

Finishing Well 2022

Lesson #3

The Broad Wall: Tripped Up By Pride

January 19, 2022

Moses' stern warning in Deut. 28:58-65.

If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, ⁵⁹ then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. ⁶⁰ Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹ Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. ⁶² You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. ⁶³ And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known— wood and stone. ⁶⁵ And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.

Background Information:

Assyria's conquest of the northern kingdom of Israel began about 740 BC under King Pul. I Chron. 5:26 "So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, the spirit of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and he took them into exile, namely, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, to this day."

Note: The Bible speaks about "the cows of Bashan," that are healthy and well-fed because of the fertile land. [Remember Lot]

Num. 32:1 & Deut. 3:19 The tribes of Reuben, Gad and $\frac{1}{2}$ tribe of Manasseh possessed large numbers of livestock.

- They approached Moses and other leaders with a request:

Num. 32:5 Please do not make us cross the Jordan but let us possess these fertile lands on the east side of Jordan."

- This request shows their sinful rejection of the covenant obligations of community life.
- They rejected God's plan. Living by sight and not by faith.
- They placed their own interests and that of their cattle over the interests of all the other tribes.

These $2\frac{1}{2}$ tribes were making their decision based, not on faith, but on selfish, material interests. They were refusing to cross over the Jordan, to die to their selfish wants.

Num. 32:6-7 Shall your brothers go to war while you sit here? And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?

Num. 32:14-15 In anger he called them a "brood of sinners." And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel. ¹⁵ For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people.

They did not want to cross the mighty Jordan to endanger themselves by fighting wars against the Canaanites. They wanted to enjoy the good life while the others fought on their behalf.

They Repented & Agreed to Fight

Numbers 32:16-19 We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones.

They entered into an agreement with Moses, Joshua, Eleazar, and others > 3 promises:

- Their armed men would cross over the Jordan with their brothers.
- Would go ahead of everyone else as the vanguard to face the greatest danger of fighting.
- They would not return to their homes until every Israelite had received his inheritance.

Consequences To Not Crossing The Jordan

1. Where are their ARMED MEN? They crossed the Jordan.
2. The wives and children they left behind were deprived of the privilege of witnessing divine miracles - the parting of the Jordan River, the destruction of the walls of Jericho, and the many battles fought and won.
3. They missed observing Passover, Barley harvest

Josh. 24: 13 And I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

4. In later years, due to their great distance from the temple, these tribes came more and more under pagan influence. They were the first taken into captivity by Assyria.

God had sent many prophets to warn them to turn from their sinful ways & follow the LORD.

II Kings 17:13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

Many attempts had been made to turn the people back to the Lord, including efforts by Elijah and Elisha, two of the greatest prophets in Israel's history.

II Kings 17:15-17 describes the many ways in which Israel sinned against the Lord, leading to His judgment upon the land: "They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false, and they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them that they should not do like them. And they abandoned all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made for themselves metal images of two calves; and they made an Asherah and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal.

And they burned their sons and their daughters as offerings and used divination and omens and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger."

II Kings 17:18 "Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None was left but the tribe of Judah only."

- Though a remnant remained in the north, the nation of Israel was under Assyrian rule, and tens of thousands were deported and made servants in Assyria.

The Assyrians began to populate Israel with people from other nations they had defeated.

II Kings 17:24 "And the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the people of Israel.

And they took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities." The descendants of these foreigners and the remnant of Israel were later called "Samaritans."

During the time of Christ, the Samaritans were despised as an "unclean" people because of their mixed ancestry and rejection of temple-based worship.

Hezekiah, "the Lord strengthens," ruled as king of Judah from 715 BC - 687 BC.

- He was the 13th king in a line of 20.
- He was 1 of 3 kings that were commended for being like David.

II Chron. 29:1-2 Hezekiah began to reign when he was 25 years old and reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, just as David had done.

II Kings 18:5-7 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. For he held fast to the Lord;

he did not depart from following Him but kept the commandments that the Lord commanded Moses. The Lord was with him; wherever he went, he prospered.

He rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him.

He will be instrumental in the building of a strong physical as well as spiritual BROAD WALL.

Hezekiah the Reformer II Kings 18:4 II Chronicles 29:3-31:21

❖ Cleansed The Temple II Chron. 29:3-19

❖ Bronze Serpent II Kings 18:4

❖ Consecrated The Temple II Chron. 29:20-26

❖ Celebrated Passover II Chron. 30:1-27

❖ Organized The Temple Ministries II Chron. 31:1-21

Hezekiah's Urgency

II Chron. 29:3 1st year, 1st month > Repaired house of the Lord

II Chron. 29:17 This was the 1st day of his reign
Temple was cleansed and sanctified in just 16 days

II Chron. 29:20 Hezekiah rose early to sacrifice; Didn't wait until he had enough priests

II Chron. 30:1 In the 1st month, he launched a nationwide evangelistic campaign

II Chron. 30:26 Less than 30 days later, they held the greatest Passover in memory.

II Chron. 30:17 He knew the people weren't ready, so he grabbed the Levites who were.

II Chron. 30:20 He prayed to God for permission

II Chron. 30:18 He didn't wait until the people were cleansed.

- Hezekiah The Negotiator II Kings 18:7-16
- Hezekiah The Sufferer II Kings 20:1-11 II Chron. 32:24-26 Isaiah 38:1-8
- Hezekiah The Singer Isaiah 39:9-22
- Hezekiah The Boaster II Kings 20:12-19 II Chron. 32:27-31 Isaiah 39

Hezekiah the Negotiator: II Kings 18:7-16

II Kings 18:7 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.

- He turned his attention to the reorganization of the army and the reconstruction of the fortifications that had been torn down by various enemies during Ahaz's weak reign.
- He defeated the army of the Philistines and took their stronghold Gaza. [II Kings 18:8]

About 20 years after King Pul took the 2 ½ tribes, Shalmaneser V, king of Assyria, overtook Samaria in 722 BC.

II Kings 18:9 In 722 BC, Assyria attacked Israel and besieged the city of Samaria.

Following a 3 year siege: II Kings 18:10-11 In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

II Kings 18:12 Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them. [Offered children as a living sacrifice to Molech; King Ahaz was guilty.]

II Kings 16:3 But he [Ahaz] walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

Judah had become a vassal state under Assyria during the reign of King Ahaz. [II Kings 16:7-18] When the Assyrian king Sargon II died, his son Sennacherib became king of Assyria.

- Hezekiah thought: This is an opportune time to break the yoke to Assyria.
- He ceased to pay the tribute Assyria had imposed on his father, Ahaz.
- Hezekiah "rebelled against the king of Assyria and served him not,"
 - But entered into a league with Egypt. [Isa. 30-31; 36:6-9]

In 715 BC, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and began a march toward Jerusalem.

- Though Hezekiah expected the Egyptians to come to his aid, they did not come.

II Kings 18:13-16 Now in the 14th year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them.

[Started ruling @ age 25; Ruled for 29 years; 15 years left; He was granted 15 extra years;]

¹⁴ And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear.

And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

¹⁶ At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria.

- Sennacherib withdrew from Judah, but he had every intention of returning.

The Annals of Sennacherib: Moreover, (as for) Hezekiah of the land Judah, who had not submitted to my yoke, I surrounded (and) conquered forty-six of his fortified cities, fortresses, and small(er) settlements in their environs, which were without number, ... By 701 BC, he boasted about conquering 46 walled cities and taking 200,000 captives.

Note: Most commentators agree the events recorded in Isaiah 38-39 [Hezekiah's illness and his welcome of the Babylonian ambassadors] happened before the Assyrian invasion recorded in Isaiah 36-37. We will take this approach as we study Hezekiah's life and ministry and seek to integrate the material in II Kings 18:1 - 20:11; II Chron. 29:1-31; 31; 32:24-26, & Isa. 36-39.

Hezekiah Suffers: 702 BC II Kings 20:1-11 II Chron. 32:24-26 Isa. 38:1-8

The next event in Hezekiah's life is his grave illness which took place 15 years before his death in 687 BC. So his sickness and healing, as well as the visit of the Babylonian ambassadors, occurred in the year 702 BC [Isa. 38-39].

The next year, 701 BC, the Assyrians returned and attacked Jerusalem. [Isa. 36-37]

II Kings 20:1 "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." [Hezekiah is about 39 years old.]

- The fact that the prophet Isaiah visited him with such a solemn message indicates how serious this experience really was, for the king was going to die.
- Set your house in order involved most of all appointing an heir to the throne.

Isaiah 38:2-3 "Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto Jehovah, and said, Remember now, O Jehovah, I beseech thee, 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."

God answered his prayer by telling the prophet Isaiah how to bring about healing.

God also gave Isaiah 2 great promises for Hezekiah.

1. The king would recover and worship at the temple within 3 days.
2. When the Assyrians return, God would defend and deliver the city of Jerusalem for His own sake and for my servant David's sake.

- Hezekiah's illness occurred BEFORE the 2nd invasion of Sennacherib's army.

To give assurance of the promises, God gave him a miraculous sign >

- The shadow on the steps of Ahaz [large sundial] went back 10 degrees.
- As the sun went down, the shadow would naturally get longer.
- But Suddenly, the shadow became shorter.

II Chron. 32:1 After these deeds of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and entered Judah; he encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them over to himself.

- After these deeds of faithfulness: Our tendency is to think that when we are genuinely faithful to God, we will be immune from attack.
- The experience of Hezekiah and countless other men and women of God tell us otherwise.

Morgan: "It would seem to be a strange answer of God to the faithfulness of His child, that a strong foe should at the moment invade the kingdom; and yet how often the experience of the people of God is of this nature."

Truth: God disciplines us because He loves us and wants to prevent us from disobeying Him and losing His blessing. He seeks to bring out the very best in us, for our Father wants us to be conformed to the image of His Son. [Rom. 8:29]

Wiersbe: Difficult experiences should give us a new appreciation for life and a new desire to live for the Lord.

Hezekiah The Singer Isa. 38:9-22 The prophet Isaiah recorded the psalm Hezekiah wrote after he had been healed and given fifteen more years of life.

Hezekiah realized that his prayer brought deliverance and forgiveness.

Hezekiah knew that God had spared his life, so in his poem Hezekiah praises God.

Hezekiah promised to "walk humbly" for the rest of his life. Hezekiah dedicated himself to praising the Lord and telling the next generation what the Lord had done for him.

Hezekiah recognized the good that came from his bitter experience. The next time you have difficult struggles, pray for God's help to gain something beneficial from them.

We have seen King Hezekiah as an effective reformer who cleansed and consecrated the temple and restored the priestly ministry. But Hezekiah the negotiator capitulated to Assyria and paid tribute to avoid war. Then God sent a severe illness to Hezekiah to humble him, and he cried out to God for mercy. His near fatal illness did humble him, but the visit of the Babylonian envoys made it clear: The old sin of pride was still very much alive.

Hezekiah the Boaster: II Kings 20:12-19 II Chron. 32:27-31 Isa. 39

II Chron. 32:27-31 Hezekiah had very great riches and honor. And he made himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for shields, and for all kinds of desirable items; ²⁸ storehouses for the harvest of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of livestock, and folds for flocks. ²⁹ Moreover he provided cities for himself, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him very much property.

³⁰ This same Hezekiah also stopped the water outlet of Upper Gihon and brought the water by tunnel to the west side of the City of David. Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

However, regarding the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, whom they sent to him to inquire about the wonder that was done in the land, God withdrew from him,

- in order to test him, that He might know all that was in his heart.

Scripture pictures the Devil as a serpent and as a lion. [Gen. 3:1ff; II Cor. 11:1-4; I Pet. 5:8-9]

- He usually comes first as a serpent to deceive us.
- If that doesn't work, he will be back as the lion to devour us.

Merodah Baladan, the King of Babylon, an astrologer, had to his great astonishment observed that God had halted the course of the sun for the sake of Hezekiah. He sent a delegation from Babylon, bearing expensive gifts and personal letters, to Hezekiah to congratulate him on his recovery and to express his admiration for the miracle God had wrought on his behalf.

The Babylonian ambassadors came to Jerusalem [the same year as his recovery from his near fatal illness] with a two-fold purpose:

1. To learn how wealthy and strong Judah was
2. Influence Hezekiah to unite with Babylon in opposing Assyria.

At that time, Assyria was the strongest empire. Why should he worry about Babylon?

Because he didn't fully grasp their true purpose, Hezekiah assumed that it was a great honor to be visited by officials from the king of Babylon.

He does not realize that Babylon will soon be the strongest empire and will invade Judah, destroy Jerusalem, the temple and take the nation into captivity.

Babylon's ambassadors are the serpent to deceive. They will return as the lion to devour.

- They entice him with false praise and his flesh willingly responds.

II Kings 20:13 And Hezekiah was attentive to them and showed them all the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

Instead of using the occasion to sanctify God's name, Hezekiah boasted of his riches.

All that Hezekiah possessed came from the hand of God and belonged to God, so why should Hezekiah boast about it? He may have made a good impression on the envoys, but he grieved the Lord and endangered the kingdom and the city.

What does pride do to man?

- Puffs them up to a position they didn't earn
- Exalt themselves and not God
- Forget they have nothing without God
- Bring destruction on themselves
- Defiles a man before God

True boasting in the Lord is boasting of God's great attributes, boasting of what He has done for us, of what He is still doing and of what He has promised to do.

Jer. 9:23-24 "Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight,' declares the LORD."

When Isaiah heard, he went to King Hezekiah and rebuked him for his foolish pride that now endangered Jerusalem and God's people. The prophet made a terrible, but accurate prediction: Isaiah's prophecy II Kings 20:14-18; Isaiah 39:3-8

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?

The king should have been horrified by the prophecy, but his response showed another fault. Hezekiah only was concerned about peace and safety during his own lifetime.

II Chron. 32:24-26 In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill; and he prayed to the LORD, and the LORD spoke to him and gave him a sign. But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received, because his heart was proud; therefore, wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. However, Hezekiah humbled the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come on them in the days of Hezekiah.

This is an amazing prophecy by Isaiah. Babylon was struggling for independence under Assyria. Hezekiah's self-satisfied display of his earthly wealth brought its own consequences.

Though Hezekiah had led the nation in reform and revival, his indifference for the future had terrible consequences. After King Hezekiah's illness, he fathered the heir to his throne, Manasseh who would be ruthlessly evil and undo much of his father's reforms.

He brought immorality back to Judah, promoted the worship of pagan gods.

Jewish tradition says he may have murdered Hezekiah's long-time friend, the prophet Isaiah.

A century after Hezekiah's death, Babylon will destroy Jerusalem and the temple, some of Hezekiah's descendants will go into captivity, and his wealth will be carried off to Babylon.

Pride is one of Satan's chief weapons in his battle against the Lord and His people.

Pride makes us rob God of the glory that belongs to Him alone.

Pride gives us a feeling of false security which leads us into sin and defeat.

Spurgeon "Be not proud of race, face, place, or grace."

Barclay "Pride is the ground in which all the other sins grow, and the parent from which all the other sins come."

Hezekiah made a bad return to God for His favors, by making those favors the food and fuel of his pride. We must never use God's blessings to impress others.

A testimony of victory can quickly degenerate into vanity and self-congratulations.