

# *Choices: Hezekiah*

## His choice

Wow this is an interesting story. I had heard good things about Hezekiah but if you read 2 Kings 18-20 and 2 Chronicles 29-32 it becomes more clear the choices he had to make. This man is sandwiched in-between two very bad Kings of Judah. His Father Ahaz was a very bad king. He made terrible choices and allowed the worship of anything but God. Hezekiah's Son Manasseh was even worse. Somehow King Hezekiah found favor with God. In many ways it was his choices that God liked.

Once Hezekiah became King he was saddled with a very corrupt kingdom. What he saw as a child observer was the worship of many idols and Gods. What he also saw was the destruction of Israel and its territories. I suppose he could see the writing on the wall. The Assyrians were coming. Some well meaning advisors might have told him that they were safe but he saw the peril they were in. You see Hezekiah believed that the reason Israel was falling was because of their false worship. Where was God? God was nowhere to be found in either kingdom. If Israel was falling, then they were next because I bet from his youth Hezekiah had heard the stories of Gods wrath towards following other Gods.

The choices were simple: fight, perish, or try God. Hezekiah chose to try God. I am stunned really because there was nothing in his upbringing that suggested he was raised to love God. How could he follow, honor, and trust a Lord that was missing in the Kingdom. This king made good choices from the beginning. As with many of these kings it did not last long. God still loved and used Hezekiah to protect his people, but the choices he made must have impressed the Lord.

What does this mean for us? We can see that the Islamic religion has and does very bad things. We, as good people, are trying to find a way to live with terrorism. We are like Hezekiah's father and the nation of Israel. They chose to incorporate anything but God to save face. Pride is the undoing of this story. Is our story about protecting us from evil or saving face? What are we willing to sacrifice in order to keep the peace? What is your choice today and for whom do you make them?

## Our choice

Hezekiah chose to be different than his family and Jewish community. I wonder if Jewish children went to a form of Sunday school or he had a believing mother. Somewhere along the way this boy learned about God. He was different than most of his society. Maybe he just saw the unfolding circumstances around him. Assyria was closing in. In any case He made some very good choices that proved to benefit himself and his nation.

Our choices can be similar. We are presented with situations that put us in harms way. Sometimes it's just wanting to change things up. Life for the nation Judah was fine but darkness loomed over their sister nation of Israel. Hezekiah could see the trees through the forest. He had to come closer to God because he felt it would help. Usually we treat God the same way. When times are tough we seek help. God is most thought of in times of trouble. Interestingly enough Hezekiah sought God before things went south.

I find that this king was always ahead of disaster. When the Assyrians came to his walls he was prepared. I suppose there were reports or rumors of how the Assyrians took a city. Hezekiah told his people to not reply to their accusations or threats. They were to wait on the Lord. I find that the good choices leaders make filter down to the people following him or her.

We would be better served waiting on God. I have said before that letting God play out the circumstances is better than over reacting. Certainly we can learn from this king because he remained calm as calamity came.

One other worthy note is who Hezekiah listened to. Some others close to him wanted him to flee or fight. This king chose to listen to the local man of God. Isaiah was prominent as the prophet of God in those days. Hezekiah sought him out for advice. That was a good move because this prophet was the best of the best. Hezekiah learned what God wanted as opposed to what his subjects wanted. These choices can be our choices. Who do you listen to? Do you tend to rush into decisions? Choices are always critical in our daily lives. What choices are before you today?

### Lesson learned

Hezekiah made many great choices, and so do we. I chose to marry someone and we ended up in divorce, yet great children came from it. People decide to chose a job that looks fun and it becomes a nightmare. We make choices and those choices become the lessons we learn. I struggle with right and wrong choices. Some look so good at first. I guess that's why I liked this little look at Hezekiah. He made good choices but in the end many of them were made with a prideful heart.

After reading the two accounts of Hezekiah in the Bible 2 Kings and 2 chronicles is see a pattern. Why the two accounts? Well Kings is historical top side view. Chronicles tends to zoom in and look a little closer. Together we see more clearly the choices he made. Our lives are like that to others. People see us by what we show them. They never get to see deep inside most of the time. I think many of us live pretty lonely lives. We just don't tend to share our deepest

feelings. I have met people who are a know it all. I have met others that are grumpy much of the time. What is really going on inside them? This look at Hezekiah shows us that God knows what we don't show.

This study has scared me because of a statement by God in 2 chronicles 32:25 **“But Hezekiah’s heart was proud and he did not respond to the kindness shown him.”** And 32:31 **“God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart.”** This king asked for extra life because of a sickness. In that time, he boasted to other nations about his blessings from God. Babylonia took those blessings and the kingdom several years later.

What we learn is that choices affect what happens. Ok, that is not rocket science, but maybe it needs to be said. One thing I learned in divorce is that it becomes a snowball. Those choices run over family, friends, and our hearts. The biggest surprise to me is how much time has passed yet the effects are still very much alive. When you make a choice maybe it would be wise to ask for an opinion from a godly person. Maybe taking a break from the choice will bring clarity before you take action. Hezekiah’s choices looked great but underneath they were not so great. What are your choices today?