

25 Jan 2015: Preached by Preacher Clement Chew

Topic: **Pray for Long Life?**

Scripture Text: 2 Kings 20:1-7; 12-19

1. Can a Christian pray for long life? What is the basis of such prayer? Some people would quote king Hezekiah's prayer to conclude that Christians can pray for long life. We need to understand the context of Hezekiah's prayer.

2. In 2 Kings chapter 20, the context involves the nation Israel. King Hezekiah had brought about a revival to cause the nation Israel to turn back to God from idolatry. The enemy Assyrians had threatened to invade Judah. The Angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians in such difficult time. King Hezekiah was then sick unto death and his son Mannaseh was not born yet.

3. King Hezekiah prayed to God to spare his life and he wept sore for it. The reason is that the Messianic line will be cut off if he died at this moment. For the nation Israel, God will prosper the land if they are obedient. Hence, God heard the prayer of Hezekiah to add 15 years more to his life.

4. The prayer of Hezekiah is only applicable to Hezekiah's context for a purpose that the Messianic line be preserved. In 3 John 2 there was a record of the prayer for Gaius for health and to prosper. This was with the purpose that Gaius can minister to the servants of God and provide for them.

5. Sadly, it was seen that Hezekiah did not use the 15 extra years of his life for the Lord. He was proud to show the Babylonian visitors the wealth in his house. He wanted to trust in the Babylonian to protect him. It is important to know the reason why we want to pray for long life and for healing. If it is for our own selfish purpose, then such prayer will not be pleasing to God. We must learn to trust God with the time and life that He has given to us to use for His glory.