

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 39 — Hezekiah's Pride and Babylon's Future

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 39 is short.

Only:

Eight verses.

Yet it represents one of the great turning points in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 37 showed Hezekiah facing:

Assyria.

He prayed.

God delivered.

Isaiah 38 showed Hezekiah facing:

Death.

He prayed.

God healed.

Now Isaiah 39 presents a different kind of test.

Not:

Military crisis.

Not:

Sickness.

But:

Success.

Attention.

Flattery.

Pride.

And this test proves spiritually dangerous.

The chapter begins with:

Babylon.

At this point Assyria remains the dominant imperial threat.

Yet Isaiah suddenly directs attention toward a power that will become enormously important later:

Babylon.

Merodach-Baladan sends:

Letters.

A gift.

Representatives.

Officially, the occasion is Hezekiah's recovery from:

Illness.

But the visit also has obvious political significance.

Hezekiah is:

Flattered.

Honored.

Interested.

He gladly receives the Babylonian envoys.

Then he shows them:

Silver.

Gold.

Spices.

Precious oil.

Armory.

Treasures.

Everything.

The parallel account in 2 Chronicles connects this episode with:

Hezekiah's pride.

That is the deeper problem.

The man who had said in Isaiah 38 that suffering taught him to:

Walk humbly.

Is now tempted after recovery to:

Display his greatness.

There is an important warning here.

A person may respond humbly during:

Crisis.

Then become proud during:

Success.

We sometimes think the greatest spiritual danger is:

Pain.

Isaiah 39 reminds us that prosperity can be:

Just as dangerous.

Perhaps more subtle.

In Isaiah 37, Hezekiah spread:

Sennacherib's letter.

Before:

The Lord.

In Isaiah 39, Hezekiah spreads:

His treasures.

Before:

Babylon.

What a contrast.

In one chapter:

He shows God the threat.

In another:

He shows Babylon the treasure.

Isaiah then arrives and asks:

What did these men say?

Where did they come from?

What did they see?

Hezekiah answers honestly:

They came from Babylon.

They saw:

Everything.

That word becomes ominous.

Everything they saw will one day be:

Carried there.

The treasure Hezekiah proudly displayed becomes the treasure Babylon will eventually:

Take.

Isaiah announces:

Future exile.

Royal descendants will be:

Taken.

The palace wealth will be:

Carried away.

Babylon, which presently arrives with:

Gifts.

Will one day return for:

Spoils.

This is one of the most sobering reversals in Scripture.

Today's:

Friendly visitor.

Can become tomorrow's:

Conqueror.

The chapter also closes with a difficult statement from Hezekiah:

“The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.”

That part can express proper submission to:

God's judgment.

But then we are told his thought:

“At least there will be peace and security in my days.”

This reveals a troubling:

Short-term perspective.

The disaster will happen:

Later.

Future generations will suffer.

Hezekiah experiences relief because:

His own lifetime remains peaceful.

The chapter therefore introduces the great theme that will dominate much of the next major section of Isaiah:

Babylon.

Exile.

Comfort.

Restoration.

The people who hear the message of Isaiah 40 and following chapters will need hope because the judgment announced in Isaiah 39 will eventually become:

Historical reality.

The central truth of Isaiah 39 is:

After experiencing miraculous deliverance and healing, Hezekiah became vulnerable to pride and displayed Judah's treasures before Babylon; God then revealed that the very nation admiring those treasures would one day carry them away, warning that prosperity can test faith as seriously as adversity and that our decisions must be considered not merely for present comfort but for their effect upon future generations.

I. BABYLON SENDS ENVOYS TO HEZEKIAH

Isaiah 39:1 — Letters and a Gift

“At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered.”

The chapter begins pleasantly.

Letters.

Gift.

Congratulations.

Friendship.

Nothing immediately appears:

Dangerous.

But spiritual tests do not always arrive looking like:

Enemies.

Sometimes they arrive carrying:

Gifts.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:12

The parallel account records the Babylonian king sending letters and a gift after hearing about Hezekiah's illness.

2 Chronicles 32:31

The Babylonian envoys came to inquire about the remarkable events associated with Hezekiah, and God allowed the encounter to test what was in his heart.

Genesis 10:10

Babylon has ancient roots within the biblical story and is associated from early Genesis with human civilization, power, and kingdom-building.

Spiritual Principle

Not every spiritual test looks like:

A crisis.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We often recognize danger when an enemy knocks.

We must also remain discerning when admiration knocks.

II. HEZEKIAH GLADLY DISPLAYS EVERYTHING

Isaiah 39:2 — The Treasure House Opened

“Hezekiah welcomed them gladly and showed them everything in his treasure house—the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his entire armory, and everything that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.”

Notice the repeated emphasis:

Everything.

His treasures.

His armory.

His kingdom.

Nothing hidden.

The issue was not merely:

Giving visitors a tour.

The broader biblical account exposes:

Pride.

Hezekiah wanted Babylon to see:

What he possessed.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:13

Hezekiah shows the Babylonian envoys his wealth, valuables, weapons, and everything contained in his stores.

2 Chronicles 32:25

After receiving great mercy, Hezekiah did not respond proportionately to the benefit shown him because his heart became proud.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, and arrogance prepares the way for a fall.

Spiritual Principle

Blessing can become dangerous when:

Gratitude becomes boasting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never turn what God gave you into evidence of how impressive you are.

III. THE MAN WHO WALKED HUMBLY IS TESTED BY PRIDE

In Isaiah 38, Hezekiah said:

“I will walk humbly all my years.”

Now:

Babylon arrives.

He proudly shows:

Everything.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday's humility does not eliminate:

Today's temptation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A great spiritual experience does not make us permanently immune to pride.

IV. ADVERSITY AND PROSPERITY TEST DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE HEART

Assyria tested:

Fear.

Illness tested:

Faith.

Babylon tests:

Pride.

Spiritual Principle

Hardship asks:

“Will you trust God?”

Prosperity asks:

“Will you remember God?”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some believers survive the battlefield and then stumble at the banquet.

V. ISAIAH QUESTIONS HEZEKIAH

Isaiah 39:3 — “Where Did They Come From?”

“Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, ‘What did these men say? Where did they come from?’ Hezekiah replied, ‘They came to me from a faraway country—from Babylon.’”

Isaiah’s questions expose:

The event.

Hezekiah emphasizes:

Faraway.

Perhaps Babylon seemed:

Too distant.

To represent immediate danger.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:14

Isaiah asks where the visitors came from, and Hezekiah identifies Babylon as their distant homeland.

Genesis 16:8

God's messenger questioned Hagar concerning where she came from and where she was going, demonstrating how questions can expose circumstances and direction.

1 Samuel 15:14

Samuel's question to Saul about the sound of animals exposes the inconsistency between Saul's claim and his actual behavior.

Spiritual Principle

A searching question can reveal:

What pride overlooked.

VI. DISTANCE CAN CREATE FALSE SECURITY

Hezekiah says:

"A faraway country."

Babylon feels:

Distant.

But distance today does not mean:

Safety tomorrow.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never assume something is harmless merely because its consequences seem far away.

VII. “WHAT DID THEY SEE?”

Isaiah 39:4 — The Question That Exposes Everything

“Isaiah asked, ‘What did they see in your palace?’ Hezekiah answered, ‘They saw everything in my house. There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.’”

Isaiah asks:

What did they see?

Hezekiah says:

Everything.

That answer prepares for:

Judgment.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:15

Hezekiah admits that the Babylonian visitors saw all his treasures.

Joshua 7:20

Achan eventually confesses openly what he had done after his hidden sin was exposed.

Proverbs 25:9

Wisdom cautions against careless disclosure of matters that should be handled discreetly.

Spiritual Principle

Wisdom knows there are things that do not need to be:

Displayed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Transparency is a virtue.

Showmanship is not.

VIII. WHAT DO PEOPLE SEE WHEN THEY VISIT OUR LIVES?

Babylon saw:

Gold.

Silver.

Weapons.

Treasures.

But the chapter does not say Hezekiah showed them:

The house of God.

The Word of God.

The greatness of God.

The testimony of his healing.

This absence is spiritually striking.

Spiritual Principle

Hezekiah had a miraculous testimony.

Yet he displayed:

Possessions.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God has done something great in your life, make sure people leave impressed with God—not merely with your stuff.

IX. ISAIAH SAYS, “HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD”

Isaiah 39:5 — God Interprets the Event

“Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, ‘Hear the word of the Lord of hosts:’”

Hezekiah has shown:

His treasures.

Now God reveals:

Their future.

Human perception sees:

Wealth.

God's Word sees:

Coming exile.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:16

Isaiah calls Hezekiah to hear the Lord's word concerning the consequences ahead.

Amos 3:1

The prophet summons God's people to hear the divine word spoken concerning them.

Jeremiah 2:4

Jeremiah likewise calls the house of Jacob to hear the Word of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

We need God's Word to interpret:

What our eyes cannot foresee.

X. BABYLON WILL TAKE EVERYTHING

Isaiah 39:6 — The Treasure House Emptied

“The time is coming when everything in your house, and everything your ancestors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord.”

The repeated word from verse 2 returns:

Everything.

He showed:

Everything.

Babylon will take:

Everything.

The display becomes:

A prophecy of loss.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:17

Isaiah predicts that Judah's accumulated royal treasures will eventually be taken to Babylon.

2 Kings 24:13

The later Babylonian conquest fulfills the warning as treasures from the Lord's temple and royal palace are carried away.

Jeremiah 20:5

Jeremiah later predicts that Judah's wealth, treasures, and valuables will be given into the hands of Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly wealth is:

Transferable.

Temporary.

Vulnerable.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If your treasure can be carried away by another kingdom, it was never secure enough to become the treasure of your heart.

XI. THE TREASURE HE SHOWED BECOMES TREASURE BABYLON TAKES

This is one of the chapter's most sobering ironies.

Hezekiah says:

Look what we have.

God says:

One day Babylon will say:

Look what we took.

Spiritual Principle

Pride enjoys:

Displaying.

Judgment exposes:

Fragility.

XII. BABYLON REPLACES ASSYRIA AS THE COMING THREAT

Assyria dominated:

Hezekiah's present.

Babylon will dominate:

Judah's future.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not become so focused upon yesterday's enemy that you stop watching tomorrow's spiritual danger.

XIII. HEZEKIAH'S DESCENDANTS WILL BE TAKEN AWAY

Isaiah 39:7 — Future Generations Pay a Price

“And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, will be taken away. They will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

Now the judgment becomes:

Personal.

Not merely:

Gold.

Not merely:

Weapons.

Not merely:

Buildings.

Descendants.

Future generations.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:18

Isaiah tells Hezekiah that some of his descendants will be carried away and serve in the Babylonian royal court.

Daniel 1:3

After Babylon conquers Jerusalem, members of Israel's royal family and nobility are taken into the Babylonian system.

2 Kings 24:12

Judah's king, officials, and leading people are eventually taken captive by Babylon.

Spiritual Principle

Decisions can cast:

Long shadows.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom asks not only:

“What will this do to me?”

But:

“What could this leave for those who come after me?”

XIV. GENERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Our choices are:

Personal.

But rarely:

Only personal.

Character can influence:

Children.

Churches.

Families.

Institutions.

Future generations.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness today can become:

Protection tomorrow.

Carelessness today can become:

Burden tomorrow.

XV. GOD’S WARNING LOOKS BEYOND ONE GENERATION

Hezekiah is focused on:

His lifetime.

God is looking toward:

Future sons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s perspective is longer than ours.

XVI. HEZEKIAH ACCEPTS THE WORD

Isaiah 39:8 — “The Word of the Lord Is Good”

**“Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, ‘The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good.’
For he thought, ‘At least there will be peace and security in my days.’”**

There are two aspects to this response.

First:

He accepts God’s Word.

He does not:

Argue.

Reject.

Attack Isaiah.

That reflects submission.

But the explanation of his thought is troubling:

“At least there will be peace and security in my days.”

His attention turns toward:

Personal short-term peace.

Even though future generations will experience:

Exile.

Cross References

2 Kings 20:19

The parallel account records Hezekiah accepting God’s word while noting that peace and security will remain during his own lifetime.

1 Samuel 3:18

Eli accepts a difficult divine word, acknowledging the Lord’s right to do what seems good to Him.

Job 2:10

Job recognizes that human beings must receive both pleasant and difficult providences without accusing God of wrongdoing.

Spiritual Principle

Submission to God’s Word is good.

Indifference toward future consequences is not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let “peace in my days” become an excuse for leaving trouble to the next generation.

XVII. THE DANGER OF SHORT-TERM THINKING

Hezekiah thinks:

At least:

My days.

But biblical faith should also ask:

What about:

Their days?

Spiritual Principle

Self-centered thinking measures consequences by:

Personal lifetime.

Faithful stewardship thinks:

Generationally.

XVIII. “AT LEAST”

Those words reveal:

Relief.

But also possibly:

Narrowness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Be careful with any peace that satisfies you simply because someone else will pay the price later.

XIX. ISAIAH 38 AND ISAIAH 39 FORM A POWERFUL CONTRAST

Isaiah 38

Hezekiah:

Weeps.

Prays.

Walks humbly.

Celebrates forgiveness.

Promises praise.

Isaiah 39

Hezekiah:

Receives admiration.

Shows treasures.

Is confronted over pride.

Key Truth

A person can emerge from suffering spiritually humbled and still later be tempted by success.

XX. ISAIAH 37 AND ISAIAH 39 FORM ANOTHER CONTRAST

Isaiah 37

A foreign king sends:

A threatening letter.

Hezekiah takes it:

To God.

Isaiah 39

A foreign king sends:

A friendly letter.

Hezekiah welcomes:

The envoys.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The friendly letter may require as much prayer as the threatening letter.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT PRIDE

Pride does not always say:

“I am greater than God.”

Sometimes pride simply says:

“Look what I have.”

Spiritual Principle

Boasting can be:

Quiet.

Socially acceptable.

Politely disguised.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT SUCCESS

Hezekiah had:

Survived Assyria.

Recovered from sickness.

Received additional years.

Now:

Success tests him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Answered prayer can become a new spiritual test if blessing turns our attention from the Giver toward the gift.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT FLATTERY

Hezekiah is honored by:

An international delegation.

That can feel:

Important.

Spiritual Principle

Admiration can lower:

Defenses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Beware of showing people more than wisdom permits merely because their interest feels flattering.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT TREASURE

Silver.

Gold.

Oil.

Weapons.

Stored wealth.

All eventually:

Carried away.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly treasure has:

No permanent address.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT SECURITY

The palace looked:

Secure.

The treasures looked:

Protected.

Babylon looked:

Far away.

But:

Everything changed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Security built on distance, wealth, or political conditions is temporary.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT GENERATIONAL THINKING

God speaks beyond:

Hezekiah's lifetime.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical stewardship asks:

What am I preparing for people I may never live long enough to see?

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT PROPHECY

The Babylonian exile has not yet happened.

God announces it:

In advance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Prophecy proves that God sees history farther down the road than human leaders do.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT CONSEQUENCES

The chapter should not be simplified to mean Hezekiah's single display alone mechanically caused the entire Babylonian exile.

The broader biblical story connects Judah's exile with:

Long-standing covenant rebellion.

Idolatry.

Injustice.

Persistent sin.

But Hezekiah's pride becomes:

A revealing sign.

And Isaiah uses the Babylonian visit to announce:

The future judgment.

Spiritual Principle

One episode can expose a heart and become part of a much larger divine warning.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S PATIENCE

Judgment is announced:

Long before it arrives.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A warning about future judgment is itself an act of mercy because God speaks before consequences arrive.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 39 TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Hezekiah's behavior does not remain:

Private.

Royal decisions have:

National implications.

Spiritual Principle

The greater the influence, the wider the potential consequences of:

Character.

XXXI. THE ENVOYS CAME WITH A GIFT

Gifts can create:

Warmth.

Obligation.

Trust.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never let a gift purchase access that wisdom would otherwise deny.

XXXII. BABYLON WANTED TO SEE

And Hezekiah wanted:

To show.

That combination became:

Dangerous.

Spiritual Principle

Pride finds satisfaction when curiosity meets self-display.

XXXIII. “THERE WAS NOTHING HE DID NOT SHOW THEM”

No restraint.

No boundaries.

No discretion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom knows that having nothing to hide does not mean having everything to display.

XXXIV. THE ARMORY

Hezekiah even shows:

Military resources.

The visitors receive a picture of:

Judah’s defenses.

Spiritual Principle

Pride can cause people to reveal:

What prudence would protect.

XXXV. WHAT DID THESE MEN SAY?

Isaiah begins with:

Words.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before being impressed by attention, ask what purpose may be behind it.

XXXVI. WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?

Origin matters.

Babylon is:

Far away.

But not:

Spiritually irrelevant.

Spiritual Principle

Something distant can still shape:

The future.

XXXVII. WHAT DID THEY SEE?

Perhaps the most important question.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people encounter your life, what do they see first:

God's grace?

Or:

Your achievements?

XXXVIII. THEY SAW EVERYTHING

Hezekiah confesses:

Fully.

Spiritual Principle

Honest admission is better than:

Defensive denial.

XXXIX. HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD

The flattering visit must now be interpreted by:

Revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never judge an event only by how it feels.

Ask what God's Word says about the heart behind it.

XL. EVERYTHING WILL BE CARRIED OFF

Everything displayed becomes:

Everything removed.

Spiritual Principle

Possessions cannot carry us.

Someone else may one day carry:

Them.

XLI. NOTHING WILL BE LEFT

This destroys the illusion of:

Permanent wealth.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not attach eternal identity to something God says can disappear.

XLII. THE SONS WILL BE TAKEN

The consequences become:

Generational.

Spiritual Principle

The cost of poor stewardship may become visible:

Later.

XLIII. DANIEL AND BABYLON

Isaiah's prophecy creates background for the later story of:

Daniel.

Young men from Judah's royal and noble families will live in:

Babylon.

Even within judgment, however, God will later preserve:

Faithful witnesses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's people may experience the consequences of national judgment without God abandoning His purpose for them.

XLIV. PEACE IN MY DAYS

This is one of the chapter's most uncomfortable statements.

Spiritual Principle

Personal peace is not the highest good if:

Future generations inherit ruin.

XLV. TRUE GENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Faithful leadership asks:

What kind of:

Church.

Family.

Nation.

Ministry.

Legacy.

Am I leaving behind?

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A good leader does not merely finish well personally.

He prepares others to continue faithfully after he is gone.

XLVI. THE DANGER AFTER DELIVERANCE

Sometimes we pray intensely:

During the crisis.

Then relax spiritually:

Afterward.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance should increase vigilance:

Not reduce it.

XLVII. THE DANGER AFTER HEALING

Hezekiah had just received:

Fifteen years.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

More time is not automatically better unless we use that time faithfully.

XLVIII. MIRACLES DO NOT REMOVE HUMAN WEAKNESS

Hezekiah had seen:

Assyrian deliverance.

Healing.

A miraculous sign.

Still:

Pride appears.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual experiences do not replace the need for:

Daily humility.

XLIX. PRIDE AFTER PRAYER

One of the saddest possibilities:

A person can sincerely pray in one chapter and proudly display himself in the next.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Yesterday's prayer life cannot substitute for today's humility.

L. THE TREASURE AND THE TESTIMONY

Hezekiah possessed:

Both.

Treasure.

Testimony.

What did Babylon see?

Treasure.

Spiritual Principle

The greatest thing about your life should never be:

What you own.

But:

What God has done.

LI. SHOW THEM THE GOD WHO HEALED YOU

Babylon came because Hezekiah had:

Recovered.

Imagine the opportunity.

He could testify:

I nearly died.

I prayed.

God heard.

God added years.

God gave a sign.

Instead the text emphasizes:

Treasures.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let an opportunity to display God become an opportunity to display yourself.

LII. PROSPERITY AND MEMORY

Pride often grows when people forget:

Where blessing came from.

Spiritual Principle

Gratitude is one of the strongest protections against:

Pride.

LIII. PRIDE AND SECRECY

This chapter is not teaching:

Paranoia.

It teaches:

Discretion.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Wisdom can be hospitable without being careless.

LIV. EARTHLY TREASURE IS TEMPORARY

Gold can:

Change owners.

Silver can:

Cross borders.

Weapons can:

Be captured.

Spiritual Principle

Store deepest treasure where:

Conquerors cannot carry it away.

LV. BABYLON'S FUTURE

At this moment:

Babylon is a visitor.

Later:

Babylon becomes conqueror.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Today's alliance should never be trusted more deeply than tomorrow's God.

LVI. THE FUTURE EXILE

Isaiah 39 prepares us for:

Isaiah 40.

Judgment is now announced.

Soon the prophetic message will increasingly address people who need:

Comfort.

Hope.

Restoration.

Spiritual Principle

God announces exile.

But exile will not be:

The end of the book.

LVII. ISAIAH'S BOOK TURNS A CORNER

Isaiah 1–39 heavily emphasizes:

Judgment.

Assyria.

Warning.

Trust.

Chapters following Isaiah 39 increasingly emphasize:

Comfort.

Babylon.

Return.

Servant.

Redemption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The announcement of coming judgment prepares the stage for an even greater revelation of God's redeeming grace.

LVIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 39

1. Pride Can Follow Great Deliverance

Principle:

Past spiritual victories do not eliminate present spiritual danger.

2. Prosperity Can Test Us as Severely as Adversity

Principle:

We must seek God when praised as faithfully as when threatened.

3. Earthly Treasure Is Temporary

Principle:

What can be carried away should never carry the weight of our identity.

4. Discretion Is Wisdom

Principle:

Not everything we possess needs to be displayed.

5. Testimony Is Greater Than Treasure

Principle:

Point people toward the God who blessed you rather than merely toward the blessings.

6. Choices Have Generational Consequences

Principle:

Faithful stewardship considers those who will live after us.

7. God's Word Sees Farther Than Human Eyes

Principle:

Babylon looked like a distant visitor; God saw the future exile.

8. Present Peace Must Not Produce Future Neglect

Principle:

“Peace in my days” is too small a vision for generational faithfulness.

LIX. NINE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 39

- 1. Assyria's Threat → Babylon's Flattery**
- 2. Prayer Under Pressure → Pride Under Prosperity**
- 3. God's Glory → Hezekiah's Treasures**
- 4. Humility → Self-Display**
- 5. Babylonian Gift → Babylonian Plunder**
- 6. Treasure House Full → Treasure House Empty**
- 7. Present Peace → Future Exile**
- 8. Hezekiah's Lifetime → Future Generations**
- 9. Short-Term Security → Long-Term Consequences**

Key Truth

Hezekiah resisted the intimidation of Assyria but became vulnerable to the admiration of Babylon, showing that the heart must remain dependent upon God in both adversity and prosperity.

LX. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who sent representatives to Hezekiah?

Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon.

Question 2

Why did they come?

They had heard about Hezekiah's sickness and recovery.

Question 3

How did Hezekiah receive them?

Gladly.

Question 4

What did Hezekiah show them?

His silver, gold, spices, oil, armory, treasures, palace resources, and virtually everything in his kingdom.

Question 5

What spiritual issue does the parallel biblical account connect with this episode?

Hezekiah's pride.

Question 6

What had Hezekiah said in the previous chapter about his future walk?

That he would walk humbly because of his suffering.

Question 7

What does this teach us?

A previous commitment to humility must be renewed continually.

Question 8

Who came to confront Hezekiah?

Isaiah.

Question 9

Where had the envoys come from?

Babylon.

Question 10

How did Hezekiah describe Babylon geographically?

As a faraway country.

Question 11

What did Isaiah ask about the palace?

“What did they see?”

Question 12

What was Hezekiah’s answer?

They saw everything.

Question 13

What judgment did Isaiah announce?

All the royal treasures would eventually be carried to Babylon.

Question 14

Would only material treasures be taken?

No.

Some of Hezekiah’s descendants would also be taken.

Question 15

Where would they serve?

In the palace of the king of Babylon.

Question 16

What later biblical book demonstrates Judean royal and noble youths living under Babylonian rule?

Daniel.

Question 17

How did Hezekiah respond to Isaiah’s message?

He said the Word of the Lord was good.

Question 18

What did Hezekiah think about the timing?

He was relieved that peace and security would continue during his own days.

Question 19

Why is that response troubling?

Because the announced suffering would affect future generations.

Question 20

What major lesson does the chapter teach?

Spiritual vigilance is necessary after success and blessing because pride can become as dangerous as fear.

LXI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 39 asks several searching questions.

How Do I Respond to Compliments?

Do they produce:

Gratitude?

Or:

Pride?

What Do I Want People to See?

My:

Achievements?

Possessions?

Books?

Ministry?

Success?

Or:

God's faithfulness?

Am I More Prayerful When Threatened Than When Admired?

Have I Survived a Crisis Only to Become Spiritually Careless afterward?

Am I Displaying Something Wisdom Says I should protect?

Do I understand that earthly treasure is:

Temporary?

What am I storing that cannot be carried away?

Am I thinking only about:

My days?

Or also:

The next generation?

What spiritual legacy am I leaving:

Children?

Grandchildren?

Church?

Ministry?

Community?

Am I willing to sacrifice future faithfulness for:

Present peace?

When God blesses me, do people hear more about:

The blessing?

Or:

The God who blessed?

LXII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Friendly Visitor Can Test Your Heart More Than the Hostile Army”

Hezekiah handled:

Threat.

Through prayer.

But admiration exposed:

Pride.

Principle:

Do not assume you are safest spiritually when circumstances become easier.

LXIII. THE LETTERS OF ISAIAH 37 AND 39

Isaiah 37:

Assyria sends:

A threatening message.

Hezekiah takes it to:

God.

Isaiah 39:

Babylon sends:

A friendly message.

Hezekiah welcomes it:

Gladly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We often pray harder over threatening letters than flattering ones, even though both can test the heart.

LXIV. THE GIFT FROM BABYLON

A gift appears:

Harmless.

Spiritual Principle

Discernment is necessary even when the circumstances feel:

Positive.

LXV. HEZEKIAH'S TREASURE TOUR

He wants them to know:

What Judah possesses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride turns stewardship into exhibition.

LXVI. SILVER AND GOLD

Precious.

Valuable.

Temporary.

Spiritual Principle

What shines brightly can still:

Disappear.

LXVII. THE ARMORY

Hezekiah displays:

Strength.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes boasting exposes the very vulnerabilities we are trying to make impressive.

LXVIII. NOTHING HIDDEN

Everything shown.

Spiritual Principle

Discernment understands the difference between:

Honesty.

And:

Indiscretion.

LXIX. ISAIAH'S QUESTIONS

Questions uncover:

Motives.

Events.

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A spiritually mature question can reveal more than a long accusation.

LXX. THE FARAWAY COUNTRY

Babylon seemed:

Remote.

Spiritual Principle

Future danger often looks harmless because it has not arrived yet.

LXXI. THE WORD THAT REFRAMES THE VISIT

What Hezekiah viewed as:

Honor.

God's Word reveals as a moment connected with:

Future judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Ask Scripture to interpret success before success interprets itself.

LXXII. THE FULL TREASURE HOUSE

Today:

Full.

Tomorrow:

Empty.

Spiritual Principle

Possession is never the same as:

Permanence.

LXXIII. ANCESTRAL WEALTH

The treasures were not all:

Hezekiah's achievement.

They included what:

Ancestors accumulated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Pride often boasts in things it did not create.

LXXIV. THE TAKEN SONS

Future descendants live with:

Consequences.

Spiritual Principle

We are temporary stewards in a story larger than:

Our own lifespan.

LXXV. BABYLON'S PALACE

Judah's royal descendants will serve:

Another king.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What pride refuses to submit to God may eventually become subject to another master.

LXXVI. "THE WORD IS GOOD"

Hezekiah does not accuse:

God.

That part is commendable.

Spiritual Principle

We should acknowledge God's righteousness even when His Word is:

Difficult.

LXXVII. "PEACE AND SECURITY IN MY DAYS"

The problem is:

Scope.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful leader should care about a future he personally will never live to see.

LXXVIII. LEGACY THINKING

Ask:

What am I leaving?

Not merely:

What am I enjoying?

Spiritual Principle

Legacy is tomorrow experiencing the effects of today's character.

LXXIX. BLESSINGS CAN BECOME TESTS

Health restored.

Life extended.

Treasures preserved.

International respect.

All blessings.

All potential:

Tests.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every blessing asks whether we will worship the Giver or become impressed with the gift.

LXXX. HEZEKIAH WAS STILL HUMAN

He had:

Great faith.

And:

Real weakness.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical heroes should be learned from, not idealized as flawless.

LXXXI. ONE CHAPTER AFTER “I WILL WALK HUMBL Y”

This should sober:

Every believer.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Humility is not a promise you make once.

It is a posture you practice daily.

LXXXII. GOD TESTS WHAT IS IN THE HEART

The parallel account tells us this visit became a:

Test.

Spiritual Principle

God may allow situations that reveal to us:

What He already knows is in us.

LXXXIII. WHAT SUCCESS REVEALS

Adversity reveals:

Whether we trust God.

Success reveals:

Whether we remember Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Trouble tests dependence.

Prosperity tests gratitude.

LXXXIV. THE GREATER TREASURE

Hezekiah had something greater than:

Gold.

He had experienced:

God's deliverance.

God's healing.

God's forgiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Your testimony may be worth more than everything in your treasure house.

LXXXV. BABYLON WILL NOT HAVE THE FINAL WORD

Isaiah 39 ends with:

Exile announced.

But Isaiah does not end:

Here.

The next chapter begins:

Comfort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can announce discipline without surrendering His redemptive purpose.

LXXXVI. ISAIAH 39 AS THE BRIDGE TO ISAIAH 40

Chapter 39 says:

Babylon is coming.

Chapter 40 will say:

“Comfort, comfort My people.”

That is one of the book’s great transitions.

Spiritual Principle

God sees beyond:

Exile.

Toward:

Restoration.

LXXXVII. SEVEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 39

1. Babylon Sends a Friendly Delegation

The test arrives through admiration rather than intimidation.

2. Hezekiah Displays His Treasures

Pride replaces discretion.

3. Isaiah Questions the King

The hidden spiritual issue is exposed.

4. God Announces Future Loss

Everything shown will eventually be carried away.

5. Future Generations Are Included

Hezekiah's descendants will experience Babylonian captivity.

6. Hezekiah Accepts God's Word

He recognizes the Lord's pronouncement.

7. His Response Reveals Short-Term Thinking

He is relieved peace will remain in his own days.

Key Truth

Isaiah 39 moves from admiration to pride, from pride to prophetic warning, and from present prosperity to the announcement of future Babylonian exile.

LXXXVIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 39 is only:

Eight verses.

But it contains a warning every believer needs.

The chapter before it ended with:

Healing.

Praise.

Forgiveness.

More life.

Now:

Babylon knocks.

And Babylon does not arrive with:

An army.

Not yet.

It arrives with:

Letters.

A gift.

Congratulations.

Interest.

That may be the most dangerous part.

Hezekiah knew what to do when:

Assyria threatened.

He prayed.

He knew what to do when:

Death threatened.

He prayed.

But when people admired him:

He showed them everything.

That tells us something.

We often prepare ourselves for:

Hardship.

We do not always prepare ourselves for:

Success.

The threatening voice makes us:

Pray.

The flattering voice can make us:

Relax.

Hezekiah had just said:

“I will walk humbly all my years.”

Then:

Pride appears.

That should make all of us:

Humble.

Never say:

“I defeated that temptation permanently.”

Never assume:

“One spiritual victory means I can stop watching my heart.”

Then Isaiah asks:

“What did they see?”

That is a powerful question.

What do people see when they look at:

Your life?

Your ministry?

Your home?

Your work?

Your achievements?

Do they see mostly:

You?

Or:

God’s grace?

Hezekiah had an extraordinary testimony.

He could have told Babylon:

I was dying.

I prayed.

The living God heard me.

He gave me fifteen more years.

He moved the shadow backward.

He delivered Jerusalem from Assyria.

Instead the chapter emphasizes:

Gold.

Silver.

Spices.

Oil.

Weapons.

Treasure.

Do not waste your testimony by replacing:

“Look what God did.”

With:

“Look what I have.”

Then God says:

Everything will be:

Taken.

There is the lesson of earthly possessions.

You may:

Own them.

Guard them.

Count them.

Display them.

But you cannot make them:

Permanent.

Babylon will one day carry away the same things Babylon once:

Admired.

Then the warning becomes:

Generational.

Your sons.

Future descendants.

They will experience:

Exile.

That forces us to think beyond:

Our own lives.

It is not enough to say:

My life is comfortable.

My finances are fine.

My ministry is working.

My church is okay.

My family is peaceful.

Faithfulness asks:

What am I leaving behind?

What kind of spiritual world will:

My children.

Grandchildren.

Future believers.

Inherit from my decisions?

Hezekiah says:

At least there will be peace in:

My days.

That is too small a vision.

Godly stewardship should say:

Lord, make me faithful in my days so those after me are better prepared for:

Their days.

Isaiah 39 closes with:

Babylon.

Judgment.

Exile.

But the book is not finished.

The next chapter will announce:

Comfort.

That is important.

Human pride can have:

Consequences.

God still has:

A redemptive purpose.

So:

Watch your heart after victory.

Pray when people praise you.

Stay humble after God answers prayer.

Value testimony above treasure.

Practice discretion.

Think generationally.

And never forget:

The greatest thing you can show another person is not what:

You possess.

It is what:

God has done.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Protect us from:

Pride.

Especially the pride that comes after:

Victory.

Healing.

Success.

Answered prayer.

Blessing.

Teach us to seek You not only when:

Enemies threaten.

But also when:

Friends flatter.

Father, thank You for every blessing You have given us.

Help us remember:

We are stewards.

Not owners.

Keep us from turning Your gifts into:

Objects of boasting.

Give us wisdom about:

What to show.

What to protect.

What to share.

What to keep private.

Father, when people look at our lives:

May they see more than:

Our accomplishments.

Our possessions.

Our abilities.

Our success.

Let them see:

Your grace.

Your mercy.

Your faithfulness.

Your saving power.

Help us tell the story of:

What You have done.

Father, teach us to think beyond:

Our days.

Give us hearts for:

Our children.

Our grandchildren.

Future generations.

The church that follows us.

The people who will live after us.

Do not let us be satisfied merely because:

We have peace now.

Help us leave a legacy of:

Faith.

Truth.

Humility.

Obedience.

Wisdom.

Father, remind us that:

Earthly treasures fade.

Silver can be taken.

Gold can be carried away.

Kingdoms change.

Empires rise.

Empires fall.

But:

You remain.

Make You:

Our greatest treasure.

And when pride rises within us:

Expose it.

Correct it.

Forgive it.

Replace it with:

Gratitude.

Humility.

Worship.

Prepare us for every season:

Adversity.

Prosperity.

Threat.

Praise.

Loss.

Success.

May we remain faithful through them all.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

“Hezekiah welcomed them gladly and showed them everything in his treasure house—the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his entire armory, and everything that was found among his treasures.” — Isaiah 39:2

Central Truth

After receiving extraordinary deliverance and healing, Hezekiah became vulnerable to pride and displayed Judah's wealth before Babylon; God then revealed that those temporary treasures would one day be carried away and future generations would experience exile, teaching that believers must remain humble after blessing, value testimony above possessions, practice wise stewardship, and live with responsibility for those who come after them.

Isaiah 39 in One Sentence

Isaiah records Babylonian envoys visiting the recovered Hezekiah, the king proudly displaying all his treasures and military resources, Isaiah announcing that Babylon would one day carry those treasures and royal descendants into exile, and Hezekiah responding with submission to God's Word yet troubling relief that peace would remain during his own lifetime, thereby warning that prosperity, pride, and short-term thinking can threaten faith even after great deliverance.