

## Sunday Morning Message

May 7, 2017

### *Forsaking Future Generations*

Text – Isaiah 39:1 - 8

Congregational Reading – 39:5 - 8

### Review Theme Verses

*"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart**; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."* (Ephesians 6:5-8)

Our theme for 2017 is "Doing the Will of God from the Heart".

This year our focus as a church will be on finding out what God wants us to do, and then doing it from the heart. From the heart means that I will do it with the right motivation – a heart of love for the Lord and for people; and it also means that I will do it with zeal and energy.

### Read vs. 1 – 8

Notice this very sad statement by Hezekiah in verse 8, after he learns that everything that the former generations had worked for would be taken away; after he learned that his children, or really his great-grandchildren, will be taken captive by the Babylonians and will actually be made into eunuchs, meaning they would be castrated.

*"Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days."* (Isaiah 39:8)

Hezekiah basically stated that as long as things were good for him, he really didn't care what happened to his kids and to this grand-kids.

Hezekiah's actions of entertaining these dignitaries from Babylon had a negative effect on future generations, and Hezekiah did not care.

### **Hezekiah was "Forsaking Future Generations"**

#### Introduction

The Book of Isaiah is one of the Major Prophets and much of the information that is contained in this Book is prophetic in nature, revealing either the future for Israel and Judah in its immediate historical context; or, by revealing what will take place in the end times.

There is a unique section in Isaiah, however, that is different from the rest of the Book in its style of writing and in its content. This small section of four chapters begins in Isaiah 36 and ends in our text passage, in chapter 39. This historical interlude in Isaiah is almost identical to information contained in 2 Kings 18 – 20 and 2 Chronicles 29 – 32.

Overall, Hezekiah was a great king who reigned over the southern kingdom of Judah in the City of Jerusalem during very difficult days.

He became king when he was 25, and he was only in office 4 years when the mighty Assyrian army completely conquered the northern kingdom, Israel, which was just a short distance away.

He did a lot of awesome things for the people of God:

He repaired the House of God, which was being neglected for many years because the nation had been long in spiritual decline.

He put the priests back to work again, because they were forced to go out into the fields and farm because the people were no longer tithing.

He re-instituted the Passover, which the kingdom had ceased to observe; and, he even invited those Jews who remained in the Northern Kingdom to join them.

He removed the “high places” and cut down “the groves” and broke into pieces “the images” (statues or idols) of false gods that the people had been worshipping. He even broke in pieces the brazen serpent that was made way back in the time of Moses because it had become an idol.

Note – when people stop worshipping God, they will find something else to worship. In Hezekiah’s day, it was the idolatry of worshipping other gods besides Jehovah. In our day people sometimes worship their possessions, or their power, or their pleasures. Some people worship their children, others their careers; but, when people get away from God, they always put something in His place. Is it God who you worship? Or, is it something or somebody else?

Hezekiah was a great king. The Bible says that he “clave to the Lord” and that he “wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God with all of his heart.”

It was Hezekiah who put his faith in God and lead the nation to do the same when the Assyrian’s came down with a great army to destroy them. When he received a threatening letter promising Jerusalem’s destruction, he “spread it before the Lord.”

When the people were afraid, he encouraged them:

*"Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh;*

*but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah." (2 Chronicles 32:7-8)*

Note – when you are facing your trials in life, the best and first thing that you should do is to spread them before the Lord as Hezekiah did.

God used Hezekiah in a great way, and God spared the City of Jerusalem, and actually destroyed 185,000 Assyrians that were encamped around it.

How did Hezekiah, a great king, get to the place where he just doesn't care about what happens to his children and grand-children?

Read Chapter 38:1 – 8

God told Hezekiah that it was time for him to die, but Hezekiah begs God for more time, which God gives him – 15 more years. But, three things happen in those 15 years, which lead me to believe that Hezekiah might have been better off dying when he got sick here in chapter 38:

1 His heart became lifted up with pride during these added 15 years:

*"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. 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)*

Now to be fair, the Bible also states in v. 36 that Hezekiah later humbles himself before God, but the damage caused by his pride before he repented would cause problems for his children.

*"Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah." (2 Chronicles 32:26)*

2 During these last fifteen years, Hezekiah had a son who would be the worst king, the most wicked king that Judah ever had.

3 During these last fifteen years, he accepted the "get-well card" from the king of Babylon, and also gave the ambassadors from Babylon a tour of the kingdom.

Note – the letter of flattery from Babylon caused more damage to Hezekiah than the letter promising destruction from Assyria. He should have spread the letter from Babylon before the Lord as well.

It seems that in Hezekiah's added fifteen years he became a little prideful, a little full of himself. He had the same "I" problem that Satan had, and that you and I do. His life became very self-centered instead of God-centered and "others-centered", and, as a result, future generations were placed on the altar of sacrifice.

## Transition

But, don't we do the same thing today.

Don't we make decisions today, and take action today that will either help or harm our children and grand-children?

People today forsake future generations:

### 1 By Not Taking Time to Teach Them

*"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."*

(Proverbs 22:6)

Your children and your grand-children need to learn about life, but they most importantly need to learn about God.

Parents, it's your responsibility – your privilege – to teach your children the Bible.

*"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)*

Kids need to learn – they need to learn math, science, history, and English, but the most important subject they need to learn is the Subject of God. Parents, grand-parents, don't forsake your children and future generations by not teaching them.

Make sure they go to church – go with them.

By the way, it's also your responsibility to protect them from learning the wrong things:

*"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)*

### 2 By Not Developing Our Children Through Loving Discipline

We must lovingly, appropriately, and consistently correct our children when they do wrong.

*"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."*

(Proverbs 13:24)

*"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."  
(Proverbs 22:15)*

*"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.  
Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." (Proverbs 23:13-14)*

Someone once said that you need to apply the board of education on the seat of understanding. We are not talking about abuse, but we are talking about corporal punishment applied by a loving parent consistently. It's in the Bible.

We are not our child's buddy. Our flesh wants to give in to their every wish, and give them everything that they want.

But, what they really need is you: they need your time, your attention, your teaching, and your touch of correction.

### **3 By Not Exhibiting the Right Example**

Children will often be who we are rather than what we want them to be.

Paul told his "son in the faith", Timothy:

*"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Timothy 4:12)*

Parents, if they are going to learn it, you are going to have to live it.

### **4 By Our Pursuit of Pleasure**

Parents, your most important priority today is your children. Don't pursue your pleasures at the expense of time with your children.

If you are going to be the parent that God wants you to be. If you are going to raise children and ultimately grand-children that will love the Lord and be good citizens then you will have to be willing to sacrifice some time that you would like to spend doing what you want to do, and perhaps some money that you could be enjoying yourself.

Illustrate - I've seen dads who worked two and three jobs in order to be able to afford a good Christian school for their children.

Illustrate – Mariea B works third shift, and then spends all day here at the school with her children and your children. Why? Because she wants to invest in her kids.

Too many people today, put their children on the back-burner because they are too busy seeking pleasure for themselves.

They are forsaking future generations.

## Conclusion

Parent, it is not all about you. It is about the Lord, and about what He wants you to do in the rearing of His children. Remember, your children belong to God. You are raising them for Him.

Illustrate – Billy Sunday was so consumed with preaching the gospel to multitudes that he was never home to train his own children. Making matters worse was the fact that his wife, Nell went to work with Billy as his administrator, leaving his children home for long periods of time with a nanny.

According to Bereanwife.net

Helen Edith Sunday Haines, born in 1890, was the only child that was really raised by Nell Sunday. She died of disease and Pneumonia in 1932.

George Marquis Sunday was born in 1892, William Ashley Sunday, Jr. in 1901, and Paul Thompson Sunday in 1907. These three sons were the source of untold grief and despair for their parents. They were drunkards, while their parents fought for Prohibition. They lived wild, riotous lives and embarrassed their parents. All three died before the age of 40 in tragic violent deaths. The oldest son committed suicide after being arrested for drunkenness and auto theft, one died while driving home drunk from a party, and the other crashed an airplane.

That isn't all, the three sons had a total of nine marriages between them. Nell Sunday was blackmailed and forced to pay large sums of money to the ex-wives in order to keep them silent about their son's infidelities.

Billy Sunday led hundreds of thousands of people to Christ, but perhaps, he could have spent a little more time and attention to his own children.

He was great Christian, but, like Hezekiah, he forsook future generations.

How about you:

Are taking time to teach your children?

Are you developing them through loving and consistent discipline?

Are you being the right example to them?

Are you living your life in pursuit of the will of God and your children's welfare; or, are you pursuing your own pleasure?

Be careful. If God has blessed you with children or grand-children, make it your number-one priority to raise them for the Lord.

*"ye fathers, ... bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* (Ephesians 6:4)