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Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

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The Tragic End of Short-Sighted Faith

Isaiah 39

I. Hezekiah's Erratic Journey of Faith

A. The "Bruised Reed and Smoldering Flax"

1. Matthew 12 (quoting Isaiah 42) describes the marvelous gentleness of Jesus Christ

Matthew 12:20 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.

2. Richard Sibbes, a Puritan theologian and devotional writer, did a phenomenal meditation on this passage in 1631
3. He says the bruised reed and smoldering flax represent people damaged and weakened by sin, whom Christ is saving
4. The bruised reed is the very picture of weakness... like a slender green reed swaying in the wind by a small pond... not a mighty oak of righteousness, but a reed swaying to and fro in the wind; but even more, this reed is bruised, like it's creased in half and dangling by some green threads, barely holding it together
5. Christ has the power and skill, and especially tenderness and gentleness to bind up the bruised reed and to heal it completely
6. In a similar way, the smoldering flax is the picture of a frail ember, flickering, smoldering, putting off both fire and smoke... about to go out; not a roaring fire of zeal for God and piety, not a bonfire of commitment and holiness and purity and power, but rather a smoldering flax, emitting both some evidence of God's grace (the ember) but also noxious smoke of unbelief and sin
 - a. Christians are a MIXTURE at all times, of both grace and corruption... of yearnings for God and yearnings for sin; of good works and bad; of moments of great victory soon followed by episodes of shameful pride or cowardly retreat
 - b. Paul puts it this plainly:

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want.

c. Sibbes speaks eloquently about this SMOLDERING FLAX:

When David was before the king of Gath (1 Sam. 21:13) and disfigured himself in an ugly manner, in that smoke there was some fire also. You may see what an excellent psalm he makes upon that occasion, Psalm 34, in which, on the basis of experience, he says, 'The LORD is close to them that are of a broken heart' (Psa. 34:18). 'I said in my haste, I am cut off from before your eyes.' There is smoke. 'Nevertheless you heard the voice of my supplications' (Psa. 31:22). There is fire.

The disciples cry out, 'Lord, save us: we perish' (Matt. 8:25). Here is smoke of unbelief, yet so much light of faith as stirred them up to pray to Christ.

The father of the demon-possessed boy cried out, 'Lord, I believe.' There is light. But he also says, 'Help thou mine unbelief.' There is smoke (Mark 9:24).

Jonah cries, 'I am cast out of thy sight.' There is smoke. 'Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.' There is light (Jon. 2:4).

'O wretched man that I am!', says Paul, with a sense of his corruption. Yet he breaks out into thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 7:24).

d. Christ WILL NOT EXTINGUISH this smoldering flax!!!

Why not? Sibbes answers:

First, because this spark is from heaven: it is his own, it is kindled by his own Spirit. And secondly, it tends to the glory of his powerful grace in his children that he preserves light in the midst of darkness, a spark in the midst of the swelling waters of corruption.

We see how our Savior Christ bore with Thomas in his doubting (John 20:27), and with the two disciples that went to Emmaus, who wavered as to whether he came to redeem Israel or not (Luke 24:21). He quenched not that little light in Peter, which was smothered: Peter denied him, but he denied not Peter (Luke 22:61). 'If you will, you can make me clean,' said one poor man in the Gospel (Matt. 8:2). 'If you can do anything,' said another (Mark 9:22). Both were smoking flax. Neither of them was quenched. If Christ had stood upon his own greatness, he would have rejected him that came with his 'if'. But Christ answers each 'if' with a gracious and absolute grant, 'I will, be clean!' The woman that was diseased with an flow of blood did simply touch, with a trembling hand, and only the hem of his garment, and yet she went away both healed and comforted.

7. Hezekiah's faith is a SMOLDERING FLAX... it was kindled by the grace of God, but it hisses and flickers with the corruption of his sinful nature

8. Hezekiah is MIGHTY through faith to purge Israel's religion of its high places... that is the light of grace; but he is weak and flickers always in the

same area: POLITICS!!! He stumbles again and again in trusting in the Lord alone to save Judah from Assyria

9. He walks with the Lord in piety and godliness concerning the Laws of Moses; that is FIRE, that is GRACE... but he smolders and flickers concerning Egypt: despite Isaiah's consistent warnings, he sends emissaries with money to hire Egypt's cavalry and chariots (Isaiah 30-31)
10. He is strong in faith to break from the King of Assyria and not send him tribute... that is GRACE, that is the FIRE of FAITH; but when Assyria invades Judah, he sends messengers with gold and silver saying "I have sinned, withdraw from me!"
11. His faith is on display in Isaiah 37... humbly petitioning God to move out in zeal for his own glory and destroy Assyria... that is the LIGHT and FIRE of GRACE...
12. In Isaiah 38... we see the MINGLED FIRE: He trusts the Lord to walk in godliness all his days, but when he falls sick, he trembles and whimpers and questions God:

2 Chronicles 32:24-25 In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. He prayed to the LORD, who answered him and gave him a miraculous sign. ²⁵ But 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.

This pride was the smolder in Hezekiah's flame...

So also was his questioning of God:

Isaiah 38:13-14 I waited patiently till dawn, but like a lion he broke all my bones; day and night you made an end of me. ¹⁴ I cried like a swift or thrush, I moaned like a mourning dove. My eyes grew weak as I looked to the heavens. I am troubled;

There is the smolder, the smoke of corruption... BUT then we also see the fire of grace:

O Lord, come to my aid!"

13. Sadly, in Isaiah 39, we come to the final chapter in Isaiah on Hezekiah's mixed pilgrimage: After all the mighty things God has done for him in the account, we have a rather sad end... Hezekiah's pride and short-sightedness was exposed
 - a. Again, it is a SMOLDERING FLAX...
 - b. Emissaries come from Babylon... this is his WEAK AREA: POLITICS

- c. They are seeking an alliance with Judah against Assyria
- d. Hezekiah reverts to the same pattern... trusting in politics and alliances rather than in the living God ALONE
- e. He is filled with pride in this account, boastfully displaying gold, silver, and military strength... and failing to give full glory to God for his healing and (maybe) the deliverance from Assyria
- f. He seems to go back to trusting in the arm of man (Babylon) rather than the arm of God alone
- g. And when Isaiah rebukes him with a tragic prophecy, he responds with a stunningly short-sighted and selfish answer, showing a lack of concern for the future generations of Judah and even of his own family

Isaiah 39:5-7 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD Almighty: ⁶ The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. ⁷ And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

Isaiah 39:8 "The word of the LORD you have spoken is good," Hezekiah replied. For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my lifetime."

- 14. Hezekiah is an example of SMOLDERING FLAX in his inconsistent but still grace-filled life with God
- 15. Sadly, the final word on Hezekiah in Isaiah is this one...

B. Gateway to the Second Half of Isaiah

- 1. The scary prophecy about Babylon is a gateway to the central drama of the rest of Isaiah—Isaiah 40-66
- 2. The central drama of Isaiah 1-39 has been the deliverance by God from Assyria
- 3. The central drama of Isaiah 40-66 will be God's faithfulness in both the EXILE to Babylon and the RESTORATION of the Jews to the Promised Land after the Exile

C. Chronology vs. Order in Isaiah

- 1. Archaeologists and Old Testament scholars: Highly likely that the events of Isaiah 38-39 *precede* the events of Assyria's invasion depicted in Isaiah 36-37
- 2. Evidence both IN the text and outside

- a. In Isaiah 38... it seems that the healing took place BEFORE the Assyrian invasion because of one verse:

Isaiah 38:6 And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city.

- b. Outside of the text, OT scholars tells us that the key is this “Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon mentioned in Isaiah 39:1
- i) Archaeology tells us that Merodach-Baladan II was a prince from the tribe of Bit-Yakin, and that he ruled Babylon from 722-710 BC, and then again from 704-704 BC
 - ii) Sargon II, king of Assyria, defeated Merodach-Baladan in 710, driving him from power and into hiding; but after Sargon died and his son, Sennacherib took the Assyrian throne, Merodach-Baladan rose up again in 704 BC to lead an insurrection against the Assyrians... Sennacherib defeated him in 703 BC, but he escaped and continued to foment rebellion against Assyria from bases in Elam across the Persian Gulf
 - iii) THUS, the Babylonian envoys could have come any time from 722-701 BC when the Assyrians invaded Judah
 - iv) BUT the key issue for these scholars is that, according to their chronology, Hezekiah died in 697-696 BC (29 years after he ascended to the throne in 726-5); the text in Isaiah 38 says that, after the illness, Hezekiah lived 15 additional years
 - v) Since the invasion of Judah happened in 701 BC, that means the illness must have happened BEFORE the invasion
 - vi) However, other scholars set the year of Hezekiah’s death at 686 BC and say BOTH the Assyrian invasion AND Hezekiah’s illness happened in 701 BC (cf. J. Ridderbos, p 316-319)
3. ON THE OTHER HAND... both 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles holds to the same order as Isaiah... Invasion first, illness second, envoys third; so I believe this is the proper order
4. In any case, these envoys from Babylon were seeking to make a POLITICAL ALLIANCE with Hezekiah against Assyria

II. The Babylonian Envoys and Hezekiah’s Foolish Pride (vs. 1-2)

Isaiah 39:1-2 At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of his illness and recovery. ² Hezekiah received the envoys gladly and showed them what was in his

storehouses-- the silver, the gold, the spices, the fine oil, his entire armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.

A. Hezekiah's Wealth, Power, and Prestige

1. Assyria was a terrible enemy, a terrifying master
2. Many of the smaller realms heard about what God had done in destroying Assyria before the walls of Jerusalem and celebrated deeply and truly with Judah

2 Chronicles 32:23 Many brought offerings to Jerusalem for the LORD and valuable gifts for Hezekiah king of Judah. From then on he was highly regarded by all the nations.

3. Having been impoverished by the King of Assyria, Hezekiah became fabulously wealthy by the plunder and by these gifts
4. The Assyrian army must have left behind a fortune of all the plunder they had taken from the lands they had already conquered
 - a. All of a sudden, a totally impoverished king and his little kingdom became rich
 - b. Hezekiah built storehouses for all this treasure

2 Chronicles 32:27-29 Hezekiah had very great riches and honor, and he made treasuries for his silver and gold and for his precious stones, spices, shields and all kinds of valuables. ²⁸ He also made buildings to store the harvest of grain, new wine and oil; and he made stalls for various kinds of cattle, and pens for the flocks. ²⁹ He built villages and acquired great numbers of flocks and herds, for God had given him very great riches.

B. Hezekiah's Two Weak Spots: Pride and Self-Reliance (especially politically)

1. Pride after his victory (as we will see in this chapter)
2. Pride during his illness (as we have seen a moment ago)

2 Chronicles 32:24-25 In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. He prayed to the LORD, who answered him and gave him a miraculous sign. ²⁵ But 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.

3. Pride led Hezekiah to forget about what God had done and to take more credit for it than he should

4. Self-reliance led him to look to future security in the form of new political alliances rather than GOD ALONE

a. God had said he would continue to deliver Judah from Assyria and from all her other adversaries

2 Kings 20:6 I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David."

2 Chronicles 32:22 So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the hand of all others. He took care of them on every side.

b. Clear message: STOP TRUSTING IN POLITICS and in your own abilities in weaving political alliances

C. God Tests and Exposes Hezekiah's Heart

1. The envoys from Babylon were a test and an threat

2. 2 Chronicles tells us what God was doing

2 Chronicles 32:31 But when envoys were sent by the rulers of Babylon to ask him about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land, God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart.

a. "God left him to test him"

b. That means God was quiet, did not speak by Isaiah, just "let it happen"

c. God was seeking to expose the thoughts of Hezekiah's heart... to press on him and push them to the surface

D. What Motivated the Babylonians to Come?

2 Chronicles 32:31 ... envoys were sent by the rulers of Babylon to ask him about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land

1. Hezekiah's healing AND

2. The miraculous sign... the movement of the sun BACKWARDS

2 Kings 20:9-11 Isaiah answered, "This is the LORD's sign to you that the LORD will do what he has promised: Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or shall it go back ten steps?" ¹⁰ "It is a simple matter for the shadow to go forward ten steps," said Hezekiah. "Rather, have it go back ten steps." ¹¹ Then the prophet Isaiah called upon the LORD, and the LORD made the shadow go back the ten steps it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

Babylonians = Chaldeans... extremely interested in celestial portents, signs in the heavens

This amazing occurrence of the shadow must have fascinated them!!

3. Probably also the defeat of Assyria motivated the Babylonians EVEN MORE

E. Hezekiah's Prideful Tour

1. He receives these ambassadors with great joy and pride
2. He is impressed by the fact that they have come from such a distant land (see verse 3)
3. He is filled with a sense of his own importance, that his reputation has reached so far
4. He takes these important visitors on an extensive tour of his capital city and his newly liberated land
5. He shows them EVERYTHING... all his wealth, all his treasures, all his military weaponry
6. BUT there is NO MENTION that he witnessed to them of the power of Almighty God; there is no mention of him giving credit or glory to God; these pagan diplomats are not given (it seems) any theology, any story of the greatness of the God who did these things
7. The Queen of the South who came to visit Solomon ended up praising GOD for all of Solomon's wealth and wisdom

1 Kings 10:9 Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the LORD's eternal love for Israel, he has made you king, to maintain justice and righteousness.

8. But these emissaries don't seem to have come to the same conclusion

III. Isaiah Interrogates Hezekiah (vs. 3-4)

Isaiah 39:3-4 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did those men say, and where did they come from?" "From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came to me from Babylon." ⁴ The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

A. Isaiah Confronts this Prideful King

1. Full of himself, Hezekiah may have gone home to his palace... contented and happy
2. Suddenly, the prophet Isaiah comes... the very one who had spoken the words of blessing concerning both Assyria's defeat and Hezekiah's healing now had a very negative mission to make
3. HOW TOUGH IT IS TO BE A PROPHET OF THE LORD!! How heavy must Isaiah's heart have been to bring this message and this correction to the King!!

B. Two Initial Questions: What Did Those Men Say? Where Did They Come From?

1. Isaiah begins to probe the encounter
2. He inserts himself into a high-level political mission... the word of God fits anywhere!!
3. Hezekiah gives a selective answer... he doesn't get into the conversation he had with these ambassadors
4. Perhaps they had already begun plotting and scheming about a joint military effort against the now weakened Assyrian king
5. Hezekiah only answered the second question: FROM A DISTANT LAND... FROM BABYLON
6. Clearly Hezekiah was impressed with how far away they had come

C. Second Question and Its Answer

Isaiah 39:4 The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

1. Isaiah probes deeper... not accepting the surface answer
2. Hezekiah also seems almost proud of what he's done... he also knows there's no point in lying to a prophet!!

IV. The Shocking Prophecy of the Babylonian Captivity (vs. 5-7)

Isaiah 39:5-7 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD Almighty: ⁶ The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. ⁷ And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

A. Terrifying Sound: “Hear the Word of the Lord Almighty!!”

1. I imagine it being said with a severe tone
2. Hezekiah’s little pride party comes to a crashing end
3. God speaks a sobering word of warning

B. Isaiah Sees Far!! He’s Already Predicted the Fall of Babylon

Isaiah 13:19-20 *Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰ She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there.*

Isaiah 21:9-10 *Look, here comes a man in a chariot with a team of horses. And he gives back the answer: 'Babylon has fallen, has fallen! All the images of its gods lie shattered on the ground!'" ¹⁰ O my people, crushed on the threshing floor, I tell you what I have heard from the LORD Almighty, from the God of Israel.*

C. Here the Prophecy Gets Enhanced: Judah Will Go Into Exile in Babylon

1. This is the first mention of the Babylonian exile in Isaiah
2. It would not happen for another 115 years... but it would certainly happen

D. Devastating Details

1. All the wealth you’ve stored up, everything you just showed off so proudly... it will all be carried off BY THE BABYLONIANS!!!
2. These so-called allies will someday be Judah’s executioners and plunderers
3. Stark statement:

“Nothing will be left.”

4. And it gets even worse:

And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

5. At the time of his illness, Hezekiah had no heir... no child to carry on the line of David
6. But whenever the Lord may give you a son, Hezekiah, some of your own descendents will become EUNUCHS in the palace of the King of Babylon

7. A “eunuch” was a male castrated so he wouldn’t be sexually active with the King’s harem... and he was also frequently a counselor and advisor to the king
8. To be a eunuch was to be excluded from BOTH the assembly of the Lord AND the lineage of the Messiah!

Deuteronomy 23:1 No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the LORD.

- E. This is a Devastating Prediction!!! How Can We Understand Hezekiah’s Reaction??

V. Hezekiah’s Short-Sighted Reaction (vs. 8)

Isaiah 39:8 The word of the LORD you have spoken is good," Hezekiah replied. For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my lifetime."

- A. When Isaiah Predicted the Exile of His People, He Was in Tears... Hezekiah Was Rather Blasé

***Isaiah 21:3-4 At this my body is racked with pain, pangs seize me, like those of a woman in labor; I am staggered by what I hear, I am bewildered by what I see.
⁴ My heart falters, fear makes me tremble; the twilight I longed for has become a horror to me.***

Isaiah 21:10 O my people, crushed on the threshing floor, I tell you what I have heard from the LORD Almighty, from the God of Israel.

- B. Again, the Thoughts of Hezekiah’s Heart Are Exposed by the Prophet
 1. All he cared about was his own lifetime
 2. He’d seen enough suffering... and as long as he has assurance that there will be “peace and safety in his lifetime,” he wants nothing more

VI. Applications

- A. Hezekiah is Not the Savior! Only Christ Alone!
 1. Hezekiah is a “Son of David,” and in many ways displayed the character and faithfulness of David
 2. BUT he was not the “Son of David” the nation of Israel was waiting for... the Messiah, the Savior

3. Scripture exposes all human heroes as the sinners they are... after the stunning defeat of Assyria, the nation of Judah could have idolized Hezekiah, but this account exposes what was in his heart
4. Only Jesus is the perfect man, the true Savior, worthy of our faith and loyalty
5. Hezekiah acted as if he couldn't care less what happened to future generations; Jesus died for millennia of future children of God

Psalm 22:30-31 *Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. ³¹ They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn-- for he has done it.*

Hebrews 2:13-16 *"Here am I, and the children God has given me." ¹⁴ ¶ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.*

B. God Searches Hearts to Expose Hidden Sins of Thought

1. Listen again to the account in 2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles 32:31 *But when envoys were sent by the rulers of Babylon to ask him about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land, God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart.*

2. God does this to each and every one of His children...

Revelation 2:23 *Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.*

3. God "leaves us alone" to show us our sins... it strips us of our pride when God leaves us to test us... because

John 15:5 *"I am the vine; you are the branches. ... apart from me you can do nothing.*

4. God orchestrates the circumstances of our lives to show us our pride, our love of human praise, our delight in earthly riches, our trust in alliances and political schemes
5. Understand that this process will be going on your whole life... the heart of a man is DEEP and naturally TWISTED

Proverbs 20:5 *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.*

Jeremiah 17:9-10 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? ¹⁰ "I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve."

6. The Christian doesn't FIGHT this process but yields to it and desires it...

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

7. PRAISE JESUS!!! God does not cast us off when we are "bruised reeds and smoldering flaxes"...

8. Jesus is patient and knows how to deal with our corruptions

C. Man Is Tremendously Susceptible to Pride

1. How could it possibly be that, after Hezekiah humbled himself and put on sackcloth and begged God to deliver him and Jerusalem from the hand of the King of Assyria, Hezekiah would be swelled with pride when other PEOPLE want wrongly to give him credit for what happened

^{ESV} 2 Chronicles 32:23 And many brought gifts to the LORD to Jerusalem and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward.

2. How much better would it have been for Hezekiah to have been EVEN MORE HUMBLE after the deliverance??

Psalm 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

3. Our hearts so easily swell with pride... only the supernatural acting of Almighty God can conquer it

4. Beware not to take credit for any good thing in your life as if you did it all yourself

5. Learn to give God the credit and the glory for every blessing you have

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

D. God Has Crafted Salvation to Destroy Human Pride

1. The gospel of Jesus Christ is designed to strip us of pride while it saves us from sin
2. Unconditional Election before the Foundation of the Earth strips us of pride

Romans 9:11-12 *Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad-- in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls-- she was told, "The older will serve the younger."*

1 Corinthians 1:27-31 *But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things-- and the things that are not-- to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God-- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."*

3. Total Depravity strips us of pride

Romans 3:10-12 *As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."*

4. The atoning work of Christ strips us of pride

Isaiah 59:16 *He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him.*

5. The resurrection of Christ strips us of pride
6. Salvation by grace strips us of pride

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.*

7. Justification by Faith alone apart from works of the law strips us of pride

Romans 3:27 ¶ *Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.*

Romans 4:2 *If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about-- but not before God.*

8. Sanctification—the “Highway of Holiness”—strips us of pride
9. Glorification strips us of pride
10. God does everything SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST BEFORE HIM

E. Be Warned About Flattery and Seeking to Impress the World

1. Hezekiah was sucked in and flattered by the interest of all these Gentile nations
2. His head swelled and he lost perspective
3. Instead, he should have humbly pointed each gentile ambassador to the greatness of God
4. So it's easy for a high schooler, trying to impress the "in-crowd" to compromise principles
5. It's easy for the ladder-climbing young professional seeking to win the favor of the "kingmakers" to compromise principles to achieve professional advancement
6. It's easy to seek the kisses of the world and forget the honor that comes only from God

F. The Dangers of a Lacking a Multigenerational Vision

1. Perhaps most tragic of all was Hezekiah's pathetic lack of concern for the future of his own family

"Who cares? There will be peace and security in MY LIFETIME... and that's all that matters to me."

2. It behooves a godly man to care about the spiritual and material well-being of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren
3. Psalm 78 makes this multi-generational vision clear

Psalm 78:3-8 what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. ⁴ We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. ⁵ He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, ⁶ so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. ⁷ Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. ⁸ They would not be like their forefathers-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

4. Where the rubber met the road: in the extra fifteen years of Hezekiah's life, his son Manasseh was born
5. Manasseh was the WORST KING Judah ever had

2 Kings 21:1-6 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. ² He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. ³ He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he also erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them. ⁴ He built altars in the temple of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put my Name." ⁵ In both courts of the temple of the LORD, he built altars to all the starry hosts. ⁶ He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

6. It was specifically because of Manasseh's sins that God says He was unwilling to forgive and Judah went into exile

2 Kings 24:3-4 Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD's command, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, ⁴ including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive.

7. Most annoying to me: the HIGH PLACES IMMEDIATELY REESTABLISHED... after all that time, Hezekiah took them down; Manasseh put them back up!! Could it be that Hezekiah didn't tell him why he removed the high places?
8. Could it be that Hezekiah parented (trained, raised up) Manasseh with the same blasé attitude about the future? Could it be that, instead of following Deuteronomy 6 in training his son, he allowed him to grow up wicked and rebellious and God-hating? Could it be that Hezekiah, satisfied that there would be "peace and safety" in his lifetime forgot that Manasseh's lifetime mattered too, and that, because of Manasseh's sin, he would be led away in a personal exile where at last he repented??
9. Lessons for Fathers:
- a. CARE ABOUT THE FUTURE GENERATIONS!!!
 - b. Train your children with an eye to eternity AND an eye to future generations
 - c. Specifically invest in Deuteronomy 6 for the future

Deuteronomy 6:1-2 These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, ² so that you, your children and their children after them may fear

the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.

Deuteronomy 6:4-8 ear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

d. Pray much about your children's future spouses and children and grandchildren

e. MULTIGENERATIONAL VISION!!! A Lasting spiritual legacy