



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Hezekiah: God Strengthens

SPEAKER DSP Chua Seng Lee

THEME Old Testament Kings of Judah

DATE 5 and 6 Sep 2020

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This sermon is a part of the series of lessons from the lives of several Old Testament kings of Judah.

The kings were recorded as the ones who “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord”. The goal is for us to learn from the good and bad examples, and see the impact of their good and bad decisions. This week, we focus on the life of King Hezekiah, whose name means “*Yahweh strengthens*”. (2 Chronicles 29-32 and 2 Kings 18-20)

GOD STRENGTHENS

1. GOD STRENGTHENS... WHEN WE ARE DOING HIS WILL

Hezekiah’s first act as king was to consecrate the temple for God and restoring worship to God (2 Chronicles 29) despite the danger of the Assyrians looming. His focus was on honouring the King of Kings – *first*.

Hezekiah also restored the Passover (2 Chronicles 30) and invited everyone, including his enemies in Judah. His act of faith and obedience in leading people back to the Lord resulted in the hand of God being on Judah, uniting them in “one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded”.

Starting with his own offerings, Hezekiah led by example to obey the word of God in giving burnt offerings to God. He also commanded his people to give what was due to the religious leaders so that they could devote themselves to the law of the Lord. As a result, Hezekiah found favour in God’s eyes and prospered.

God will strengthen and empower us when we do His will and act according to His word. We often see the result in changed lives when we obey. Do not quit.

2. GOD STRENGTHENS... WHEN WE HUMBLE OURSELVES

When Hezekiah surrendered to Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, he even gave him silver and gold taken from the temple of the Lord (2 Kings 18:13-15). However, Hezekiah recognised his mistake and humbled himself before God, and entreated Isaiah to pray for them.

The second time Hezekiah was threatened and taunted by Sennacherib, his response was completely different from his previous one. He acted in faith and humility instead, bringing the letter from Sennacherib before God and submitting it to God. He prayed and worshipped God, acknowledging the worth of God and pleading for deliverance so that the name of God would be honoured. As a result, “the angel of the Lord went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians” (2 Kings 19).

When we humble ourselves before God, he lifts us up and strengthens us, sometimes even performing miraculous interventions. We need to run to God, not run away from Him.

3. GOD STRENGTHENS... WHEN WE LOOK TO JESUS

For all his positive attributes, Hezekiah was not the perfect king. Rather, he was but a shadow of the perfect King to come. When Hezekiah fell ill and was miraculously healed by God, visitors from Babylon came to see how he was doing. However, instead of using the opportunity to glorify God and tell of God’s goodness and power in healing him, Hezekiah boasted of his accomplishments and wealth.

When Isaiah prophesied that everything Hezekiah had would be taken from his future generations, his response was selfish and prideful, expressing relief that he would have peace in his time at least.

Unlike Hezekiah, we need to look to Jesus rather than earthly achievements in order to be strengthened by God. Men, even kings, will fail us but God will never fail.

CONCLUSION

God will strengthen us:

- 1) When we are doing His will: *Do right in His sight; don’t quit.*
- 2) When we humble ourselves before Him: *Do right in His sight; don’t run away.*
- 3) When we look to Jesus: *Do right in His sight; don’t blink!*

QUESTIONS

1. King Hezekiah had a good start, doing God's will the moment he became king and prospered as a result. Share an occasion where you experienced God's blessing as a result of intentionally submitting to His will and acting in obedience?

2. Reflect upon your walk with God and share based on any one of the following questions:

- How did God encourage you, when you took the step of obedience to do His will?
- How did God answer you, when you put aside your pride to humbly seek Him?
- How did God strengthen you, when you took your eyes off your problems to focus on Jesus?

3. Pride and selfishness caused King Hezekiah to stumble in the end, marring his otherwise great rule and relationship with God. What do you think are attributes you have that may cause you to stumble in your walk with God? What do you think you can do to work on them?