

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 41

Chapters 38 and 39: ASSYRIA EXITS; BABYLON ENTERS

Chapters 36 and 37 closed out the Assyrian threat to Judah with a miraculous deliverance by the Lord. Chapters 38 and 39 focus on Hezekiah's life afterwards. It's a story of answered prayer, a foolhardy decision, and a prophesy of future ruin at the hands of the Babylonians, who will take Israel into exile. In this way, chapters 36-39 serve as the bridge between the prophecies of chapters 1-35 and those of chapters 40-66. You will find parallel accounts in 2 Kings 18-20 and 2 Chronicles 32:1-33.

The narrative in chapter 38 gets a little convoluted.

38:1-8 narrates events which occurred a little bit before Sennacherib's invasion of chapters 36 & 37.

38:9-20 are things Hezekiah wrote after his illness and recovery. 9-15 give his thoughts on his impending death. 16-20 record his prayer to the Lord (expanding on verse 3).

38:21-22 record events that occurred right after verse 6. See 2 Kings 20:8-11.

And 39:1 occurs after 38:1-8.

Let's read chapters 38 and 39 now.

Discussion Guide

1. What motivated the Lord to add years to Hezekiah's life?
2. What is the gist of what Hezekiah wrote in 38:9-15?
3. Does his writing remind you of any other writing in the Old Testament? Who or what?
4. Compare and contrast Hezekiah's prayer in 38:3,16-19 with his prayer in 37: 15-20.
5. What sign did the Lord give Hezekiah after he prayed in chapter 38? How about in chapter 37? Why? How did each sign fit its prayer? Did Hezekiah ask for a sign either time? See 2 Kings 20:8-11. Insights?
6. Why did the Lord allow Hezekiah to be alone with the envoys from Babylon, according to 2 Chronicles 32:31? Did Hezekiah pass the test?
7. Why did Hezekiah fail the test, according to 2 Chronicles 32:25-26? Show how Isaiah 39:1-4 reflects this.
8. What are the consequences of Hezekiah's sin?
9. Give a couple of other examples in the Old Testament where one man disobeyed the Lord, and that resulted in dire consequences for himself and others.
10. What is the most important lesson you will take away from chapters 36-39?