

# “Set Your House in Order”

Isa 38:1 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. 2 Then 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. 4 Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, 5 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. 6 And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city. 7 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; 8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.- Isa 38:1-8

## Introduction:

1. Ken Pierpont said, “Years ago I went to visit a man to talk to him about the Lord. I didn't call ahead, I just dropped in unannounced. It was just after the supper hour. His wife came to the door. She welcomed us in and spoke to us in a whisper like a librarian.  
"He watches 'Wheel of Fortune' every night." She said quietly. "If you want to you can watch it with him, if you are careful to be quiet. He doesn't like any interruptions. When the program is over he will talk to you."

We agreed to wait for him to watch his game show. He didn't acknowledge our presence at all during the show or the commercials. He took a kitchen chair and pulled it up to within two feet of the television and did not move back until the program was over.

When the program ended he put the chair away, greeted us and offered us a treat from the freezer. We had a pleasant chat and I thanked him for visiting our services. I tried to talk with him about eternal things. He was civil and pleasant but otherwise disinterested in in-depth discussion.

We thanked him for his welcome and left. I never saw him in church again. A few weeks later he was changing a light bulb in his garage, fell from a step ladder and hit his head. He never recovered from the fall.

Within a short time he was dead. When I visited him he didn't know that he was only a few weeks from meeting God but he was more interested in his game show than discussing eternal things.

2. Do you give your time and attention to things that are empty? Have you sufficiently considered eternal things? How long will it be until eternity begins for you? None of us knows how many more years on earth we have, or how many months, or even how many days or hours. How many days do you have to see that you are right with God and others? How many days will you have to forgive those who have hurt you? How many days will you have to love the people around you?
3. Hezekiah nearly died in the middle of his reign as king of Judah
  - a. He was overtaken by a sickness which would have taken his life when he was only 39 yrs old
  - b. Fortunately God intervened and spared his life for a time

## **I. THE PAIN OF THE SICKNESS - VS 1**

### **A. The Physical Pain - vs 1a**

1a In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. ...

1. Hezekiah was sick and bedridden
2. He is on his deathbed
3. Pain should remind us of the curse of sin
  - a) *Physical pain that you are experiencing does not necessarily mean that you have committed some sin for which God is punishing you*
  - b) *But all pain is related to sin entering the world*

## **B. The Political Pain - “those days”**

1. This incident in Hezekiah’s life happened in “those days”
2. The Assyrians had just invaded the nation of Israel from the north and they were slowly making their way towards Jerusalem.
3. It is bad enough for the king to be sick in good days, but when the kingdom is in danger attack
4. With the possibility of war looming, the nation needed its king.

## **C. The Prognosis Pain**

**1b ...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.**

1. The Command - “Set thine house in order”
  - a) *It was bad enough to be suffering the physical pain*
  - b) *Now Hezekiah learns of his prognosis from the prophet*
  - c) *Hezekiah needed to hear that he was under a death sentence so that he would pray for God to heal him*
  - d) *Hezekiah was so young*
    - (1) He began to reign at age 25 and he died around 53 years of age. That means that he was around 37 when he received this bad news of his death
    - (2) Death doesn’t always have the decency to hold off till we think it appropriate. One young pastor went to his first church which

had many elderly members. He wondered about his first funeral. Would it be the man in his 90s? Would it be the woman who had been a shut-in for the last 15 yrs? “My first funeral was an 18 yr old girl, killed in a car wreck. She was visiting colleges to find out which one she would attend. She was preparing for the next chapter of her life which never came.”

## 2. The Challenge - “Set thine house in order”

**1b ...Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.**

### a) *Take Care of Eternal Things*

- (1) Stewardship of One’s Soul
- (2) It is more important to have our spiritual matters in order
- (3) Death mandates preparation in the spiritual area
- (4) Was Hezekiah ready to die – spiritually
- (5) He would soon meet God

### b) *Take Care of Temporal Things*

- (1) Set your house in order involves worldly affairs
- (2) As king of Judah, he would have more affairs than the ordinary person
- (3) For most of us setting our house in order involves making a will
- (4) Not taking care of these matters causes problems for those who survive

The Pain in the Sickness.....

## **II. THE PRAYER IN THE SICKNESS - VS 2-3**

### **A. Practice of Prayer**

**2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,**

1. Study the life of Hezekiah and note that he resorts to earnest prayer when the crises of life come

2. Now we see him turn to earnest prayer after receiving the bad news of his impending death
3. Seeking God's help in the time of trouble is a wise thing to do
  - a) *Many seek help from a variety of sources but fail to pray*
  - b) *Because we fail to seek God in our troubles they become heavier and more difficult*
  - c) *The hymn has it right*

O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry,  
Everything to God in prayer.

## **B. Place of Prayer**

**2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,**

1. At other times, Hezekiah had gone to the temple to pray
2. Being sick in bed he could not go to the temple
3. That did not stop him from praying
4. For privacy, he turned his face to the wall
  - a) *Being king, he had many attendants around him*
  - b) *Many were coming and going*
5. We can pray anywhere
  - a) *It is nice to pray in church where the surroundings encourage us to pray*
  - b) *Those surroundings are not always available but that should not hinder prayer*
  - c) *We can pray on the road, in the classroom, at work*
6. The most important thing is not the place of prayer but the practice of prayer

### **C. Plea in the Prayer – vs 3**

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.

1. On the surface, this appears to be a self-righteous plea
2. Hezekiah is pointing out that he has tried to serve God and do His will
3. Hezekiah did not have the perspective that we have today about heaven
  - a) *We know more about heaven today than Hezekiah*
  - b) *We have NT teaching about heaven*

### **D. Passion in the Prayer**

3b ...And Hezekiah wept sore.

1. Distinction about His Tears
  - a) He was not weeping because of a guilty conscience
  - b) Much weeping is the result of sin, but Hezekiah was not shedding tears because of sinfulness
  - c) He would not be able to accomplish goals he had for the future
  - d) He did not yet have a son to take his place as king
  - e) Sorrow is always present for believers when we lose loved ones, but that sorrow is not as great as the sorrow of the unbeliever
2. Diligence of His Prayer
  - a) His weeping evidenced the fervency of his prayer
  - b) He was not absentmindedly reciting some prayer from a prayer book
  - c) He was earnest and sincere in his prayer
  - d) Hezekiah has always been earnest in spiritual matters
3. Deficiency of His Knowledge
  - a) His weeping reflected that he did not have knowledge of life after

death like we have

b) He did not know what Paul said in *Phil 1:23*

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

c) We still weep about death today, but we have more comfort about death than Hezekiah did

d) We walk in light which the great patriarchs of the OT never had

e) We know far more today

The Prayer in the Sickness....

### III. THE PROMISES IN THE SICKNESS - VS 4-6

4 Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, 5 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. 6 And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.

#### A. **God's Answer - vs 5 - "I have heard thy prayer"**

1. See how promptly God answered this prayer
2. Hezekiah's prayer was quickly answered
3. God dispatched Isaiah to Hezekiah
4. Our prayers are not often answered this quickly, but delay does not mean denial
5. Hezekiah was quick to pray and God was quick to answer

#### B. **God's Awareness - vs 5 - "I have seen thy tears"**

1. We see God's pity
2. In compassion, God saw the tears of Hezekiah
3. How comforting to know that God takes interest in our heartaches
4. God heard the prayer and saw the tears

### **C. God's Adjustment - vs 5 - "I will add to thy days fifteen years"**

1. God would add 15 years to the life of Hezekiah
2. He would die at 54 instead of 39
3. 54 is still not very old today, but this did double the length of his reign as king
4. Our times are in God's hands
5. God would also rescue the city out of the hand of the Assyrians

### **D. God's Aid - vs 6 - "I will deliver thee..."**

1. Hezekiah faced two problems here - his ailment / the Assyrians
2. God promised to take care of both problems.

The Promises in the Sickness....

## **IV. THE PROOF IN THE SICKNESS - VS 7-8**

7 And this shall be a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; 8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

### **A. Hezekiah Desired Proof - vs 22**

22 Hezekiah also had said, *What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?*

1. Christ rebuked some for asking for a sign and it was said to be a mark of unbelief - Matt 12:39
2. But Hezekiah is not rebuked for asking for a sign
  - a) *The people in Christ's day did not need another sign*
  - b) *They already had ample proof that Jesus was who He said He was so asking for more signs meant that they were unbelievers*

### **B. God Gave Hezekiah Proof - vs 7-8**

1. See the mighty power of God who reversed the rotation of the earth to

- cause the shadow of the sun to go backward ten degrees
2. Leave out the power of God and you cannot explain any miracle of the Bible
  3. Bring in the power of God no miracle is too difficult to believe.

## Conclusion:

### 1. Unbelievers, Set Your House in Order

#### a. Your Problem is the Same as Hezekiah's Problem

1. Hezekiah was sick and facing death
2. Everyone here today faces death
3. We are helping the sinner if we tell him that eternal death in hell fire awaits him if he does not repent
4. Lost sinners need to be told that they are under the sentence of death so they will be prompted to call on Christ to save them
5. For the saved, pain will one day forever cease
6. For the lost, pain will never cease in eternity
7. The rich man was in "torments"
8. He confessed that he was "tormented in this flame"
9. Since we all face death – preparation is necessary – read verses

#### b. Hezekiah's Impending Death Drove Him to Prayer

1. Dear lost person – you have just heard of your impending death
2. Lost person – set your house in order
3. Take care of the temporal things
4. Don't forget the spiritual things
5. Rom 10:9-13

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto

all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

6. Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved

c. Hezekiah Prayed and God Spared Him

1. Trust Christ as your Savior and you will be spared an eternity in hell
2. Hezekiah received 15 years of additional life
3. You can receive eternity in heaven
4. Trust Christ as Savior and enjoy the promises that are for believers – read the promises

d. Hezekiah received proof and our proof is the resurrection of Christ

e. Bro. Collins preached his aunt's funeral. Later Bro. Collins and his father were in the graveyard and Bro. Collins' father said, "I'd like you to preach my funeral." Bro. Collins said, "Dad, that would be awfully difficult because you are not a Christian." About two years went by and early one Sunday morning Bro. Collin's phone rang. It was his father. He said, "Son, you can preach my funeral now. I am a Christian." And a few years later, he did.