

# “What Have They Seen In Thy House?”

(Adapted from class materials written by Bobby Witherington)

**This is a question that Isaiah asked King Hezekiah, and it is recorded both in II Kings 20:1-15 and Isaiah 39:4.**

## History

Hezekiah was King over Judah (II Kings 18-20). He reigned 29 years in Jerusalem (II Kings 18:2; II Chronicles 29:1). He was a good king; he did “*what was right in the sight of the Lord..., he trusted in the Lord..., he held fast to the Lord..., he kept His commandments*” (II Kings 18:3-6). In the 14th year of His reign Hezekiah became “*sick and was near death*” (II Kings 20:1). Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “*Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live*” (II Kings 20:1; Isaiah 38:1). Hezekiah “*turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the Lord*” (II Kings 20:2; Isaiah 38:2). God heard his prayer and, through His prophet Isaiah, informed Hezekiah that He would add 15 years to his life (II Kings 20:6; Isaiah 38:5). He also promised to deliver Hezekiah from the King of Assyria and defend Jerusalem for the sake of His servant David. Then, as a “*sign*” that God had healed Hezekiah, He caused the shadow to go “*ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz*” (II Kings 20:8-11; Isaiah 38:7-8). Hezekiah recovered, and sometime later Berodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, King of Babylon sent letters and presents to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick (II Kings 20:12; Isaiah 39:1). One reason why the king of Babylon sent ambassadors to Hezekiah was to “*inquire about the wonder that was done in the land*” (II Chronicles 32:31). Hezekiah was flattered that ambassadors would come to him “*from a far country, from Babylon,*” and he showed them all his treasury and all his armory (II Kings 20:13).

It was at this point that Isaiah went to Hezekiah and said, “*What have they seen in thy house?*” (II Kings 20:15; Isaiah 39:4). Hezekiah answered truthfully and said, “*All that is in my house they have seen...*” (II Kings 20:15). Isaiah then uttered the first words about the coming Babylonian captivity, declaring that the day was coming when all which their fathers had accumulated would be carried to Babylon, and when Hezekiah’s own descendants would be eunuch and made to serve in the palace of the King of Babylon (II Kings 20:18; Isaiah 39:7).

What the ambassadors from Babylon saw in the house of Hezekiah had significant repercussions for generations to come. They saw a king who was too easily flattered by all the attention; his “*heart was lifted up*” (II Chronicles 32:25). They saw immense treasures which doubtlessly contributed to covetousness on the part of the King of Babylon to obtain Judah’s wealth. The prophecy if Isaiah was indeed fulfilled about 100 years later when Babylon destroyed the city of Jerusalem and took its King captive and princes were made to serve in the palace of the King of Babylon (II Kings 24:12; II Chronicles 33:11; Daniel 1:3-7).

## Application

“What have they seen in thy house?” “*They,*” as used in this question could include neighbors, family, relatives, or the family members (even our children), who reside in the “*house.*” Have they seen

1. Order or Disorder, as it relates to headship and authority (I Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 6:1-2)?
2. Love or Indifference (Ephesians 5:25,28,33; Colossians 3:19; Titus 2:4-5)?
3. Expressions of Love or Outbursts of Anger (Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:31-32)?
4. A Desire to Serve, or a Desire to Be Served (Matthew 20:20-28)?
5. Children lovingly Disciplined, or children who have learned to get their way by kicking and screaming (Proverbs 19:18; Ephesians 6:4)?

6. Contentment or Materialism (I Timothy 6:6; Philippians 3:19)?
7. Spirituality or Worldliness (Matthew 6:33; I John 2:15-17)?
8. God's Name invoked in Prayer, or God's Name used in Vain (Matthew 6:9; Exodus 20:7)?
9. God's Word diligently Studied, or collecting dust from lack of use (II Timothy 2:15; II Peter 3:18)?
10. A family which Worships God regularly, or a family which uses Excuses to justify forsaking the assemblies (Hebrews 10:25-31)?

What should "they" be able to see in "*thy house?*" Can what "*they*" see in "*thy house,*" for good or bad, affect your family for years to come? Would "*they*" respect us more or less, if "*they*" saw all that is in "*thy house?*" The really important thing is not what "*they*" see, but what GOD sees, and he sees everything (Hebrews 4:13; Psalms 139:7-10)!