

Psalm 90 - Numbering Our Days

Ps. 90 is unusual in that it was composed by Moses, and so we should interpret it in the light of that time period.

1 – Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

God's people from Adam to Moses (and now to us) have found their real and eternal home in God. This world is not our home, but if we live now with and for God, we will, at death (or at Christ's return), enter into our everlasting rest in His presence.

Heb. 11:5 – Enoch pleased God, and God took him to be with him (Gen. 5:24)

11:8-10 – Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11:13-16 – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah sought a better country, a heavenly one, and God had prepared for them a city.

11:24-27 – Moses forsook Egypt. He endured as seeing him who is invisible. God was an invisible reality to him.

2 – Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

God is the almighty Creator, and exists in eternity. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning (origin) of everything that exists, yet He himself had no beginning, nor will ever cease to exist. He is outside of time. He exists in the eternal past, and exists in the eternal future.

3 – Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

A. Through deaths and judgments of those around them, survivors are urged to repent

B. Men inevitably die, and these bodies of flesh are destroyed by corruption and decay. God gave each of us life at the moment of conception, and we became "living souls". At death, we are called back to the giver of life, to answer for what we did with that life. The souls of the righteous (in Christ) live eternally in God's presence, while the unredeemed live in the eternal torment and misery of his righteous judgment.

4 – For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

We think of time as being long or short. It is difficult for us to think outside the range of our own lives. Our consciousness seems to start with our own birth, so that we cannot see the overall picture. This is why it is good to study history, science, theology, etc. (if done from good and true sources) – we can see that we are not the center of the universe, but are but specks in God's ultimate plan. Babies are totally self-centered, but with maturity comes a fuller recognition of our minuteness. Ps. 8

5-6 – Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

Whole generations come and go like waves on the shore. They move quickly, rise up in mighty strength and glory, but then are dashed upon the shore and return to the sea. Our lives pass quickly, as when in a sleep. Jas. 1:9-11, 1 P. 1:24

7-8 – For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

(a later example is in the trespass of Achan – Josh. 5)

God's holy wrath against sin will not be mollified apart from the blood of Christ. That wrath burns even as men continue in ignorance of their precarious state. He allows them to treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of judgment. Whether that judgment falls partially here in this life, or wholly in the next, it will come. Every evil word, deed, and even thought will be exposed to the terrible light of his countenance. Rom. 2:3-11

9-10 – For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Throughout history, life has usually been hard and difficult. Moses started out "easy", but then spent 40 years herding sheep, and another 40 leading a rebellious people around the desert. The Israelites had been slaves. As a result of the Fall, we work by the sweat of our brow, and in old age experience weakness and decline.

The 1900's brought to western civilization the greatest advances and conveniences ever. Electricity, lights, running water, flushing toilets and septic systems, kitchen stoves and refrigeration, foods from all over the world, ... We have luxuries that in previous centuries not even kings could experience.

Yet even in this, there is no ultimate satisfaction. Our lives pass like a flash, and the older we get, the faster time flies. In the end, when facing death, it seems but yesterday that we were children, or married, or knew the challenges of new jobs or homes

or children. But then we are “cut off” from this earthly life. There is an end to our plans, ambitions and dreams, to our acquaintances, our assets, and our debts, and we “fly away”. The spirit quite literally separates from the flesh, and returns to God that made it. Once the spirit is gone, the flesh dies.

11 – Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

Often times we fear something but eventually discover that it is not as bad as we feared. The anticipation was worse than the reality. Not so with God. Men comfort themselves that as they have not been directly confronted by God, that they seem to have gotten away with their sins, and will not be brought to account, that God will see that their good outweighs their bad, and will therefore show them mercy, despite their rejection of Christ. With God, the actuality of his judgments are even more dreadful than our imaginings.

12 – So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Therefore we must number our days here on earth, and not let them slip away in idle pursuits. We must apply our hearts to seek wisdom, to pursue those heavenly treasures that will endure beyond the grave. Death will force us to part with homes, vehicles, money, silver and gold, guns, boats, family and friends, and all earthly ambition.

What can survive the grave? We can leave some things behind – an inheritance to children, writings, reputation, the influences and remembrance of a life well-lived, and descendants who will hopefully follow us to God. But what can we bring with us? Certainly nothing physical, but our relationship with God, our testimony of faithfulness to God, and His to us, and the legacy of prayers that God has not forgotten, and may yet be borne before the throne.

13 – Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

We desire God to conclude our time of chastening, punishment, or dryness, and that we may once again know the goodness of His presence, and have confidence before Him.

14 – O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all thy days.

Not early in the day, but early in life. We pray that God will reveal himself to our children and loved ones so early that they can avoid many sins and their consequences. We can have a life full of God’s movings and mercies, and live a life of thankfulness, dependence on God, and rejoicing. If we delay and think we will live in sin and repent at our leisure, we may discover that we cannot. Perhaps death will come early and cut us down without even a warning, or we may get to the deathbed and find that we cannot repent. Repentance is a gift, and God is not under obligation to give it, if you have repeatedly rejected his call (Proverbs 1).

15 – Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

For all the times of our punishments, chastenings, sorrow and groanings, and the hard times of this life, we pray that God would replace them with times of blessing, praise, and rejoicing in His presence.

16 – Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory appear unto their children.

We are to believe for God to move, to do signs and mighty wonders, that the name of Christ would be magnified in this earth before the nations. That our children would see the wonders and mighty acts of God.

17 – And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

As we respond properly to chastening and “hard times”, God’s presence will be manifested in us to those around us. As we live according to His will, He will then bless the work of our hands, because we will be working with Him (His guidance and direction) instead of constantly against Him.

It is a bit ironic that as we move with God and the flow of His will, instead of battling Him and trying to paddle against the current, we will at the same time be moving against the current of this world, and its current events, fads, mores, educational systems, and the false denominational systems.