



Berean Christian Fellowship

DEVOTIONAL

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The Memory Verse for this week is from 2 Chronicles 32—a parallel passage to Isaiah 39, which details how King Hezekiah foolishly displayed his wealth to envoys from Babylon:

“God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart” (2 Chronicles 32:31b).

Here we see a sobering picture. So soon after his divine healing, Hezekiah’s pride prevented him from returning to the Lord, *“according to the benefit done to him”* (2 Chronicles 32:25a). This benefit, most importantly, was the restoration of his life, after he had been told by God to put his house in order because he was going to die. We saw last week how Hezekiah appealed to the Lord to save his life. God heard his prayer and healed him. It seems that Hezekiah took the command to put his house in order to heart, because for the rest of his life (as we see in this chapter) he dedicated himself to building up the strength of his kingdom. God made him prosper in this, and all the works of his hands brought him nothing but wealth, power, and accomplishment.

It is sad to reflect that so often success leads Believers into dangerous places spiritually. We are often safer in our walk with the Lord when we walk in trials and tribulations than when we have plenty and excess.

In verse 31, we see that God left Hezekiah to himself in order to test the motivations of his heart. God didn’t withstand his intent or send a prophet to warn him. Instead, He let him have his way to see what he would do.

As Believers, many times in our lives, we weary of following closely to the Lord on the unpaved foot-path of salvation. After all, it is no stage tour, and there are no press junkets. Sometimes in our weariness of the meekness

of our lives, we make choices that lead us away from God, and God doesn’t always reach out and stop us. Oftentimes, in our hearts, we know we are straying from Him, but we cloud our minds with denial, which deceives us with its promise that “ignorance is bliss.” So often, when I sin, I think, “Well, I’m not going too far from Him...He’ll still be there when I’m done exploring this mysterious byway—perhaps He won’t even notice I’ve gone and tiptoed in this on-ramp to the broad highways of the world.” I tell myself I deserve to have some concrete under my feet for a change and know how it feels to be in the world, and I wander off the narrow way.

Perhaps Hezekiah just wanted to know what it felt like to be admired and desired by his peers—the “great men” of the earth (Revelation 6:15)—to taste the self-satisfaction of praise and flattery. Perhaps he didn’t really mean to fall away, but regardless, there are serious consequences to our sin.

As Believers, we must realize we are patterned after Jesus, Who knew no pride of praise or flattery from men but was rejected and despised (Isaiah 53:3). We share His shame in this world and should glory in it because of the eternal glory promised to us in the Heavens if we bear His name before all men.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted” (Hebrews 12:1-3).