

"The Prayer of Moses"

Psalm 90

Introduction: In Psalm 90 we find the words of Moses as he prayed for himself as well as the people of Israel. As Moses records this prayer he does so out of the wilderness wanderings.

I. **The Back Ground**

This prayer comes from the 38 years after Israel had come to Kadesh Barnea and had failed to trust in God and therefore they did not enter into the land. Let me show you the judgment which God pronounced on Israel.

Numbers 14:26-34

²⁶ And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

²⁷ How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.

²⁸ Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

²⁹ Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward which have murmured against me.

³⁰ Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

³¹ But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

³² But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.

³³ And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.

³⁴ After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

All the numbered men would die over the next 38 years.

Numbers 1:45-46

⁴⁵ *So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel;*

⁴⁶ *Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.*

The number of men who would die over the next 38 years would be 603,550. That would be 15,882 men per year. That comes out to 43 men per day. That equals about 2 men per hour over the next 38 years.

This is the back ground for Psalm 90.

II. **The Frailty of Life**

Starting in verse 3 and going through verse 11 Moses points to the frailty of life before he petitions God. I want to walk you through these verses and then we will look at Moses' petition.

a. **Man is under the curse.**

Notice Psalm 90:3

Death is inescapable because we are all under the curse and we all will return to the dust of the ground and this curse is for man's benefit.

Genesis 3:17-19

¹⁷ *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

¹⁸ *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;*

¹⁹ *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

Job 14:1-2, 5

Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.

² *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*

⁵ *Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;*

b. **The passing of life.**

Notice Psalm 90:4

Our lives here are but a whisper compared to eternity. Life here is like "A WATCH IN THE NIGHT".

"Sir John Chardin observes in a note on this verse, that as the people of the East have no clocks, the several parts of the day and of the night, which are eight in all, are given notice of. In the Indies, the parts of the night are made known as well by instruments of music in great cities, as by the rounds of the watchmen, who with cries, and small drums, give them notice that a fourth part of the night is passed. Now as these cries awaked those who had slept, all that quarter part of the night, it appeared to them but as a moment."

A watch in the night was but 3 hours long. This is used to show just how short life is compared to eternity.

Notice Psalm 90:5-6

Moses compares life to 3 things here:

1. **Waters of a flood.**

Listen to the words of William Bradshaw on this thought.

"Let us meditate seriously upon the swift passage of our days, how our life runs away like a stream of waters, and carrieth us with it. Our condition in the eyes of God in regard of our life in this world is as if a man that knows not how to swim, should be cast into a great stream of water, and be carried down with it, so that he may sometimes lift up his head or his hands, and cry for help, or catch hold of this thing and that, for a time, but his end will be drowning, and it is but a small time that he can hold out, for the flood which carries him away will soon swallow him up. And surely our life here if it be rightly considered, is but like the life of a person thus violently carried down a stream. All the actions and motions of our life are but like unto the strivings and struggles of a man in that case: our eating,

our drinking, our physic, our sports, and all other actions are but like the motions of the sinking man. When we have done all that we can, die we must, and be drowned in this deluge."

2. **Sleep**

3. **Grass**

Notice Psalm 90:7-9

Moses tells us that our lives are like "A TALE THAT IS TOLD".

In the days of the wilderness wanderings there were no books to read. People would gather together and some would tell stories to entertain the listeners. The stories would be told in such a way that they would hold the reader's attention. But the stories were short and they were soon forgotten.

It is the very same way with our lives. Our lives are like a novel which may be very interesting for the time but after it is read the memories fade away and quickly it is over.

James 4:14

¹⁴ *Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

Notice Psalm 90:10

Man's life is at the best 70 years and if he lives to be 80 years of age the remaining years are but sorrow and labor.

Listen to the words of Wilkerson:

"So short is that life which nature allows, and yet we sleep away part, and play away part, and the cares of the world have a great part, so that the true spiritual and Christian life hath little or nothing in the end."

III. The Petition

Notice Psalm 90:12, 16-17

Moses prayed that he would see each day as a gift and that his work would be accepted by God

December 31, 2017

New Year's Eve PM Service

Application:

The year before will go by very quickly so let us pray that God would teach us to number our days. Let us see each day as a gift and let us use them to honor and glorify our Lord who died to save us from our sins.