

Fact Sheet for **“An Assay”**
Isaiah 39:1-8

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Parallels: 2 Kings 20:12-21; 2 Chronicles 32:27-33

ESV 1 ¶ At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered.

This was the sickness when God gave Hezekiah 15 more years of life.

2 And Hezekiah welcomed them gladly. And he showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his whole armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them.

Do you get an itchy feeling about this? He showed these envoys a lot. He had a lot (2 Chronicles 32:27-29).

3 Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?" Hezekiah said, "They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon." 4 He said, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house. There is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."

ESV 2 Chronicles 32:31 And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.

The word for tes is נִסָּה (na-sah) “assay”. God at times does assay His people (Exodus 16:4; 20:18, 20; Judges 2:21-22). How does this fit with God’s omniscience? I don’t know. I do know that God may choose to assay us at any time.

5 ¶ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 6 Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the LORD. 7 And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

What if this came as a word from God to you? How would you react?

⁸ Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days."

NLT 2 Kings 20:19 Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "This message you have given me from the LORD is good." For the king was thinking, "At least there will be peace and security during my lifetime."

ESV 2 Kings 20:21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Take some time right now to read about Manasseh in 2 Kings 21:1-9, 11-16. Manasseh was evil beyond measure and led the people of Israel to do evil. Manasseh's son Amon only reigned 2 years. Then Amon's son, Josiah, became king.

Josiah served the Lord with his whole heart. He had the temple repaired, and the book of the Law was again found. Read 2 Kings 23:3. He tore down idol worship places, deposed pagan priests, and restored the Passover. Now read 2 Kings 23:25-26. A mere 4 years after the death of Josiah the 70 year Babylonian Captivity began.

Here's the "nugget".

Hezekiah was generally a good king. He loved the Lord. But, he failed the test when God assayed him. He was more concerned with himself than he was with the people he led or with the next generation of leadership... Manasseh. Manasseh turned out to be the worst king Judah ever had.

God does assay us from time to time.

The only way to assay out well when God tests you is to pay attention to always loving Him with all your heart, strength, soul, and might... as Josiah did.

Think about it. When leaders think more of themselves than the people they lead, or of preparing next generation leadership, then there is trouble ahead.

This is true of nations, of families, of denominations, of churches, etc.

If God were to assay you today what would the results be?

What would you want them to be?

Who are you leading?

How are you preparing them for what's ahead?