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SICKNESS GRAVE

Isaiah 38

Intro. Did you ever face the solemn, somber, serious time of illness with the grave reality that death was imminent?

(Are you afraid to die?)

The Bible invites you to enter the sick room of a king. He has perhaps a malignant ulcer.

King had just given a sigh of relief for deliverance from the Assyrian army of 185,000 soldiers died one night. Leader, Sennacherib slain by his sons, account 37.

38 -- danger of death -- disease. Time was running out. Note the place of prayer in times of illness. Also, God heals the sick.

OUTLINE

- I. Sudden Discovery v.1
- II. Supplication of the King v. 2-3
- III. Sufficiency of God v. 4-8
- IV. Surveying Death v. 9-14
- V. Survival Value v. 15-22

I. SUDDEN DISCOVERY v. 1

v. 1 Sick unto DEATH

King not afraid to die but no man wants to die suddenly when he has so many good things planned.

Kingdom threatened by enemy -- important reforms incomplete. He was a young man. He had no child at that time to follow on the throne. 1 Kings 2:4

Sickness and death common among kings and beggars.

NO EXEMPTIONS Greatness Goodness Ruler

Midst of triumph, usefulness, comfort, sickness seized him. Ruined army of Assyrians.

Mary and Martha. "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick."

Prime of life -- 39 years old.

When people discuss death, question arises -- Would you like to know if you had a few days or months to live? Some: Yes and no.

Would this knowledge bless or hinder?

Time is lent to us -- years are limited -- that is why they are precious.

In your mind there is always knowledge of death, eventual or immediate.

History family of Hezekiah -- Father died 36 (ruled 16 yrs.). Grandfather died 41 (ruled 16 yrs.). He was told he would die by time 40.

One of Israel's great kings. Busy -- Religious -- Reforms for good. He loved life, wanted to live, hated to leave his work undone.

Cecil Rhodes, statesman So. Africa, inscribed on his grave "so much to do, so little done, Good-bye"

Medical Report -- The king's condition is critical -- unsatisfactory -- chart notes that death is not distant, but near. "It is appointed unto men to die, but after this the judgment." Heb. 9:27

Prophet told him to make out his will. I am not wrong in my interpretation -- "Set thy house in order" Why?

Like YOU -- anticipating a long life -- accident, catastrophe, disease, heart failure -- Have not assurance for one day to next.

James 4:13-15 "Go to now, ye that say today or tomorrow 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 tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, 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."

William James -- "The great use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts it."

David S. Jordan -- "Be a life long or short, its completeness depends on what it was lived for."

Jonathan Swift -- "May you live all the days of your life."

Life became precious -- newspaper obituary notices -- funerals passing on the streets -- the sentence of death -- no way to avoid.

Aged Christians who have completed life often welcome the news; however, those who have made no preparation it is terrible.

Set your WORLDLY AFFAIRS in order. King must get things in order.--
Some never tend to this business.

Set your ETERNAL AFFAIRS in order -- king must get things of the soul ready. -- Great journey about to begin. Obligations to God must be in order. Some years back a man came by the parsonage presented me with a sizable sum for the church. He planned to be away for a few days; his health was not good and he said, "I do not intend to die with part of God's money in my house." He was dead before the week was out.

The only pattern of life for the Christian is to live near Jesus.

Set things in order -- Jesus means the same thing when you come to worship and remember you have ought against your brother. Leave the gift and to be reconciled, return and worship.

Set the dishonest deals in order.

Set the falsehoods you have told in order

Set the unpaid bills in order

Set your sins in order

Set your business in order!

V. 2 Facing the Wall

Climb in ^{the} bed with Hezekiah! How would you respond? What would you do?

Could you pray?

Would you have been unwilling to die?

Would you pray in order to live to be useful in the church? It seems hard for a Christian or minister to be smitten down to die with so much needing to be done. The longer we are in the world the more reluctance we have to depart.

Wall -- End!

V. 3 Power of Prayer --

- Confess
1. Tried walk humbly before the Lord
 2. Tried keep a clear heart
 3. Tried to do good in my life. Faithful in my work.

Earnest petition bathed in tears -- wept sore.

DAN. 3:16-18. Three Hebrew children. "Our God is able to deliver us from this terrible death if he chooses to do so. But whether he lets us die or not, we still will worship him and not the images of man."

III. SUFFICIENCY OF GOD. v. 4-8

V. 4. ISAIAH -SPECIAL MESSAGE

v. 5. PROMISE to restore Health - 15 years before have to face death

→ Great words of Action -

6.

1. HAVE HEARD -- Hears our prayers. Not pray in vain.

2. HAS SEEN - tears - Earnestness

3. HAS ADDED 15 years -- There was no specific request.

v. 8. 4. WILL DEFEND Jerusalem -- Life without fear.

v. 8. 5. PROVIDE A SIGN -- Sun dial - 10° backward.

King is on his bed -- face turns to the window looking upon his gardens.
Shadows falling. 1 As he looks the clear sun light pours forth and shadows seem
to back away upon the sun-dial visible from the sick chamber.

God was at work controlling his laws.

A sign -- His steps would be in the light. It is believed that there was
a set of steps leading up to the sun-dial.

Same thing when a soul comes into the light of the gospel, heaven and
earth is moved with joy and that soul walks in the light of the Son of God.

Now, no one that I know has the absolute promise or knowledge of living a
certain number of years as Hezekiah.

IV. SURVEYING DEATH V. 9-14.

V. 9. Account of the king after recovery writing his experiences of the sick bed. Divinely healed, he offers thanksgiving in writing.

Good for you to keep a record of your thoughts when you were sick -- mercies of God -- your prayer -- your resolve.

Why did he not want to die?

V. 10. 1. Being deprived of the residue of his years.

Prime of life -- noon-tide of life. Put in grave ahead of time.

Enter gates of death -- shortening of his human life.

Why does God shorten life? Teach ^{that} he could put even a king aside and still carry out his design for the nation. Teach that all even the king was dependent upon God. (Incline to forget) Teach the living to be ready at any moment. Teach the living to be faithfully employed in the service of their Lord.

You who have lived long life may count it a distinct favor ~~favor~~ of the Lord.

V. 11. 2. Having to leave friends in land of living. Death puts an end to conversation, acquaintances.

V. 12. 3. Before his plans were complete. About to leave suddenly. Removing a tent. Shepherd's tent folded, pulled down in an instant.

Psalm 103:15 "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth - for the wind passeth over it & it is gone & the place thereof shall know it no more."
Weaver -- finally cuts the thread and his work is done, rolls up

his work. About to receive the finishing stroke of the scissors of death,
Unfinished cloth.

V. 13. 4. Prospect of death brought intense suffering. Lion-breaking bones.
Agonies of death were sharp and severe.

All day, repetition of yesterdays sufferings await -- thinking all
night.

V. 14. 5. Had only one way to look.

Crane -- loud shrill note -- chatter, rather so did I scream.
Birds when frightened.

Dove -- I did moan -- mourned like

Oppressed -- overcome -- sinking.

Lord undertake -- come between me and gate of death.

Be surety for me -- as a debtor being carried off to prison.

V. SURVIVAL VALUE V. 15-22

Sudden change -- King had been living like you enjoying art treasures, beauty of his palace. Like God appeared to Adam in cool of day and called him into judgment. Face to face with death.

→ V. 15. What does he say about recovery?

He talks it over with himself -- I shall recover. Live 15 more years. I am sure of these 15 years.

First, I will remember days of my sickness.

Softly -- Walk quietly -- at ease.

Bitterness -- as a result of -- or rather after this sickness.

Like sunshine after a storm. Trouble is over, I will remember the lessons learned.

V. 16. Second, I will be useful to others.

By these things -- not bread alone -- Experiences to help other men in their walk - Share his Faith - Jesus - MK. 5:40 said to disciples "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no Faith?"

V. 17 Third I will live a life of peace.

Sickness had embittered his comfort and interrupted his peace.

Thou hast loved my soul back from death - pit. Drawing him back from edge of pit.

WOMAN - 12 yrs. sick - Dr.'s not help - Pray, touched Jesus - Jesus said "go in peace & be whole of thy plague".

Hezekiah knew he was a sinner -- God had pardoned his sins, put them away.

God's love is sufficient to bring a soul from pit of corruptionn perishing souls.

Cast all sins behind his back -- Remembers them no more. This is what God does when he pardons our sins. Psalm 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

V. 18. Fourth / I will glorify God as a pleasure.

Death would have put an end to his praise of the Lord.

Grave cannot praise God

Dead men cannot praise God.

Life is precious -- Zeal unto good works.

Lost and wasted time should not come into the account of your life.

Summons of death we must go -- if your life is unholy, it must go, death does not wait.

Your years should be marked with good works -- Lost and wasted time should not be in your life.

A Roman emperor is reported to have a custom of saying, "I have lost a day" if he had not done any good action in it.

Jesus said, "The night cometh when no man can work."

Good man like Joseph in Potiphar's house. Lord blessed his house for Joseph's sake.

V. 19 Fifth, I will live according to truth.

Only the living can live in truth. God's will and purpose.

Life is worth living -- some of you can say I have lived my allotted term of human life.

Some of you will not see the end of this year.

Some of you have had added years like the king -- mercy of God.

If only the living would praise God

We walk among the tombs.

V. 20 Sixth, I will take regular part in church worship.

I will go to church as long as I live -- All 15 years, I will sing and worship.

(LAME MAN) Kate called Beautiful of the Temple - from Birth - Healed, Entered the Temple - praising God acts 3:1-8

Con. -- 2 Kings 20:7-8

V. 21. 1. GOD EXPECTS YOU to use the means available for healing.

We pray and take the steps that will help. We must not put the physician in the place of God, but use them in God's providence to help.

Hospitals - Doctors - Medicine -

2 Kings 20:7-8 accidentally omitted from their proper place in the narrative.

Part of the cure -- a lump of figs was to be placed on the tumor -- ulcer -- carbuncle -- dangerous boil. Directs a poultice to draw the discharge of the offensive matter from the sore. Plaister.

*Sudden Departure - in Memory of Anna Hopewell, Her life the body of Anna
bore to death by a banana; it was at the fruit that laid her low
But the skin of the thing that made her go!*

V. 22 2. GOD ALSO EXPECTS you to use the means available for worship.

King would go immediately up to the temple to worship.

John 5:14 -- Christ found the (impotent man) Pool of Bethesda - 38 yr infirmity -

Exercise of religion is a delight to the good man.

Rise take up thy bed & walk -
v. 14 - Temple - Next time
years met him,