

God's Calling Requirements Part 16

Lessons from the Life of King Hezekiah

“In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. 2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. 4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. 7 And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. 8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day? 9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. 11 And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.” (2 Kings 20:1-11 KJV)

King Hezekiah, when he became ill and received the message from the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz, that he will die and not recover, ***“2 he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*** Hezekiah told the Lord in his prayer, ***“Remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart ...” (2 Kings 20:2-3 KJV)*** Have you walked before the Lord in truth and with a perfect heart.

When Hezekiah felt sick, God sent to him the prophet Isaiah who told him, ***“Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.” (2 Kings 20:1 KJV)*** Here the prophet announced to him that He will die and for this reason he needed to put his house in order. He needed to put things in order in his family and his household and finally in his kingdom. Hezekiah prayed and cried to God, ***“2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.” (2 Kings 20:2-3 KJV)*** After the crying of Hezekiah and His prayers, the Lord answered, and He told Isaiah to go back to Hezekiah and announced to him the mercy of God, ***“4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years.” (2 Kings 20:4-6 KJV)*** So here we understand the followings:-

- A. ***The great value of prayer and the effect of crying out to God:*** The Lord answered the crying of Hezekiah and blessed him with an additional fifteen years.
- B. ***The controversy between the two messages of God to Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah:*** In the first message God said, ***“Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.” (2 Kings 20:1 KJV)*** But in the second time the Lord announced that He is going to heal Hezekiah and He will add 15 years to Him. ***“I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years.” (2 Kings 20:5-6 KJV)*** Certain times we instruct the people to do certain things that we received from God. When they will not accept, they will pray to God, and the Lord would send us again to them with another message as we noticed here how Isaiah was sent twice to Hezekiah. That does not mean the prayers of other people are more effective than your prayers, or that we are wrong in what we are receiving from the Lord. Certain time we might be even embarrassed with such situations, as what happened to Isaiah, but we should not be shaken as Isaiah was not shaken. Certain time we cannot understand the ways of God. The two announcement of God through the prophet Isaiah is different, but if you are going to look deep and analyze them in the light of the Scriptures, then you will just find that the second message is just continuity for the first one.

King Hezekiah had the courage to say the following to God, ***“Remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.” (2 Kings 20:2-3 KJV)*** This is because King Hezekiah had done lot of good and marvelous things for the Lord. As we will read ***2 Kings 18*** you will grasp all the good things that Hezekiah did for the Lord and that you can reflect on yourself as God called you to serve Him:

“1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. 2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. 3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did. 4 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. 5 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. 6 For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. 7 And the LORD was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.” (2 Kings 18:1-7 KJV)

1. ***Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord:*** ***“3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.” (2 Kings 18:3 KJV)***: You need to do what God wants you to do and achieve for him.
2. ***Hezekiah removed the high places:*** ***“4 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves.” (2 Kings 18:4 KJV)***: These places were not ordained by God for worship. To stop getting involved in activities, parties and

programs which are externally religious, but in reality they are not representing God's will or God's way for worship.

3. **Hezekiah Smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles.** *"And brake the images, and cut down the groves."* (2 Kings 18:4 KJV): He removed different kinds of idols. To get rid of things that had replaced God in your life, like laziness, love of money, watching TV, playing video games, traditional practices, worldliness, etc. Idols in the new testament are also the greed, the covetousness, immoralities and the uncleanness: *"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."* (Colossians 3:5 KJV) *"3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them."* (Ephesians 5:3-7 KJV)
4. **Hezekiah brake into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made:** *"and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan."* (2 Kings 18:4 KJV): That was the snake of bronze that Moses did in respond to God's command. When the people sinned by grumbling against Moses and Aaron, the Lord God sent among them snakes that bitten them. When they cried to God, the Lord instructed Moses to make a snake from bronze and to lift it up, that whoever looks at it will be recovered from the snake bite. The people when they recovered they started to worship that bronze snake and that continued till the time of Hezekiah. But God did not tell them to worship that bronze snake. They were deceived, that is why King Hezekiah in preparing the people for revival he removed and got rid of that bronze snake. The meaning of Nehushtan is unclean, bronze (cheap) and common. God wants you to clean your life from unclean and unholy things. There are things people consider them holy but when you go to the Word of God they are unclean. *"And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."* (Luke 16:15 KJV)
5. **Hezekiah rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him,** *"He rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not."* (2 Kings 18:7 KJV): You need to move toward trusting God and not to be loyal to neither people nor trusting that they will help you. But rather start to serve the Lord wholeheartedly and trust Him that He will help you in times of need. The Lord either will help you directly or He will send you the right people at the right time. Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, *"5 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. 6 For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses."* (2 Kings 18:5-6 KJV) God wants us to trust on him and not on man: *"5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. 7 Blessed is the man that*

trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. 8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." (Jeremiah 17:5-8 KJV) I am not telling you not to trust people but I am telling you to put your trust on God who will send you the right people that you can trust.

6. **Hezekiah worked and cooperate with the Prophet Isaiah when he was threatened by the Assyrians:** *"And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. 2 And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. 3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. 4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left."* (2 Kings 19:1-4 KJV) Isaiah sent his prophecy to Hezekiah and assured him the end of his enemy, *"6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. 7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."* (2 Kings 19:6-7 KJV) As we noticed here, there was good cooperation between Hezekiah and Isaiah. Later on Hezekiah received another threat from the Assyrian. He took the letter and went to the house of God to pray, *"14 And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. 16 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. 17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, 18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only."* (2 Kings 19:14-19 KJV) There is a power in prayer. When we are threatened and are in trouble we bring to God the whole situation, the letters and the messages we received, and we trust him for answer and deliverance. Hezekiah's prayers moved God and the Lord sent Isaiah to assure him that God's deliverance is on the way. So wonderful is the unity and the understanding between Isaiah and Hezekiah, and that what God would expect from us to be united with the leadership of the church, *"20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. 21 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. 22 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against*

whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. 23 By thy messengers thou hast reproached the LORD, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel. 24 I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places. 25 Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. 26 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up. 27 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. 28 Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. 29 And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof. 30 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. 31 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this. 32 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. 33 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. 34 For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.” (2 Kings 19:20-34 KJV) God promised deliverance, that truly took place, and in a marvelous way. “35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. 37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.” (2 Kings 19:35-37 KJV)

Hezekiah when he got sick and prayed, mentioning all his labor for the Lord's Kingdom; he was heard by God and the Lord truly granted his request and he was healed and fifteen years was added to his life. Now it is true that we need to live in a righteous way and in obedience to God, but we also need to understand that when God answers our prayers and help us that does not mean that we are good. But God help us and he answers our prayers because He is good. As well as we need to understand that when God answer prayers His purpose is not only to comfort us and to help us, but He has other nobles purposes that He wants us to work with Him to fulfill them.

Good to mention that the Lord at that moment of healing gave also assuring sign to Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah that he really will go to the house of God, “8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into

the house of the LORD the third day? 9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. 11 And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.” (2 Kings 20:8-11 KJV) Notice again here the power of the prayer, when Isaiah cried to the Lord, He answered him and brought the shadow ten degrees backward.

Hezekiah became king when he was 25 years old, and he ruled for 29 years. We can divide his reign over two main periods. The first 14 years we can see and read all his achievements as we had discussed. What we had read the good things that Hezekiah did. But in the life of King Hezekiah there were other things that are wrongs and that needed to be corrected. The additional 15 years that God gave to him was the second chance that was given to the king Hezekiah to correct himself. Whatever we do good, that does not cover the wrong that needed to be corrected. The Scriptures would help us to see ourselves in a better way.

The following events happened later in Hezekiah's life after he was healed:

“12 At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. 14 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. 15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. 16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. 17 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. 19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?” (2 Kings 20:12-19 KJV)

As you had read the above events you might ask, what are the grave things that Hezekiah did that made Isaiah rebuked him and telling him grave things to happen to him as you can read here: “17 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” (2 Kings 20:17-18 KJV) That all his treasures and his descendents will go to the Babylonians who visited him.

According to the history, at the time of Hezekiah reign, the Babylonian were subdued and under the Assyrians, and at the time that the Lord wrought great victory over the Assyrians army when he sent His angel; “35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of

the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. 37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.” (2 Kings 19:35-37 KJV) The victory that God gave to Hezekiah the captain of His people over the Assyrians, that victory gave a relief to the Babylonians. Therefore they came to Hezekiah in order to be friend with him as they have seen that he got a big victory over their enemies. The shortcoming of Hezekiah, is that he behaved in a boastful way and went ahead and showed them everything. He did not treat them as a nation that he can subdue for the Lord, but he treated them as people who are stronger and more honorable than he. He was deceived with the letters and the gift that they brought to Him. Many of us deceived by a small appreciation and a flattery but we fail to look deep into the things and consider seriously what is going on. As well as, Hezekiah boasted as if his own strength achieved that victory. He knew his behavior was carried out of pride and was unpleasant to the Lord, therefore he hide the visit of the Babylonians and did not inform Isaiah about it, because he knew that Isaiah will prohibit him from doing what he did.

The openness of Hezekiah to such kind of people and receiving gift and letters from them and making of them equal friends brought Isaiah to pronounce God’s judgment on him. Notice, that the purpose of Isaiah in pronouncing that judgment on him is to warn him and to not to destroy him: Isaiah was sent to Hezekiah to explain to him that the sinful act that he did will bring bad effects and consequences. The Lord’s message to him through Isaiah the purpose of it is to make him realize his mistakes and finally to bring him to repentance. But Hezekiah did not repent. That is why we can read in the book of Daniel that the Word of God through Isaiah was fulfilled, as some of the royal seed, from the children of Judah were taken to Babylon, ***“3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; 6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.” (Daniel 1:3, 6 KJV)***

Hezekiah took the rebuke of Isaiah with pride and answered him indifferently, ***“19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?” (2 Kings 20:19 KJV)*** Many Christians will boast about their material prosperity when they are corrected, thinking that their jobs, money, and wealth are the stamp of the approval of God. God gives good things in order to lead us to repentance. Therefore, we need to pay heed to the message and repent.

Finally, what God threatened to do through the prophet Isaiah took place when the army of Babylonian destroyed Jerusalem and took all the precious things. Hezekiah’s sin of vanity and selfishness was exposed by God. Hezekiah didn’t think of passing on the blessings that he had received from God to his descendants. His pride and boasting refused him the correction. Spiritual wrongdoings and short comings of parents and church leaders and their unwillingness to repent and be restored will put their descendants in a tight corner.

Now, you may ask this question, *‘It is not a big mistake what Hezekiah did, as well as Hezekiah has done lot of things to the Lord, then why Isaiah was so judgmental to deal with him?’* ***Ezekiel 18:24-26*** can be a good answer to your question: ***“24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the***

abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. 25 Yet ye say, The way of the LORD is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? 26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.” (Ezekiel 18:24-26 KJV) Hezekiah did a wicked thing and that needed to be corrected. It has to be made right, before the Lord will forgive and reconcile. Pride was Hezekiah wickedness and that what made him show disrespect to the rebuke of the prophet Isaiah in the way he answered him. He should accepted his mistake and take a decision that he will not do such thing again. Hezekiah needed to repented in such a way before he can be restored, ***“Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.” (Ezekiel 18:27 KJV)*** Hezekiah when he was confronted with the prophet Isaiah, he answered him in this way, ***“And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.” (2 Kings 20:15 KJV)*** He said to Isaiah, ***“All the things that are in mine house,”*** and ***“my treasures”*** he considered that all what he has is his and not God’s and that is another sin.

Now we go back to the saying of the Lord to Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah, ***“Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.” (2 Kings 20:1 KJV)*** Hezekiah was not mindful about the next generation, He was not mindful to keep the treasures of God to be hand over to the next generation, but instead he boasted about them to the enemy and he exposed himself to them. He was willing to have a fellowship and union with non believers and make them equal to him and in this way approved that his descendent will be the same to them. When God told him, ***Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.*** God wanted him not only to think about himself but about the next generation. To set his house in order is to secure the future of the next generation. Today even we are responsible before God to seek the will of God and His ways and plans for our children, the next generation, those that they would come to the leadership after us. Many they are ready to send their children to colleges and places for study and they don’t mind if their children would be exposed to threat and the temptations of this world. Many they are willing to send their children to colleges and famous places to studies just to fulfill their loyalty toward the idolatry of academic standardization.

The idolatry of academic standardization: This is another issue that we need to remove from our lives. As a result of the industrial revolution and its assembly-line mentality, we have applied the concepts of standardization and quality control to education. Thus our whole educational experience is based on comparing one student’s progress with someone’s idea of a "norm." The problem with this is that comparison breeds conformity. Paul warns of the foolishness of comparisons, saying ***“for we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” (2 Corinthians 10:12)*** When we focus on measuring the progress of our children study with what is going on in the world, we find ourselves preparing our children for exams and test rather than preparing them to face life. Most parents are quite concerned that their students maintain their "grade level" and score well on "standardized tests." When we focus on measuring progress with such comparisons then we are moving toward conformity to the world’s agenda rather than being directed by Spirit-led parents following God’s word.

This bondage to standardization becomes a modern idolatry similar to the failure of the Old Testament kings to “pull down the high places.” These otherwise righteous kings would eliminate idolatry during their own reigns but left the idolatrous shrines in place that tempted the following generation to return to idolatry. By our endeavoring to keep our children in line with the educational agendas of the world are we simply keeping the door open for a possible going back to the world's institutions. We should be careful that our children acquire diligence and godliness rather than trying to acquire the standard knowledge of the world that puffs up **“We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up.”** (1 Corinthians 8:1) Competition and planting jealousy in the hearts of our children is not the right way that we will raise our children by comparing them and urge them to conform to the standards of the world around them. That will drive them away from God’s presence and His plans for their lives.

The second Word of God to Hezekiah after his prayer, God announced, **“I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years.”** (2 Kings 20:5-6 KJV) That God will heal him and give him additional 15 years, so Hezekiah will have the time to work out with God with humility and with the fear of the Lord, to set his house in order and protect his children and his descendant and His kingdom from the threat of the world and from drifting away from the ways of God and the will of God following the people of this world.

When Hezekiah was sick he wrote his testimony and it was published in the Bible, **“9 The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: 10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. 11 I said, I shall not see the LORD, even the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. 12 Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. 13 I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. 14 Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me. 15 What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. 16 O LORD, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. 17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. 18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. 19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth. 20 The LORD was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD. 21 For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover. 22 Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?”** (Isaiah 38:9-22 KJV) He testified in this writing that the Lord saved him, **“The LORD was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD.”** (Isaiah 38:20 KJV) But he did not testified about the goodness of God when the envoy of the Babylonian was sent upon his

recovery from his sickness. That is another failure that we fail to testify to others about the Lord who is good to us.

“At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.” (Isaiah 39:1 KJV) When the envoy of the Babylonian came to him he did not sent for Isaiah for opinion, and God did not sent Isaiah to stop him, but God let him alone to see what is in his heart, **“Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.”** (2 Chronicle 32:31 KJV) Now it is time for us to check our hearts. We all may do good things and pray to God and follow Him and we receive good things from him. But are our hearts perfect and knitted with God? Remember, God would expose us to ourselves and then to the people. He exposed us to ourselves so we will repent and He will expose us to other to rebuke us and to correct us.

Hezekiah although he did lot of great things, but he was not a humble person and his heart was full of pride, and he was not grateful to God who healed him, **“24 In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign. 25 But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.”** (2 Chronicles 32:24-25 KJV) Although God healed him but he was not grateful to God. He was a selfish and worldly person and he was just glad that there will be peace in his life time as he disregarded the warning and the rebuke of God, **“17 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”** (2 Kings 20:17-18 KJV) Many Christians are careless about what will happen to their descendant after their death as long as they are enjoying the material blessings of God.

Isaiah was a man of perfect heart, his heart was in unity with God, while King Hezekiah although he was doing lot of good things but from inside he still selfish, worldly, careless about the next generation, and careless to transmit the Word of God to them. He was not willing and does not care if his descendents became slave under the power of darkness and being away from God. While Isaiah was a man of God and he was burdened with what is in the mind of God and his heart was in unity with God.

Isaiah prayed and Hezekiah prayed and both of them God answered them, but only Isaiah was with perfect heart. Therefore it does not matter whether God will answer or not our prayers, but it matter much if our heart is not perfect in the sight of God. Now the good things that we received today from God’s Word is to set our house in order, and for this reason God is giving you 15 years more to work it out. You need to start with repentance in dealing with your sins and wrong attitude and character, uniting your heart with God and with His good plan for you. After the Lord healed Hezekiah, he should focus on the task entrusted to him, to put his house in order. Instead of doing that, he opened his house to the worshipper of Baal and welcome them, **“1 At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. 2 And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the**

silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.” (Isaiah 39:1-2 KJV) It mentioned here clearly that Hezekiah was glad of them.

The meaning of Hezekiah is ‘Jehovah is my strength,’ and the meaning of Isaiah is ‘Jehovah has saved,’ and the meaning of Berodachbaladan is ‘Worshipper of Baal.’ Hezekiah was pleased to receive a worshipper of Baal and he did not preach to them the gospel, and he forgot that Jehovah has saved. Let us not to be unfaithful to God by neglecting and putting aside the Lord and those who stood with us in times of troubles, but when we are relieved we forgot God and forgot those people and go along with worldly people and whoring with them after their idols and practices.

Hezekiah did not do his assignment in putting his house in order when he received the fifteen years from the Lord. During the fifteen years that God added to his life, Hezekiah got a son, Manasseh, who started to reign after the death of his father at the age of 12 years old. **“1Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: 2 But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.” (2 Chronicles 33:1-2 KJV)** Hezekiah as a result of not putting his house in order, Manasseh was an evil doer and he did much evil in the sight of the Lord.

My dear and beloved: The process of salvation is our journey to heaven. When you sin then you need to repent in order for you to be restored. To be restored is to be back to the point that you fail God in His calling to you. Whatever great and good things that you had done in the past, that will not cover the sin that you had recently committed. Therefore humble down, put pride away, confess your sins and renounce your shortcoming so that you will be restored back to the good plan that God has for you in calling you to serve Him as you agree to pray.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your clear word to me. Lord now I understand that I cannot boast of the good things that I did in the past, rather I need to repent from my sins*

Lord I confess and renounce the following sins, _____ that I recently did.

Let us confess and renounce our sins to God _____.

Lord forgives me and restores me back so I can continue to serve you.

Lord I pray for my brothers and sisters who repented and had started to put their house in order. Lord strengthens them and helps them to continue to do what is right and just. Lord provide all their needs and give them all the spiritual gifts that they needs so their ministry will be fruitful and effective and will bring glory to you.

Lord we pray for our church that you will enable us to put things in order according to your will. Lord enables us to reach new people and make new disciples. Lord helps us to evangelize and to plan new bible studies and new congregation. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let

your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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