

人生何求– 诗篇 90:1-17 What's Your Life Pursuit? – Psalm 90:1-17

Introduction: What is the pursuit of life? What is your most fundamental life pursuit?

- The author Moses: The prince of the most civilized and developed country 35000 years ago, Egypt. **“Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.”** But he gave up his throne to become the leader of Israel. He lived for a total of 120 years.
- Psalm 90 is the only psalm that has Moses' name on it. It's a psalm about life. It's common sense that Moses has the credentials to talk about life (whether because of his social status, his knowledge, his age or his life experiences) , but Moses did not talk about life from these perspectives, **but from the perspective of God (vv. 1-2)**

Why? Because God is our Creator. Talking about life without talking about the Creator is a waste of time.

Therefore, let's examine what is life according to the Creator through Moses.

I. Life is short (90:4-6)

Moses uses analogies to describe life. These analogies all emphasize how short life is, and at the same time, they convey various aspects of this short life:

1. **“Are like yesterday”** (v4a) For a thousand years are like yesterday .70-80 years is nothing compared to eternity.

Aspect: It feels like yesterday when we reflect upon our life.

No matter how successful you were yesterday. They are all in the past. There were so many people of high status, great wisdom, wealth and achievements, but that's all in the past. Yesterday is history.

2. **“a watch at night”** (v4b) Life is too short! We can only enjoy our youth for a short period of time.

Aspect: Life is passing away unnoticed, and, before you know it, you're old.

3. **“swept them away like a flood”** (v5a) It's fast. A common phrase “spilled milk” - it means something that cannot be reversed.

Aspect: Many things in life are irreversible, such as time.

4. **“They fall asleep”** (v5b) Too fast for people who sleep well. When we wake up there is nothing left.

Aspect: sometimes we might feel that life is so empty that it's just like a dream.

5. “grass which sprouts anew” (vv. 5c-6) In Palestine, grass is very short-lived. Just like how short human life is.

Aspect: That's the end of every life. We fade and wither away.

II. Life is pathetic (90:7-11)

Why ? Verse 9 - **“finished our years like a sigh.”**

Have you signed?

What is a sigh? It means that it's helpless. Please see how pathetic our life is

Some people's lives end abruptly. What a pity;

Some people live a long life and regret many things, and they eventually end up with but a sigh.

1. **their pride is but labor and sorrow** (v10)

- labor - physical toil
- Sorrow - spiritual suffering

2. **The only outcome of human life: For soon it is gone and we fly away.(v10)**

- At birth we bring nothing, at death we take away nothing
- We strive so hard for a coffin. -- **“What is the span of one's life on earth”**

Why would we fly way?

v3: God turns man back into dust! Why would God want us to die?

v7: because we are consumed by God's anger! Why would God be angry toward us?

Answer: v8 all have sinned. - iniquities and secret sins => sins have seeped into all corners of the world.

All the sins are before God (v8), God cannot ignore it. → Consequences:

v9: God's judgment (in Your fury) → death (unable to fellowship with God: therefore life is short and pathetic (labor and sorrow).

What should we do? There is a turning point → v.11 Did you realize that the fear of God is the turning point?

III. Life has hope (90:12-17)

“teach us” ⇔ A prayer. Once we turn toward God we will have hope ⇔ Christians' lives are not passive.

1. Prayer for a heart of wisdom(v12)

“Wisdom” here means to look at life from God's perspective. It's strange that Moses did not say “so teach us to have a heart of wisdom, that we may know how to number our days.”

[Know how to number our days - means that we know how short life is]

The priority of life: First, get it right with eternity! And then, deal with this life.

2. Prayer for the grace of salvation (v13)

“ Do return, O LORD; how long *will it be?* And be sorry for Your servants”

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent;”

What does it mean to repent / be sorry? It means to return, to change one's mind.

It means not punishing us according to our sins, like how God spared Nineveh from destruction. That's God's grace of salvation. To receive this salvation, we must first repent, like the people of Nineveh, when they heard about Jonah's message, they repented and God spared them.

God, our Creator, does not force anyone to receive the salvation of Jesus Christ through punishment, but is calling us with his loving voice - “come back, my children”

3. Prayer for the satisfaction of God's lovingkindness (v14)

What can satisfy us for life? God's love.

People who have tasted suffering are more eager to long for love. But the only kind of love that can satisfy you is not love from man but love from God. One day when Jesus enters your heart, your life will become sweet and you will be satisfied. Therefore:

We may sing for joy and be glad all our days (v14), a sharp contrast to be “in your fury” (v9).

4. Prayer for the joy of victory (v15)

“Make us glad according to the days You have afflicted us, *And* the years we have seen evil.” This verse tells us that suffering is not merely something that God allows, but it is completely under God’s sovereign control.

Sichuan Earthquakes? Haiti’s earthquakes? SARS? COVID?

Suffering also reminds us that this world is not our permanent home, so that we may be all the more eager to long for a far more beautiful home.

5. Prayer for faithful children (v16)

“Let Your work appear to Your servants And Your majesty to their children.”

Moses asks God to reveal His glory to the children so that they can understand the work of God.

What heritage will you leave your children with? Far more than gold or silver, you should leave them with a correct direction of life.

6. Prayer for a beautiful testimony (v17a)

“Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us” . Whatever life circumstances may be, may we always reflect God’s glory. May we not be afraid of suffering and give up. The greatest testimony of our life is to reveal God’s work.

“Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10)

This verse shows us clearly how to have strength before the Lord.

How do Christians gain strength for their life? How to live a life pleasing to the Lord, full of strength, full of life? When God is glad, His gladness becomes our strength. This kind of strength helps us to face all challenges or difficulties in life, even attacks from the enemy.

7. Prayer for Confirmation of the work of our hands (v17b)

“And confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands.” Moses realized that the biggest enjoyment of life is to serve God. Only doing the work of God is of eternal value. Therefore, a Christian life should be a life of serving God. Only this kind of life is a meaningful life. “Only works confirmed by God have eternal values.” Our work before knowing God, no matter how great it may seem, has no eternal value. Once we know God, as long as we work for the glory of God, our work has eternal value and can be called eternal work. Only when we are doing the eternal work can we ask God to confirm (establish, make firm) it. Only this kind of life will not make us regret before we die.

Summary:

The Bible tells us that a life without knowing God is short and pathetic (filled with labor and sorrow, suddenly it’s gone). But once we come to the Lord, we come to a life of hope– We can enjoy God’s love and have victory over the sorrow and labor caused by sin in this short life. As long as we work for God, it is of eternal value.