

Isaiah 38:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

God's command to 'set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live' demonstrates divine sovereignty over life and death, yet also allows for prayer to change outcomes within His decreed purposes. This paradox reveals that God's pronouncements can be conditional warnings rather than immutable decrees. Hezekiah's childlessness at this point (Manasseh was born three years later) meant no heir to David's throne, threatening messianic promises.

Historical Context

This occurred during or shortly after Sennacherib's invasion (701 BC). Hezekiah was approximately 39 years old, having reigned 14 of his eventual 29 years. The illness was likely a carbuncle or boil that became life-threatening.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How should you respond when God's revealed will seems to contradict His promises?
2. What does Hezekiah's honest emotional response teach you about authentic prayer?

Interlinear Text

בָּם יָמִם	בְּמַלְאָכִים	חִזְקִיָּהוּ	מִת	אֶל יְהִיב וְאֶל
In those days	H1992	sick	was Hezekiah	for thou shalt die
H3117		H2470	H2396	H4191
וְשָׁעִי הָוּ	בְּנֵי אָמָן	רְאֵבָב יְאֵם	רְאֵם רְאֵם	כֶּה אֶל לְ
And Isaiah the son of Amoz	the prophet	unto him Thus saith		H413 H3541
H3470	H1121	H531	H5030	H559
רְאֵם רְאֵם	יְהֹוָה צְדָקָה	בְּנֵי לְבִית	כֶּה מִת	
unto him Thus saith the LORD	in order	Set thine house	H3588	for thou shalt die
H559	H3068	H6680	H1004	H4191
וְלֹא אַתָּה תְּחִי	וְלֹא תְּחִי			
H859	H3808	and not live		
	H2421			

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 32:24 (References Lord): In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.

2 Samuel 17:23 (Parallel theme): And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

Jonah 3:10 (Parallel theme): And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Acts 9:37 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

Isaiah 37:21 (References Lord): Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

Isaiah 1:1 (Parallel theme): The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Isaiah 37:2 (Prophecy): And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 (Parallel theme): Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Jonah 3:4 (Parallel theme): And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.