

Title: **MY EXPERIENCE OF GRACE**

Text: Isaiah 38:9-22

Subject: *Hezekiah's Account of God's Work in Him*

Date: Sunday Morning — January 19, 2020

Reading: *Psalms 40:1-17*

Introduction:

As God the Holy Ghost will enable me, I want to talk to you about **MY EXPERIENCE OF GRACE**. That is the title of my message — **MY EXPERIENCE OF GRACE**. Our text will be Isaiah 38:9-22. — **MY EXPERIENCE OF GRACE** (Isaiah 38:9-22). — Salvation is more than an experience. But God's salvation is an experience! It is something felt in the depths of your soul.

- It is an emancipation!
- It is deliverance from a pit!
- Salvation is freedom for the captive!
- Salvation is pardon for a condemned prisoner!
- It is the restoration of sight to the blind!
- It is the deaf being made to hear, the lame being made to walk, and the dumb being made to sing!
- God's salvation is a heart transplant!
- It is the resurrection of the dead!

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HEZEKIAH'S RESTORATION

When good King Hezekiah, that great and godly King of Judah was sick, the Lord God sent his prophet Isaiah to him to tell him that he would not recover from his sickness, but that he would die. Hezekiah was just 39 years old. He had been a great king. By his hand, the Lord God had destroyed the altars and high places of idolatry throughout the land, purged his house, and restored the worship of Jehovah alone as God. In just fourteen years Hezekiah had all but eradicated idolatry in Judah. But now he is sick. And God tells him plainly that he must die. — As soon as he heard God's word to him...

(Isaiah 38:2-3) “Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, (3) And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is good* in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.”

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While he was praying, the Lord God sent Isaiah back to the King and told him he had heard his prayer and that he would give him fifteen more years on earth.

- The Lord God caused the shadow of the sun to go backward by ten degrees on the sun dial of Ahaz.
- Isaiah ordered that a plaster of figs be laid upon Hezekiah's boil.
- On the third day God healed Hezekiah and he went up unto the house of the Lord (2 Kings 20:8). — A Picture of Christ's Resurrection

ISAIAH 38:9-22

That is what Hezekiah experienced. **In Isaiah 38:9-22, Hezekiah tells us his own thoughts about his experience.**

(Isaiah 38:9-22) The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: (10) I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. (11) I said, I shall not see the LORD, even

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the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. (12) Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. (13) I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. (14) Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me. (15) What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. (16) O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. (17) Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. (18) For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. (19) The

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living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth. (20) The LORD was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD. (21) For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover. (22) Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?

Hezekiah probably had many reasons for writing out his thoughts and experiences during his time of great affliction and his deliverance from it.

- To keep a Record of His Thoughts at the Time
- To Inspire Himself, His Family, and His Friends to Remember God's Goodness
- To Provoke His Own Heart to Unceasing Dedication to the Lord

Hezekiah's writing was very good. I am sure that his intentions were good. Yet, he soon forgot what he wrote. In just a few years we read, "*Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done*

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unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him” (2 Chronicles 32:25).

What a lesson there is for us here! — **Do not forget the mercies you experience in times of trouble.** And do not forget the resolutions and commitments you have made to consecrate yourself to the Lord God.

LIVE FOR ETERNITY

When a man thinks he is about to die, he begins to realize how precious life is. This is especially true for believing men. When Hezekiah thought he was dying, a young man in the prime of life, just 39 years old, deprived of residue of his years, many things went through his mind...

- I will no longer see the Lord in the land of the living. I shall soon bid farewell to my brethren here. I will no longer join them in the house of prayer.
- I am about to leave all those I love, those for whom I care deeply.

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- God is bringing my life to its close. He's about to make an end of me.
- I don't know how to pray. I must sound like a crane or a swallow, just making senseless noise, chattering, or like a dove in deep mourning.
- I'm anxious for heaven, anxious to see my Savior, anxious to be done with sin and all the pain, sorrow, and loss sin has caused. — But then, how shall I teach my children, how shall I make known the truth of the gospel?
- Yes, I have peace with God. I am ready die. — In love to my soul my God has delivered me from the pit of corruption. He has cast all my sins behind his back!
- Yet, for peace I have bitterness. — Bitterness for you who yet are without Christ, without hope, and without God. — Bitterness when I think how little I have done and how much more I might have done! — Bitterness for the pain and injury I have caused — Needless offenses!

We need to learn to live for eternity. O Spirit of God, set my affection upon things above and teach me to live for Christ, to live for eternity!

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(2 Corinthians 4:17-5:1) For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. (5:1) For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

(Colossians 3:1-3) If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

This writing of Hezekiah is preserved for us in the Word of God because the writing itself was inspired by God the Holy Spirit. It certainly shows us the experiences of a believer in times of great affliction, sickness, and even utter despair, and the working of

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God upon the hearts of his people in such times. Hezekiah was a true believer. Though he failed miserably, he was humbled, broken, and repentant. And God forgave him. — *“Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah”* (2 Chronicles 32:26).

GRACE EXPERIENCED

I am also certain that this writing of Hezekiah is intended by the Spirit of God to show us a picture the experience of grace in a sinner’s heart, when he is delivered from the pit of corruption into salvation and life in Christ.

Proposition: In these verses of Holy Scripture Hezekiah shows us what a sinner feels and experiences when he is brought from death to life in Christ by the almighty grace of God.

I do not want anyone to leave here thinking “I must feel like Hezekiah before I can be saved,” and go out

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of here seeking a feeling. **I am not laying down conditions for you to meet.** Salvation is unconditional and free! Yet, I do want to show you four things every sinner experiences as he comes to Christ. If you have come to Christ, if God has saved you by his grace, you have experienced these four things.

- For some of you, this message will be a message of Remembrance and Reflection. — I am going to remind of what God has done for us by his grace.
- For some of you, I hope, it will be a message of Instruction and Explanation — I am going to explain what God is doing in you.

Divisions: Let me show you four things every saved sinner experiences as he comes to Christ.

1. The Despair of Conviction (vv. 10-13)
2. The Dependence of Faith (vv. 14-16)
3. The Deliverance of Grace (v. 17)
4. The Dedication of Gratitude (vv. 18-20)

In these words Hezekiah expresses exactly what I experienced in conversion! I take his words for my

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own. For I think that was and is the intention of the Holy Spirit in inspiring this writing of Hezekiah.

THE DESPAIR OF CONVICTION

1st — When God the Holy Ghost performs his work of grace in you, when God saves you by his grace, somewhere along the way, you will experience the despair of conviction (vv. 10-13).

When God the Holy Spirit goes to work on a sinner in real grace, the first thing he does is to bring him to the end of himself. He brings down the proud, stubborn heart with the conviction of sin. — Nebuchadnezzar — Isaiah — Gomer — Myself — *“Zachaeus, Come down!”*

This conviction of sin may be protracted, or it may be very brief in its initial experience. But you can be sure of this — Before God grants his salvation, he will convince you of your sin! He will bring you under the sentence of death and make you to despair of life.

- He strips before he clothes.

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- He empties before he fills.
- He abases before he exalts.
- He sends darkness before he gives light.
- He kills before he makes alive.
- God takes you down to hell (v. 10 — “*The gates of the grave.*” — The Gates of Sheol — The Gates of Hell) before he lifts you up to heaven.

You will never look to Christ for life until God the Holy Ghost convinces you that you are dead spiritually and dying eternally, without Christ and without hope (vv. 10-11).

(Isaiah 38:10-11) I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. (11) I said, I shall not see the LORD, *even* the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

You will not look to Christ for life until God the Holy Ghost shows you that your destruction is the work of your own hands. — “*I have cut off like a*

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weaver my life” (v. 12). — I deserve to die. My condition is my own fault.

You will never look to Christ for life until God the Holy Ghost convinces you that you are in God’s hands and you must meet God in judgment (vv. 12-13).

(Isaiah 38:12-13) Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd’s tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me. (13) I reckoned till morning, *that*, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

Blessed is that man who is brought into utter despair and helplessness as a guilty sinner before the Holy Lord God! The despair of conviction always brings sinners into...

THE DEPENDENCE OF FAITH.

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2nd — Holy Spirit conviction always leads to the comfort of hope and joy of faith in Christ. Show me a sinner and I will show you a believer. — **The despair of conviction always results in the dependence of faith** (vv. 14-16). When Hezekiah had no hope anywhere else, he looked to the Lord God for grace!

Broken, he poured out his soul to God. — “*Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me*” (v. 14). — Day and night, I poured out my soul to God in prayer, confessing my sin, seeking his mercy; but you could hardly call it prayer. It was more like...

- The coarse barking of a crane.
- The shrill chatter of swallow.
- The sad mourning of a dove.

(John 16:7-11) Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (8) And when he is come, he will reprove the world of

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sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: (9) Of sin, because they believe not on me; (10) Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; (11) Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

“O LORD, I am oppressed!”

- With your holiness!
- With your righteousness!
- With your law!
- With your justice!
- With my guilt!

Oppressed, with the load of guilt and sin and death, the convinced sinner, the God taught sinner seeks and looks to the Lord Jesus Christ to be a Surety for him. — “Undertake for me!” “Be Surety for me!” — Oh, what blessed, blessed Surety he is!
He undertook for me...

- from eternity!
- in his incarnation!
- in his life of obedience!
- in his death!

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- in his resurrection!
- in his rule!

Hearing from God's prophet, Hezekiah looked upward in faith (vv. 15-16).

(Isaiah 38:15-16) What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done *it*: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. (16) O Lord, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

That's exactly what happened to me when God saved me by his grace.

- He sent a preacher to me with his message. — Jewel Smith
- The Lord God caused me to believe his word of grace — The Gospel.
- He broke me, humbled me, and laid me low before his throne. — “*I shall go softly.*”
- He gave me repentance. I repented of my sin. — “*I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.*”

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- Like Hezekiah of old, I give God alone the glory (v. 16; Psalm 115:1; Ephesians 1:3-14).

(Isaiah 38:16) O Lord, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

(Psalm 115:1) Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

(Ephesians 1:3-14) Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. (7) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of

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his grace; (8) Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; (9) Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: (10) That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: (11) In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: (12) That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (13) In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

By these things, by God's predestination, God's election, God's covenant, God's providence, God's

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work, God's word, God's gift of faith I live! He gives life to my spirit. **He recovered me.**

- By His Election.
- By His Redemption.
- By His Regeneration.
- By His Calling.
- By His Sanctification.
- By His Justification.
- By His Gift of Faith.

Would you be saved? Would you have God's salvation? — "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!*"

The dependence of faith is always followed by...

THE DELIVERANCE OF GRACE

3rd — How sweet, how blessed, how wonderful the deliverance of grace is!

(Isaiah 38:17) Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul

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delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

God destroyed my peace with bitterness. He graciously destroyed my refuge of lies and gave me the sweet bitterness of grace.

- The Bitterness of Repentance
- The Bitterness of this Warfare

The Lord God, my Savior, delivered me from the pit of corruption. Spirit of God, let me never for a moment forget where you found me by your grace!

(Isaiah 51:1) Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor

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revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

He delivered me from the pit of corruption (my life).

- By His Sovereign Decree!
- By His Precious Blood!
- By Omnipotent Grace!

The cause of this salvation is the love of God!

- Eternal Love!
- Distinguishing Love!
- Indestructible Love!
- Saving Love!

And my God has forgiven all my sin! — *“Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back!”*

- When God forgives, he remembers no more!
- When God forgives, he forgives all!
- When God forgives, he forgives forever!

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The despair of conviction leads to the dependence of faith. The dependence of faith obtains the deliverance of grace. And the deliverance of grace always produces...

THE DEDICATION OF GRATITUDE

4th — Saved sinners are devoted disciples, devoted to Christ. Ours is not the dedication of law but the dedication of gratitude (vv. 18-20).

God has saved us that we might glorify him. — *“For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.”* (v. 18).

All who are saved by the grace of God gladly praise him — *“The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day”* (v. 19).

Saved sinners propagate and perpetuate God’s praise and his truth (v. 19-20).

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(Isaiah 38:19-20) The father to the children shall make known thy truth. (20) **The LORD was ready to save me**: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD.

Constrained by the love of Christ we are...

- Dedicated to God's Truth.
- Dedicated to God's Glory — *"The LORD was ready to save me!"*
- Dedicated to God's Worship.

APPLICATION

Has the Lord saved you?

- Confess Him.
- Consecrate Yourself to Him.

Amen.