**R. 931 (86) Rumination for Nov. 27, 2022**

The **T**heme: **Live or die** [berita-bethel-ung.com](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com)

The **T**ext: *For to me to* ***live*** *is Christ, and to* ***die*** *is gain.* Phil. 1:21

The **T**hots:

1. **Hezekiah Was to Die, but He Wanted to Live**
2. The **P**ronouncement: II Kgs, 20:1

*Thus, saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.*

1. The **P**leading: II Kgs. 20:2

*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*.

1. The **P**roducts:
   1. Hezekiah’s life **S**pan was extended 15 years – *I will add unto thy days fifteen years.* 20::6
   2. During this time, his **S**on, Manasseh was born. Later he **S**educed Judah to **S**in against God 21:9-11, 16

*Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed …*

* 1. Manasseh became a **S**ymbol of rebellion for the **S**ins of Judah. 24:3;

*Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight,*

*for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did.*

1. **Elijah Wanted to Die, But He Was to Live and not Die.**
2. His **R**equest: I Kgs. 19:4

*He requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life;*

1. His **R**eason: 19:10

*I have been very jealous for the LORD … and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.*

1. The **R**eality: *Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all … have not bowed unto Baal.* 19:18
2. The ultimate **R**esult: Elijah would not die. II Kgs. 2:11

*Behold, there appeared a chariot… and horses of fire…and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

1. **Jonah wanted to die because God allowed those in Nineveh to live. Jonah**
2. The **P**rophet’s **R**esentment – *O LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.*  4:3, 8
3. The **P**eople’s **R**epentance – *God saw their works that they turned from their evil way*. Jon. 3:10
4. Jonah’s **P**ersonal **R**eason – *God…did not bring upon them the destruction He had threatened*. 4:10, NIV
5. God’s **P**ertinent **R**eply – *the LORD replied, "Have you any right to be angry?”* 4:4, 9, NIV
6. **For Paul, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**
7. Paul’s **D**eclaration: *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*. Phil. 1:21
8. Paul’s **D**esire: *to depart, and to be with Christ…is far better.* 1:23
9. Paul’s **D**ecision:
   1. *Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you*. 1:24
   2. Thus, he decided: *I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith*. 1:25, NIV
10. **Jesus had the power to live, but he chose to die,**

**and Now He Lives forevermore.**

*I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.*

*I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* John 10: 17, 18

1. Jesus **Lived** for the **S**uffering of death. . Heb. 2:9

*Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death;*

1. Jesus **Died** to **S**ave **S**inners.

*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Rom. 5:8

1. Jesus **Lives again** to **S**uccour **S**aints.

*For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.* Heb. 2:18

1. Jesus is the I AM *that* ***liveth****, and was* ***dead****; and, behold, I AM* ***alive*** *for evermore, Amen;* Rev. 1:18

Now He tells us to Remember Him in the Breaking of Bread and Drinking of the Cup until He Comes.

*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.* I Cor. 11:26

*See, the feast of love is spread, Drink the wine, and break the bread;  
Sweet memorials, till the Lord Calls us round His heavenly board;*

*Some from earth, from glory some Severed only, “Till He come.”*

Edward Bickersteth

**Reflections for the Week R. 931**

1. What will our response be if we were in Hezekiah’s place when told by the Lord,

*Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live?*

We all know that one day we all have to bid farewell to this world. What we are not sure about is when! And this is what makes many of us fear how we are going to face the future.

For some, it may be too soon and they are not prepared to meet their God. It can come to them through a sudden illness that catches them unprepared such as a heart attack; for others it may be a fatal accident; for still others it may come at a time least expected when they may even be at the prime of their youth – after all death is no respecter of persons, young or old, poor or wealthy, male or female, black or white. *It is appointed unto* [all] *men* [and women] *once to die*!

Death does not end with death! It is what comes after – the so-called “unknown factor” that comes after death that is so frightening. The Bible says, *It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* (Heb. 9:27). Yes, it is the ominous judgment of our sin in everlasting punishment that frightens most of us, if not, all.

It is for this reason Jesus came into this world to live a sinless life ("*Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth*…*Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness…”.* (I Pet. 2:22-24, NKJV). Thus, Jesus died to bear the judgment of our sin, so that we can be set free and live. He announced when He was on earth, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.* (Jn. 5:24, NKJV).

Yes, everyone has to die. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned* (Rom. 5:12), *therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.* (Rom. 5:18-19, NKJV)

Now death should hold no fear for you, if you have Jesus in your life. Death would be just like passing through a shadow which can cause you no harm though there may be the initial fear when passing through it. Be like King David who wrote, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.* (Psa. 23:4, NKJV).

Will you be able to utter King David’s words when the time comes? **REFLECT**

1. Paul was never afraid of death. He wrote to the Christians at Philippi: (Phil. 1:20-25, NRSV)

*It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death.* ***For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.***

*If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer.*

*I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith.*

Paul longed to die because He knew that after that he would be with His beloved Master for eternity free from the challenges of living. On the other hand, he knew his beloved Christians in Philippi still needed his ministry to them to strengthen them in their faith to bear fruits for their Lord. Unselfishly, he opted to live for them, not so much for himself, but for them!

What is your purpose in living? **REFLECT**

**Points To Ponder:**

*Only one life, ’twill soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last –* CT Studd