

THE SHADOW ON THE STAIRS

Who among us has not prayed for healing? Hezekiah had a history of serving God faithfully and was not shy about taking his problems to the Lord in prayer. This is a remarkable story of God's answered prayer for healing, and the Lord not only healed him, but He also provided a miraculous, unique sign of answered prayer, the shadow on the stairs. Certainly, we too come before the Lord with prayer for our own and others' healing. Reflect with me on three statements of the Lord and three responses of King Hezekiah, in light of the story of the shadow on the stairs.

The Shadow of Death

1. Prophecy: *Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live!*
 - a. Arguably the warning is a grace, particularly for those in positions of responsibility.
 - b. Example: Horrible as it is, cancer gives you time to settle issues and prepare for the battle.
2. Response: *I'm in the middle of my life!* (10) [cf. [Psalm 30](#)]
 - a. Immediate and desperate appeal to the Lord—beseech w/ arguments, *I've walked before You...*
 - b. [These things occurred prior to previous chapter, at a time of national tension.]
 - c. Hezekiah probably only in 30s, and as yet his heir unborn.
3. Reflection: The Lord doesn't always tell us when we are about to die.
 - a. Set your house in order is wisdom for all. Be ready to go or stay, trusting the Lord's timing.
 - b. Passionate appeal is appropriate response to adversity/bad news.
 - i. Nabeel Quoreshi counting the family cost of converting from Islam to Christ.
 - ii. Jesus in Gethsemane,

The Shadow of the Cross

1. Prophecy: *I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears, ... I will heal you... will add 15 years.*
 - a. God answers prayer! Perhaps not always as we prefer, but according to His good will.
 - b. Notice that Hezekiah's deliverance includes deliverance of city from Assyria
 - i. King foreshadowing the coming King of Kings
 - ii. Christ as king rules over us and defends us from His and our enemies.
2. Response: *What will be the sign that the Lord will heal me?* (2 K 20:8)
 - a. How will I know that I may go up to the Temple? Context unclear examined by priest
 - i. Apparently, the illness came from some sort of visible boil or sore (21)
 - ii. Prophecy indicated *You will go up to the temple on the third day* (2K 20:5)
 - b. Full gratitude: *You kept my soul from the pit ... You cast my sins behind You* (17; Ps. 16)
3. Reflection: Pray for healing with faith in God's goodness, power, and sovereign will.
 - a. Ultimately healing is full and everlasting.
 - b. But the way to that healing requires payment for sin—through suffering, even the Cross of Jesus.

The Shadow and Eternal Life

1. Prophecy: *And this shall be the sign ...*
 - a. A unique miracle moving the earth backwards in time.
 - b. Foreshadowing angel's word to shepherds: *And this shall be the sign, you shall find the baby...*
2. Response: *So, we will play songs ... all the days of our lives at the house of the Lord* (20).
 - a. A psalm of praise like David's, rejoicing and calling others to rejoice in God's gracious healing.
 - b. *It is the living who give thanks, as I do today* (19), cf. Ps. 116 *What shall I render ...?*
3. Reflection: Hezekiah was healed and happy and had 15 more years, but consider these cautions:
 - a. Despite warnings of coming desolation, Hezekiah said, *For there will be peace in my days.*
 - b. *But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received because his heart was proud...* (2 C 32)

Conclusion: Shadow on the stairs foreshadows the miracle of Jesus, Light and Healer of all our diseases. We don't know what time we will be given, but we know whatever we have is a gift of grace. What return are we giving?