

Isaiah 39:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon.

Analysis

Isaiah's questions "What said these men? and from whence came they?" probe the encounter's nature. Hezekiah's answer "From a far country are they come unto me, even from Babylon" seems innocent but reveals the problem—he attributes their coming to himself ("unto me") rather than recognizing geopolitical maneuvering. The prophet's questioning technique draws out the king's error gently, giving opportunity for self-awareness. This demonstrates wise pastoral approach—asking questions rather than immediately condemning.

Historical Context

Babylon at this time was still under Assyrian dominance but seeking allies for future independence. The visit had political dimensions Hezekiah apparently didn't recognize.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does wise counsel use questions to help us recognize our errors?
2. What spiritual danger lies in attributing others' actions to our importance rather than their agendas?
3. How can we cultivate self-awareness about our motivations and blind spots?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| וְאָמַר | חִזְקִיָּהוּ | בְּמֵת | לְרַבָּה | אֶל | בְּנֵבֶבּ | יְאָה | וְיִשְׁעֵיָהוּ | בְּאֹהֶל | וְאָמַר |
| Then came | Isaiah | the prophet | H413 | unto king | Hezekiah | and said | | | |
| H935 | H3470 | H5030 | | H4428 | H2396 | | | | |
| וְאָמַר | וְמִמֶּאָה | בְּאָנָשָׁים | וְאָמַר | מֵה | אֶל | וְאָמַר | וְמִמֶּאָה | בְּאֹהֶל | וְאָמַר |
| H413 | H4100 | H559 | and said | H582 | H428 | these men | and from whence | Then came | |
| | | | | | | | H370 | H935 | |
| וְאָמַר | חִזְקִיָּהוּ | בְּאֶרֶץ | מֵאֶרֶץ | רְחוּקָה | הַמִּזְרָחָה | וְאָמַר | בְּאֹהֶל | בְּאֹהֶל | וְאָמַר |
| H413 | and said | Hezekiah | country | from a far | H776 | H7350 | Then came | H413 | |
| H559 | | H2396 | | | | | H935 | | |
| מִבָּבֶל: | | | | | | | | | |
| unto me even from Babylon | | | | | | | | | |
| H894 | | | | | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 28:49 (Parallel theme): The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

Jeremiah 5:15 (Parallel theme): Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.

2 Chronicles 16:7 (Kingdom): And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not

relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

2 Samuel 12:1 (Parallel theme): And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

Isaiah 38:1 (Prophecy): In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

Isaiah 38:5 (Parallel theme): Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

Joshua 9:6 (Parallel theme): And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us.

Joshua 9:9 (Parallel theme): And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,

2 Chronicles 25:15 (Prophecy): Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?