
Words of Truth

Hezekiah Was Granted Fifteen More Years

By: Brian A. Yeager

Unless Jesus comes first, we are all going to die (II Samuel 14:14, Psalms 89:48, Ecclesiastes 9:5, and Hebrews 9:27). That is a fact that most people do not enjoy thinking about. You can ignore that fact, but ignoring it will not prevent death from happening. You can eat right, exercise, make regular appointments with health care professionals, etc. At the end of it all, you're going to die. Even if you find ways to extend your life, it is still going to end.

When you come to accept the fact of life and death, you learn to appreciate how valuable time in the flesh is. You stop taking minutes, hours, and days for granted. There was a time wherein some Christians not only took life for granted, but were also boastful as though they controlled the time they had on this earth. They had to be corrected. In that correction, we can gain some wisdom. Thus, consider these inspired words: *"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil"* (James 4:13-16).

From the correction that you just read, we can learn that tomorrow is not promised to any one of us. That's why God said long ago not to boast of tomorrow (Proverbs 27:1). Sadly, people often do not appreciate the value of time until their life begins to come to an end. You can see it often when people have fatal illnesses. They begin to wish they had spent their time differently and they try to make up for lost time in their last days in this life. Let's consider an inspired example of this by looking at what happened to Hezekiah.

Hezekiah Was Sick Unto Death

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now 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. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for

mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered" (II Kings 20:1-7). The text goes on to show Hezekiah's failures in his last days (II Kings 20:8-21). There are lessons there to be learned. However, the point I am seeking to make concerns how Hezekiah didn't want his life to end.

Hezekiah was not prepared to see his life end. He wept sore at the news of his death. He wanted an extension on life. He got it. Notice the words of Hezekiah after he was healed. Consider his account of how his mindset was when he was facing death: *"The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth. 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"* (Isaiah 38:9-20).

Hezekiah was miraculously healed and given fifteen more years to live. We know that such is NOT going to happen to us (I Corinthians 12:31-13:13). What might happen to us, if we are not prepared, is that we might come to the end of our physical lives and wish such was not the case. Being unprepared for death was not just a problem that Hezekiah had. Most who have lived in this world have lived unprepared to die.

Be Ready To Die

Is your house in order? You will not have a prophet telling you when you're going to die. You or I could die at the most unexpected times (Luke 12:13-21). We are told to be wise and redeem time (Ephesians 5:14-17 and Colossians 4:5). We should live every day as though it is the day we will face eternal judgment. For, if that day comes and we're unprepared, we'll not be given a stay of judgment (Matthew 25:1-13).

Conclusion

A Psalmist said: *"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"* (Psalms 90:12). Be wise and think about the end of your physical life. As fun as that might not be, it will be a whole lot worse if your life ends and you're unprepared.