

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Fifteen Years

II Kings 20:1-21 II Chronicles 32:24-33 (*selected verses*)

Major Segments:

- Announcement of sickness that will lead to death
- Healing and sign of confirmation from Lord
- Delegation from Babylon Visits with Gifts
- Isaiah inquires about delegation and tells that they will someday invade

Segment Questions:

- Hezekiah responded to the news that he would not recover by immediately praying in faith. He asked God to remember his (Hezekiah's) faithfulness and his heart. What could have been his response to the news? What implications might those responses have brought? How would you have responded?
- Why do you think the crying was described as "bitter"? A loss of the kingdom to Assyria? His son, Manasseh, was too young to be king? Another, more selfish reason perhaps?
- Why did God send this trial to Hezekiah? What lesson do you think God was teaching him?
- What does the presence of the sign – turning back the shadow – add to the story? What does it underscore about God? What does it say about human nature?
- Hezekiah responds very positively to the gift and presence of the visitors from Babylon. Why does Hezekiah reveal everything to them? Pride? Hope of an alliance against Assyria? Another reason? What would have been the implications if he would have responded differently to the gift?
- Did Hezekiah's response to Isaiah's bad prophecy surprise you? What do you think of Hezekiah's response? What are the positive redeeming points of his response? What are your critiques of his response?

Action Questions:

- Hezekiah is linked to David in the Scripture, both through genealogy, but more importantly by character, his heart. Pride and humility battle within our hearts. How can you, king of your own little "kingdom" ensure that pride does not consume your heart?
- Isaiah responds faithfully to God's leading even when delivering bad news. Hezekiah seems to have had great respect for Isaiah. What can we learn from Isaiah's sharing God's truths and Hezekiah's response to them? How can you share and respond better in your daily life?
- In Hezekiah's story, we see God's sovereignty and His faithfulness. He blessed David because of his heart. He blessed David's line because of David. God blessed Hezekiah's rule, not to let it end with the Assyrians, nor the Babylonians during his reign. How can we bless our line? What steps have you made to ensure God's faithfulness to your descendants? What steps can you take?

II Kings 20:1-21 II Chronicles 32:24-33

From: www.btstories.com

King Hezekiah became extremely sick. The prophet Isaiah went to him and said, "God told me this sickness will kill you. So prepare to die." He then turned and left the room.

Hezekiah turned his head to the wall and prayed to God. "Oh Lord! I've walked with you in faithfulness and lived according to your commandments." He broke down and cried bitterly.

Once again, God talked to Isaiah. "Go tell King Hezekiah I've heard his prayer and have seen his tears. Therefore I'll add fifteen years to his life. I'll also give him a sign so he'll know that this promise is true. I'll cause the shadow on the sundial to go backward ten degrees."

Hezekiah watched the shadow on the sundial and saw it move back ten degrees. Immediately his sickness began to leave him until he totally recovered. He sang before the Lord and gave thanks.

After he recovered, a delegation came from Babylon with gifts. They gave him a letter from their king saying he was glad about Hezekiah's recovery.

Hezekiah was pleased with this, and honored the delegation with a tour of his palace and government buildings. He took them to the treasury house and showed them all of the nation's treasures – including gold, silver, spices, and precious oil.

After the men from Babylon left, the prophet Isaiah asked, "Who were those men and what did they say to you?"

The king said, "They're from a far-off country, a place called Babylon."

"What did you show them?"

"I showed them everything. I didn't hide anything of value from them."

The prophet said, "Listen to the words of the Lord. 'A day will come when Babylon will invade Judah and take everything they've seen back to their country. Your descendants will become personal slaves to the king of Babylon.' "

Hezekiah bowed his head, and finally said, "This message from the Lord is good. None of this will happen in my lifetime. While I live, there will be peace and security."