

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XC: Focusing On Life's Only Meaningful Venture

(Psalm 90:1-17)

I. Introduction

- A. Psalm 90 is a prayer by Moses, a great man of God whose life was cut short in divine discipline so he could not enter the Promised Land for his sin in the wilderness, cf. Deuteronomy 32:48-52; Numbers 20:1-13.
- B. The prayer deals with man's relatively short life-span and the need to live it righteously before the Lord in view of the brevity of life, and we study this psalm for invaluable insight and edification (as follows):

II. Focusing On Life's Only Meaningful Venture, Psalm 90:1-17.

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm comprise the first part of verse one in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1055), so we stay with the numbering system of the psalm in the English Bible for clarity.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 90:1-17 as follows:
 - 1. "Adonai, You (em. pron.) have been our habitation of refuge from generation to generation," Psalm 90:1.
 - 2. "Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the land and the world, from eternity (past) up until eternity (future), it is You Who is (the) Elohim," Psalm 90:2.
 - 3. "You return insignificant man ('*enosh*, Ibid.; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 50-52) to dust, saying, 'Return, O sons of common man ('*adam*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., Girdlestone, p. 45-50)," v. 3.
 - 4. "For a thousand years in Your eyes are as a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night," v. 4.
 - 5. "You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning --" (Psalm 90:5)
 - 6. "though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered," Psalm 90:6.
 - 7. "For we are consumed by Your anger, and terrified by Your indignation," Psalm 90:7.
 - 8. "You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your presence," Psalm 90:8.
 - 9. "For all of our days pass under Your wrath; we finish our years with a moan," Psalm 90:9.
 - 10. "The length of our days is seventy years -- or eighty, if we have the strength; yet, their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away," Psalm 90:10.
 - 11. "Who knows the power of Your anger? For Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due You," Psa. 90:11.
 - 12. "Teach us to number our days like this so that we may gain a heart of wisdom," Psalm 90:12.
 - 13. "Relent, O Jahweh! How long will it be? Have compassion on Your servants," Psalm 90:13.
 - 14. "Satisfy us in the morning with Your loyal love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days," v. 14.
 - 15. "Make us glad for as many days as You have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble," 15.
 - 16. "May Your deeds be shown unto Your servants, Your splendor to their children," Psalm 90:16.
 - 17. "May the favor of Adonai our Elohim rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us -- yes, establish the work of our hands," Psalm 90:17.
- C. We note significant observations and applications regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. Moses' own history of being disciplined by the Lord to have his life cut short so he could not enter the Promised Land for his sin at the waters of Meribah (Numbers 20:1-13; Deuteronomy 32:48-52) make his observations about man's brevity in this life due to sin (v. 3-11) very moving: he deeply felt this issue!
 - 2. Accordingly, Moses' call (v. 12) that God teach us to realize how short this life is that we acquire a heart of wisdom in buying up every opportunity we do have in this life to obey the Lord versus sinning takes on great force, what should make every believer who focuses on this psalm to apply the idea Moses presents!
 - 3. Moses pleaded with God to establish the work of his hands, that his brief life would count for something of value beyond his imminent passing, Psalm 90:17. The books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) and God's Law given through Moses has formed much of Western Civilizations (Edward McNall Burns, Western Civilizations, 1963, p. 100), showing God's answer to Moses' request!

***Lesson:* From Moses' own personal tragedy of seeing his life cut short so that he missed entry into the Promised Land in divine discipline, reflected in Psalm 90:1-17, teaches us to focus on this life's brevity that we not waste our time committing sin that God will judge, but do God's righteous will throughout life. If we do this, the Lord will establish the work of our hands, making it extend far beyond our temporal lives and into eternity, cf. 1 John 2:17.**

***Application:* May we learn from Moses' testimony to focus on life's brevity that we not waste our time committing sin, but using life's opportunities to heed God that He might make our brief stay on earth eternally worthwhile.**