

WHEN OUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED, PSALM 90:12

INTRODUCTION:

FACING EVERY THINKING PERSON ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES.
EITHER THIS MATERIAL UNIVERSE IS ETERNAL AND THERE MAY BE NO GOD;
OR GOD IS ETERNAL AND CREATED THIS MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

MOSES IN THE 90TH PSALM SPEAKS THE CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY
IN THESE WORDS: "BEFORE THE MOUNTAINS WERE BROUGHT FORTH,
OR EVER THOU HADST FORMED THE EARTH AND THE WORLD,
EVEN FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING, THOU ART GOD."

BEFORE THE FIRST STAR EVER TWINKLED OUT ITS PRISTINE GLORY,
EVEN FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING, THOU ART GOD,

BEFORE THE SILVERY MOON EVER MIRRORED THE REFLECTED RAYS OF
THE SUN AND BATHED EARTH'S MIDNIGHT WITH ITS MELLOW RADIANCE,
EVEN FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING, THOU ART GOD.

BEFORE THE FIRST DECAYING LEAVES FORMED PRE-HISTORIC FOSSILS
FILLING EARTH'S BOSOM WITH COAL AND FUEL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS,
EVEN FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING THOU ART GOD.

THE MAN MOSES WAS NO MATERIALIST.

UNLIKE SHALLOW THINKERS OF OUR 20TH CENTURY, HE CLEARLY REALIZED
THAT THERE MUST BE AN OMNIPOTENT, ETERNAL BEING WHO HAD NO
BEGINNING.

HE FOUND IT MORE RATIONAL, AS WELL AS MORE RELIGIOUS,
TO BELIEVE THAT GOD, RATHER THAN MATTER, IS ETERNAL.

AND, NOT BEING CIRCUMSCRIBED BY A CLOCK,
OR TERMINATED BY TIME,

GOD'S RELATION TO A DAY IS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM OURS.

A THOUSAND YEARS IN HIS SIGHT ARE BUT AS OUR YESTERDAY,
WHICH LIVES ON OUR LIFE ONLY AS A LINGERING, PHANTOM MEMORY.

OR A MILLENIUM IN GOD'S EXPERIENCE IS LIKE A 3 HOUR WATCH
OF A SOLDIER PACING MONOTONOUSLY IN NIGHT'S QUIET BLACKNESS.

WE, HOWEVER, ARE CREATURES OF TIME. WE ARE IMMORTAL.

WE SHALL NEVER HENCEFORTH CEASE TO EXIST SOMEWHERE IN SOME WAY,
AN EXISTENCE DIFFERENT, BUT NO LESS REAL, THAN OUR PRESENT
EXISTENCE.

BUT WE ARE NOT ETERNAL. WE HAVE NOT ALWAYS EXISTED.

WE CAME INTO BEING AT A DEFINITE POINT IN TIME.

WE SHALL BE HERE ON EARTH FOR A CERTAIN LENGTH OF TIME,
AND THEN AFTER DEATH, OR AT CHRIST'S SECOND COMING,

SHOULD HE RETURN DURING OUR LIFETIME,

WE SHALL ENTER OUR ETERNAL ABODE.

BUT WHILE WE ARE LIVING HERE ON EARTH OUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED.

THIS I BELIEVE IS TRUE IN A LITERAL, TEMPORAL SENSE.

MOSES REFERS TO THIS IN V.10, "THE DAYS OF OUR YEARS ARE
THRESCORE YEARS AND TEN. . ."

THIS MORNING, HOWEVER, I AM SPEAKING OF THIS IN THE SENSE
WHICH MOSES MEANS IN V. 12, "SO TEACH US TO NUMBER OUR DAYS,
THAT WE MAY APPLY OUR HEARTS UNTO WISDOM."

HE REALLY PRAYS, "TEACH US TO MAKE OUR DAYS REALLY COUNT."

THERE ARE MANY, MANY PEOPLE WHO LIVE AND DIE WITHOUT
REALLY ACCOMPLISHING ANYTHING ACTUALLY WORTHWHILE.

MATTHEW ARNOLD WROTE:

"MOST MEN EDDY ABOUT

HERE AND THERE — EAT AND DRINK,

CHATTER AND LOVE AND HATE,

GATHER AND SQUANDER, ARE RAISED

ALOFT, ARE HURL'D IN THE DUST,

STRIVING BLINDLY, ACHIEVING

NOTHING; AND, THEN THEY DIE —

PERISH; AND NO ONE ASKS

WHO OR WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN,

MORE THAN HE ASKS WHAT WAVES

IN THE MOONLIT SOLITUDES MILD

OF THE MIDMOST OCEAN, HAVE SWELLED,

FOAMED FOR A MOMENT, AND GONE."

THESE WORDS SOUND TOO MELANCHOLY TO MOST OF US;

BUT THEY STATE A VERY SAD FACT ABOUT A LARGE PART OF THE HUMAN RACE

WHEN ARE OUR DAYS NUMBERED? WHEN DOES OUR LIFE REALLY COUNT?

I. OUR DAYS ARE SO NUMBERED WHEN WE PROPERLY APPRECIATE THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

1. THE GREATNESS OF HIS ETERNITY, V. 2

2. THE GREATNESS OF HIS POWER, V. 5

3. THE GREATNESS OF HIS WRATH, VS. 7, 9, 11.

4. THE GREATNESS OF HIS MERCY, V. 14

(POOR DYING WOMAN WHO SAID TO THE CHRISTIAN,

"DOES GOD CARE FOR THE LIKES OF ME?"

5. THE GREATNESS OF HIS GLORY, V. 16.

II. IN ORDER FOR OUR DAYS TO BE NUMBERED SO THAT THEY REALLY COUNT IN GOD'S SIGHT, WE MUST NOT BE FRIGHTENED BY OUR FRAGILENESS. V. 5, 9

1. GOD IS GREAT AND WE ARE LITTLE

2. BUT LET US NOT FORGET THAT WE ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

3. OUR LIFE CAN BE WORTHWHILE AND CONSTRUCTIVE AND

TRULY VALUABLE TO THE GLORY OF GOD,

AND TO THE GOOD OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

4. OUR POSITION AS CHRISTIANS.

A. CHILDREN OF GOD.

B. CO-WORKERS WITH HIM.

C. AMBASSADORS FOR HIM.

D. KINGS AND PRIESTS WITH HIM.

As Shakespeare said, we may be "such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep" and we may have
a strong feeling of transience, but we know
that there is an unchanging God who "has
been our dwelling place in all generations"
and we have perfect security in Him.

III. OUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED SO THAT THEY REALLY COUNT WHEN WE ARE SAVED FROM OUR SINS.

1. ONCE A NURSE GOING ON DUTY SAID, "O, I'D GIVE ANYTHING IN THE WORLD IF I HAD SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT TO DO!"

2. LIFE BEGINS, NOT AT 40, BUT WHENEVER YOU RECEIVE JESUS AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOR.

3. THE WISEST THING ONE CAN DO IS TO LET JESUS SAVE HIM FROM HIS SINS.

4. THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE.

(over)

IV. OUR DAYS ARE PROPERLY NUMBERED ONLY WHEN WE ARE GOOD STEWARDS OF OUR TIME, Talents & Possessions

1. OVER A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AN UNNAMED AMERICAN WRITER SAID:

"WE ARE BORN IN HASTE;

WE FINISH OUR EDUCATION ON THE RUN;

WE MARRY ON THE WING;

WE MAKE A FORTUNE AT A STROKE, AND LOSE IT IN THE SAME MANNER, TO WIN AND LOSE IT AGAIN TEN TIMES OVER, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE.

OUR BODY IS A LOCOMOTIVE;

OUR SOUL A HIGH PRESSURE ENGINE;

OUR LIFE IS LIKE A SHOOTING STAR,

AND DEATH OVERTAKES US AT THE LAST LIKE A FLASH OF LIGHTNING!

(THAT WAS IN 1839;

WHAT WOULD HE SAY TODAY?)

2. AGAIN AND AGAIN PEOPLE, EVEN CHRISTIAN PEOPLE, SAY,

"I DON'T HAVE TIME" — NOT EVEN TIME TO DO THE WILL OF GOD.

3. WE MUST REDEEM THE TIME (over)

V. WHEN OUR DAYS ARE SO NUMBERED THAT THEY REALLY COUNT

WE ARE BLESSED BY GOD'S BEAUTY, V. 17.

1. A HOMELY CHRISTIAN WOMAN IS GREATER BLESSED WITH THE BEAUTY OF CHRIST, THAN IS AN ATTRACTIVE UNSAVED WOMAN WHO BOASTS OF ONLY THE BEAUTY OF COSMETICS.

2. LIVING IN CLOSE COMMUNION WITH CHRIST IS LIKE HANDLING A COLORFUL BUTTERFLY — SOME OF ITS BEAUTY COMES OFF ON YOUR HAND — OR, IT IS LIKE WALKING THROUGH A PERFUME FACTORY — SOME OF ITS FRAGRANCE WILL LINGER WITH YOU AS YOU LEAVE, — AS MOSES' FACE WAS RADIANT WITH A HEAVENLY GLORY WHEN HE CAME DOWN FROM THE MOUNT AFTER MEETING GOD.

CONCLUSION:

OH, MY FRIENDS, LET US NOT TRIFLE WITH OUR TIME,

OR DESECRATE OUR DAYS,

OR WASTE OUR WEEKS,

BUT LET US PRAY EARNESTLY, "TEACH US TO NUMBER OUR DAYS, SO THAT THEY REALLY COUNT."

IT IS ONLY AS WE PUT THE WILL OF GOD IN OUR SCHEDULE THAT WE FIND THE SECRET OF A HAPPY, PURPOSEFUL, AND CONSTRUCTIVE LIFE.

HIS HIGHEST WILL, IF YOU ARE UNSAVED, IS THAT YOU COME AND ACCEPT HIM AS YOUR SAVIOR, AND, WHEN YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN, THAT YOU OBEY HIM AND LIVE FOR HIM.

WE SHALL GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THIS STEP NOW AS WE SING THE INVITATION HYMN.

IV

"How soon hath Time, The subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year.
Jno. Milton.

"Patient is time: it knows that Truth will stand
Against all tempests, like the iron core
of the iron earth...
that which is real is real, though planets crash
and ages die, and shall endure unchanged
when continents and their oceans are
separated.

III

Ultimate security and meaning in life cannot
be found by improving social conditions and
by inventing better economic systems.

Our real need goes deeper.

Even if all social ideals were realized,
and all political platforms were imple-
mented, we would still be discontented
without a knowledge of the Lord.

Augustine was right when he said that our
hearts are restless till they find rest
in God.

It is not enough to believe that God exists,
or even to be assured that he is a personal
God and that he is favorable toward mankind.
We must commit ourselves to him, trust him,
and find in him a refuge in all changing
experiences of life

Beach

St. Peter FBC - 12/30/84

H.M. 7/21/81

Norman B.C. 12-29-85

Gateway B.C. Jan 4, '81