would result in death, that Hezekiah was thus to set his house in order and prepare to die, Isaiah 38:1.
  - 2. Hezekiah then turned his face to the wall and prayed, reminding God how he had walked before Him in faithfulness and wholeheartedness, doing what was good in His eyes, and he wept greatly, Is. 38:2-3 ESV.
  - 3. The Lord then sent His prophet Isaiah to Hezekiah to tell him that the Lord God of his ancestor David had heard his prayer and seen his tears, that He would add fifteen years to Hezekiah's life, Isaiah 38:4-5.
  - 4. God added that He would also deliver Jerusalem and Hezekiah out of the hand of the Assyrians, defending Jerusalem, all the more reason for Hezekiah to have trusted the Lord when Assyria invaded, Isaiah 38:6.
  - 5. In addition, the Lord graciously gave Hezekiah a sign to encourage him that He would fulfill this promise, that sign being God's causing the shadow on a westward facing flight of stairs to move downward ten steps rather than rising as it would with the setting sun, God's clear signal of turning back time to symbolize His prolonging of Hezekiah's days on earth, Isaiah 38:7-8; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Isaiah 38:8.
  - 6. We know from Isaiah 38:21-22 that God also directed that a cake of figs be applied to Hezekiah's boil that he might recover, and that Hezekiah had asked for a sign to confirm the prophecy of his healing, a sign that he would indeed go up to the house of the Lord. The movement of the sun's shadow going downward on the western stairway was apparently that sign.
  - 7. As a result of this healing, Hezekiah authored the following psalm that tells that he learned in this trial his need to consecrate the rest of his days humbly to exalt the Lord, Isaiah 38:9-20:
    - a. First, Hezekiah described his dismay at his life-threatening condition in which he realized that he was helplessly unable to prolong his life due to God's sovereign decision to see it end, Isaiah 38:9-15: (1) in facing an early death, Hezekiah reported he had lamented the fact that though he was in his prime, he would not be able to relate to the Lord and others (v. 9-10) as God cut off his life (v. 11-12). (2) Hezekiah stated (v. 13a) that he would wait through the night, expecting the Lord to slay him at daybreak, breaking all his bones in death as a lion would its prey since he was so upset about dying, 13b; Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. II, p. 521. (3) Hezekiah noted he was weary from grieving over his death, realizing that he was utterly vulnerable to God's will as to how long he lived, Isaiah 38:14.
    - b. However, describing God's answer to his prayer and tears, Hezekiah in Isaiah 38:15-20 asserted how God was His strength and source of blessing, that he would thus exalt God for the rest of his life: (1) due to Hezekiah's bitterness of soul in his illness, he noted that God's speaking to him about seeing his life prolonged would cause him to live in peace, but never to forget the bitterness of his close brush with death, Isa. 38:15. (2) Hezekiah thus acknowledged that with God was life, that He would restore him to health, v. 16. (3) Hezekiah told how God had graciously delivered him regardless of all his sins (v. 17) that he might praise the Lord and testify of His greatness to the next generation for the rest of his days (v. 18-20).

***Lesson:*** *God arranged for Hezekiah to face the threat of imminent death that he might realize his need for the Lord just remain alive in this life that he might humbly rely on God in his future when tempted to ruinous pride.*

***Application:*** *If God lets us face a troublesome trial for a period of time before pulling us out of it, He wants us to learn from the experience to rely humbly on Him as protection against strong, destructive future temptations.*