**R953\_(86) Rumination for Apr. 30, 2023**

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: he 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. 953**

1. There is one event in life which is ever sure even as a birth gives life to it. When it will come is the one feature that guarantees its coming, but come it will. As one is born, one will die. But when? – no one knows!

The Bible also guarantees that. Heb. 9:27a states very precisely:

*It is appointed unto men once to die…*

Death is sure. No one in time has ever been known to escape this appointment.

Likewise, the judgment that follows it –

Heb. 9:27b – *It is appointed unto men once to die,* ***but after this the judgment****:*

It is the judgment of man’s sin that will consequently send him to his punishment in hell for the sins he commits when alive on earth.

But we can escape this judgment! Today we can still hear the Lord say: "*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)

Jesus could offer us this escape from spiritual death and judgment because He had borne our punishment and there is nothing more for us to bear. He qualified to be so as our Substitute because He was Sinless and Spotless:

He ***did no sin****, neither was guile found in His mouth:* I Pet. 2:22

*He was manifested to take away our sins; and* ***in Him is no sin.*** 1 John 3:5

And God *hath made Him to be sin for us,* [He] ***who knew no sin****;*

*that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*. II Cor. 5:21

*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are,* ***yet without sin***. Heb. 4:15

Now we can rest assured that we can pass from judgment unto life because of what the Lord had accomplished for us on the cross – He bore our punishment and died on our behalf that He might give us life. Those of us who believe in Him can now be assured of this wonderful hope that we are safe in the arms of Jesus and we shall never perish when we leave this world. Are you thus assured? **REFLECT**

1. *And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.* (II Kgs. 4:31)

Today there still exist many pseudo prophets who claim to be able to perform miracles in healing and restoring dead limbs and organs, etc. on various parts of the human body. Some even claim that they can raise the dead and restore them to life. There is no lack of modern-day Ghazi’s with their miraculous staffs and wands and their so-called magical incantations.

When the Lord wills that you should suffer or even die, whatever be your estate, will you be able to say, *It is well* (Heb. *shalom* = peace) *with my soul*”, and even say like David,

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.* (Psa. 23:4)

When it is time to go, are you prepared to do so and meet your God? **REFLECT.**

**Points To Ponder:**

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