

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

The Babylonish monarch sends letters of congratulation and a present to Hezekiah, on account of his recovery from his late dangerous illness, Isaiah 39:1. The king of Judah shows the messengers of Merodach-baladan all the treasures of his house and kingdom, Isaiah 39:2. The prophet takes occasion from this ostentatious display of the king to predict the captivity of the royal family, and of the people, by the Babylonians, Isaiah 39:3-8.

Hitherto the copy of this history in the second book of Kings has been much the most correct; in this chapter that in Isaiah has the advantage. In the two first verses two mistakes in the other copy are to be corrected from this: for חִזְקִיָּהוּ (*hizkiyahu*), read וַיַּעֲזֶזֶק (*vayechezek*), and was recovered; and for וַיִּישָׁמַח (*vaiyishma*), he heard, read וַיִּישְׂמַח (*vaiyismach*), he rejoiced.

Verse 1

At that time Merodach-baladan - This name is variously written in the MSS. Berodach, Medorach, Medarech, and Medurach.

And ambassadors - The Septuagint add here $\text{וְאֵלֵי מַלְאָכִים}$; that is, $\text{וְאֵלֵי מַלְאָכִים}$ (*umalachim*) and ambassadors; which word seems to be necessary to the sense, though omitted in the Hebrew text both here and in the other copy, 2 Kings 20:12. For the subsequent narration refers to them all along, *these men, whence came they?* etc.; plainly supposing them to have been personally mentioned before. See Houbigant.

Verse 6

To Babylon - בָּבֶל (*babelah*), so two MSS., (one ancient); rightly, without doubt as the other copy (2 Kings 20:17) has it. This prediction was fulfilled about one hundred and fifty years after it was spoken: see Daniel 1:2, Daniel 1:3-7. What a proof of Divine omniscience!

Verse 8

Then said Hezekiah - The nature of Hezekiah's crime, and his humiliation on the message of God to him by the prophet, is more expressly declared by the author of the book of the Chronicles: *But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, 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. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.* 2 Chronicles 32:25, 2 Chronicles 32:26, 2 Chronicles 32:30, 2 Chronicles 32:31.

There shall be peace and truth in my days - I rather think these words should be understood as an humble inquiry of the king, addressed to the prophet. *Shall there be prosperity, שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*), and truth in My days? - Shall I escape the evil which thou predictest?* Understood otherwise, they manifest a pitiful unconcern both for his own family and for the nation. *So I be well, I care not how it may go with others.* This is the view I have taken of the passage in 2 Kings 21:19. Let the reader judge whether this, or the former, should be preferred. See the concluding notes on 2 Kings 20.