

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE PROUD "SHOW OFF"

KING HEZEKIAH

Pride is spoken of in the bible as an offence to God and a mark of foolishness. James 4:6 and I Peter 5:5 tells us that God resists the proud. Even the ancient Greek philosophers considered pride (hubris) to be mankind's greatest sin.

But aren't we allowed a certain amount of pride? We can be proud of our children, for example, but that is not a haughty type of pride. It becomes different when we take a view where we feel we are better than others, or we think we have become "somebody," or wish to "show off" our stuff.

Hezekiah was a godly king of the southern kingdom of Israel, Judah, during the days of Isaiah about 710 B.C. He had become deathly ill and was dying. He earnestly pled with God who then granted him an additional fifteen years of life. It was confirmed miraculously by the sun's shadow moving backward ten degrees.

The king of Babylon learned of this healing and miracle. He sent emissaries to Hezekiah with letters and gifts. Hezekiah showed them all his wealth. He "showed off." This is recorded in II Kings 20:12-19 and again in Isaiah 39:1-8.

Let me pause here to quote I John 2:15-16 where it says, *"Love not the world, neither things... in the world... for all that is in the world... the pride of life is not of the Father, but it is of the world."* The Greek word here for "pride" is "ostentation" from which we get our English word ostentatious. It indicates vain boasting, vainglory, a pretentious show intended to attract notice. This is what Hezekiah had done.

Hezekiah was ostentatious. He chose to show off his wealth and strength to these heathen foreigners, and God was displeased with it. Isaiah then told the king what God said would happen because of his pride in showing off. He told Hezekiah that these same Babylonians would come to Judah and carry away all this wealth. Furthermore, all his sons' generations would become captives in the courts of Babylon. However, this would take place after the days of Hezekiah.

The king accepted Isaiah's word from God and rejoiced that he would not live to see that day as a kindness from God. This prophecy was fulfilled beginning in 605B.C. and fully completed in 586 B.C. Hezekiah's sin of pride was visited upon his sons to the third and fourth generations, but he himself was spared the same due to his righteousness.

We must always be mindful of our motivations. God knows the intentions of our heart. Never let pride become a motivating factor in your life.