

Hezekiah – When Mercy Is Forgotten

2 Kings 18–20; 2 Chronicles 29–32; Isaiah 38–39

Westend Bible Chapel

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Hezekiah stands out as one of the godliest kings in Judah’s history. He tore down idols... restored worship... trusted God when Assyria roared at the gates... and prayed when death knocked at his door.

But at the end of his life, something tragic happened —mercy was forgotten. We often remember the mercy that *saves* us, but forget the mercy that should *shape* us.

Hezekiah’s life teaches this truth: A heart that forgets mercy will soon fall into pride. Let’s walk through the rise, the rescue, the recovery — and the ruin — of this king.

I. THE DEVOTION HE DISPLAYED *2 Kings 18:1–7; 2 Chronicles 29–31*

King Hezekiah begins his reign with purity and passion. “*And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD...*” 2 Kings 18:3 .

“*He removed the high places... broke the sacred pillars... and broke in pieces the bronze serpent...*”2 Kings 18:4 .

When Hezekiah ascended the throne of David, he came, as it were, as a housecleaner—with *a large broom and a loud bang*—sweeping away *impurities*—cleansing *not just the pollutions of the land , but a nation’s heart.*

- *He reopened the Temple doors.*
- *He restored the priesthood.*
- *He removed the defilements from the sanctuary.*
- *He rekindled holy worship and sacrifices.*
- *He reinstated the Passover.*
- *He held fast to the LORD and kept His commandments.*

“He trusted in the LORD God of Israel...” (2 Kings 18:5). And this is why Scripture can say: *“The LORD was with him.”*

In a dark generation, Hezekiah shone brightly—and revival broke forth under his godly leadership.

But true devotion is never left untested. God would now deepen Hezekiah’s faith , not through ease ,but through a mighty deliverance.

II. THE DELIVERANCE HE EXPERIENCED *2 Kings 19; 2 Chronicles 32:1–23.*

The nation of Assyria advances toward Judah like a wolf among sheep, with Sennacherib prepared to devour her. This is going to be far more than a military threat—it will be open defiance against the living God.

2 Kings 19:10–11 The message was : , ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, “Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them. And shall you be delivered?’”

For Assyria the LORD God of Israel was no different from the powerless idols and false gods of conquered nations. Hezekiah does not answer the blasphemous mockery with aggression or strategy. He carries the threat into the presence of God.

“And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the temple of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 2 Kings 19:14 (NKJV)

Then he prays—first and foremost for God’s glory.

Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD God, You alone.” 2 Kings 19:15–16, 19

Hezekiah’s act of spreading that infamous letter before the LORD teaches us where our burdens belong. It is a picture of casting every care at the feet of Jesus, because *He cares for us* (cf. 1 Pet. 5:7).

Deliverance from the enemy is requested— but the honor of God is the motive. What does God reply ?

2 Kings 19:32–34... because the Assyrian king rages against me, I will defend this city, to save it, for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.”

“And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand...” 2 Kings 19:35

Judah did nothing—God did everything. Showing that deliverance is not by might, nor by power, but by the sovereign hand of the LORD. The zeal of the Lord accomplished it . No shared glory !

Having delivered Hezekiah from a national crisis, the LORD would now bring him through a personal one—where the threat was no longer outside the walls, but within his own body.

More mercy is coming—closer, deeper, and more personal.

III. THE DISEASE HE SURVIVED *2 Kings 20:1–11; Isaiah 38*

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2 Kings 20:1 –“In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you will not recover.’”

At the age of 39, with no sons in line for the throne, King Hezekiah faced a terminal illness. In the depth of his distress, he turned his face to the wall, wept bitterly, and prayed earnestly to the LORD for healing.

The act of turning to the wall meant facing the temple.

- *He turns away from human help.*
- *He turns away from the court, away from the throne, and away from the physicians.*
- *He turns toward the only One who can miraculously heal.*

“And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, and said, ‘O LORD, I pray, remember now how I have walked before You faithfully... with a loyal heart, and have done what is good in Your sight.’ And Hezekiah wept bitterly.” (2 Kings 20:3, NKJV)

His prayer is not self-righteous boasting. He does not cry out from pride or entitlement. Rather, he appeals to the faithfulness of God—his tears reveal the sincerity of a heart totally dependent on God alone. In this moment, we can see his faith, hear his faith, and feel his faith.

God answers: *“I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you.” (2 Kings 20:5).*

The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18).

God confirmed the healing promise with a sign.

The shadow on the steps of the royal palace moved backward. Normally, a shadow only moves forward with the sun's passage. But God deliberately reversed it, defying nature itself.

This miraculous sign was a message for all to see and understand: His promises do not depend on medicine, human effort, or chance—they depend on Him alone.

By the sign , God was saying: *"I am in control. I control time. I can undo what seems final."*

God turned the clock back to show He can turn a life around, even when all seems lost. His power is not limited by circumstance, age, or the laws of nature—He is sovereign over every moment, every life, every heart.

Hezekiah rose from his bed on the third day—a miraculous act and a powerful symbol in itself.

As the king of Judah rose on the third day, Scripture foreshadowed the true and eternal King of Israel—the Lord Jesus Christ—who would rise on the third day, not merely healed from sickness, but victorious over death itself.

- *Hezekiah was restored to life.*
- *Christ was raised unto glory.*
- *Hezekiah's healing delayed death.*
- *Christ's resurrection destroyed it forever.*

God sovereignly added fifteen more years to Hezekiah's life. In gratitude, the king wrote a beautiful psalm of thanksgiving, which is recorded in Isaiah 38.

But then a sobering truth occurs: those fifteen added years became the "proving ground of his heart."

IV. THE DISOBEDIENCE HE DISPLAYED *2 Kings 20:12–19; Isaiah 39*

After his miraculous healing, *"Hezekiah's heart was proud, and he did not respond to the kindness shown him; therefore, the LORD's wrath was on him and on Judah and Jerusalem."* (2 Chronicles 32:25)

Scripture also tells us: *"God left Hezekiah to test him, that He might know everything that was in his heart."* (2 Chronicles 32:31).

God did not withdraw His presence, but His protection, allowing what was in Hezekiah's heart to be revealed—not for God's knowledge, but for Hezekiah's humbling.

"At that time the Babylonians come with letters and a present to Hezekiah." (2 Kings 20:12)

Babylon came not with armies, but with admiration. They came:

- *Inquiring about the miraculous shadow sign —they were a people fascinated by astrology.*
- *Inquiring about his recovery from the brink of death*
- *Bearing a gift — honour disguised flattery*

They came under the pretense of courtesy, but with political curiosity—to probe Judah's strength, assess her wealth, and lay the groundwork for future conquest (2 Kings 20:12).

“So, Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures...” (2 Kings 20:13)

He displayed :

- *His silver and gold*
- *His armory*
- *His treasures—nothing was withheld*

Hezekiah made: :

- *No mention of the LORD who healed him*
- *No mention of the LORD who defeated Assyria*
- *No mention of the LORD who reversed the shadow on the steps*

The miracle became his story, not God’s.

A heart that forgets God’s mercy becomes:

- *Short-sighted*
- *Self-centered*
- *Indifferent to future consequences*

The contrast is sobering:

- *The same man who wept before God now boasts before Babylon.*
- *The same man who said, “The LORD saved me,” now says, “Look at all my treasures.”*
- *The same man who promised to walk humbly now walks proudly.*

The 15 years God had graciously added to his life—meant to be a testimony—became a major test, and he fails it.

“Therefore, the LORD’s wrath was on him and on Judah and Jerusalem.” (2 Chronicles 32:25).

What follows is prophetic devastation — a sober warning that mercy ignored becomes judgment endured.

V. THE DESTINY HE FACED *2 Kings 20:17–18; Isaiah 39:6–7*

Isaiah warned Hezekiah of the cost of his pride:

“All shall be carried to Babylon... and they shall take away some of your sons... and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”
(Isaiah 39:6–7, NKJV)

Because Hezekiah forgot God’s mercy, a future generation would suffer. His story ends not in triumph, but in warning.

Yet there is grace.

“Hezekiah repented of the pride of his heart... therefore the LORD’s wrath did not come on them during the days of Hezekiah.” (2 Chronicles 32:26).

And Hezekiah humbly submits to God’s word:

“The word of the LORD... is good! Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?” (2 Kings 20:19)

Sincere repentance delays judgment, preserves life, and secures God’s peace, even when consequences remain.

Hezekiah’s story reminds us: never forget God’s mercy, for pride blinds, flattery misleads, but humble hearts find lasting peace.

Lessons for Us Today

1. Mercy Remembered Keeps Us Humble

*“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.”
(Psalm 103:2, NKJV)*

Forgetting grace always breeds pride.
Remembering grace always produces worship.

Hezekiah did not deny the LORD—he simply forgot Him and the miraculous blessing and that forgetfulness lifted his heart.

2. Extended Life Is Not a License for Self

More time granted to us —means greater accountability before God.

“To whom much is given, from him much will be required.” (Luke 12:48)

Mercy extends opportunity, but also intensifies responsibility.

3. Pride Turns Blessings into Burdens

God’s blessings are meant to humble us, not elevate us.
What God gives to magnify His glory; pride uses to magnify self.

Hezekiah showed what God had done,
but failed to show who God was.

4. Forgetting God Always Leads to Loss

“Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God.” (Deuteronomy 8:11)

When Israel came out of Egypt, they did not deny God—they drifted. Every time mercy was forgotten, blessing was lost:

- In the Wilderness: “*They soon forgot His works...*” (Psalm 106:13–15; Num. 14:22–23) → loss of rest and lost entrance into the Land.
- In the Days of the Judges: “*They forsook the LORD...*” (Judges 2:10–15) → loss of protection and delivery into oppression.

The pattern is unmistakable: mercy forgotten leads to loss—*rest, protection, joy, peace, and hope*—until repentance restores what forgetfulness erodes.

God commands remembrance—not as sentiment, but as safeguard. The Lord’s Supper deliberately calls us back to Christ’s work, keeping pride from rising where gratitude should reign.

May God keep us mindful in mercy, humble in blessing, and faithful in extended days—lest what was meant to magnify God becomes the very thing that distances us from Him.