

## Let the Beauty of God Be upon Us

If God favors us, why do we live only 70 or 80 years, and why are those years filled with sorrow?

Psalm 90

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • November 17, In the year of our Lord, 2013  
Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – “Let the Beauty of Jesus Be Seen in Me,” “I’ll Fly Away”

### Prelude:

#### **I. What is life?**

- A. We are frail, but an eternal God watches over us.
- B. We are sinful, but a holy God deals with us.
  - 1. We live a short time, and sorrow fills those years.
  - 2. We live a short time, but we want God’s beauty upon us.

#### **II. What do you want on your headstone?**

- A. What phrase could summarize your hyphen?
- B. How about the preface to Psalm 90?

### Persuasion:

#### **I. Psalm 90.0 – A Man Who Knew God**

- o A Prayer of Moses the man of God.  
(Psalm 90.0)
- A. Just let it be said that we are of God.
  - 1. So and so, man of God.
  - 2. So and so, woman of God.
    - a) Yet, the preface says, Moses *the* man of God.
    - b) He was the man.
- B. How much could have been said about the 120 years of Moses, yet,
  - 1. what the preface says in brief,
  - 2. says it is all.

C. Moses was a man of God.

1. God formed Moses.
2. God directed Moses.
  - a) Moses lived for God.
  - b) Moses died for God.

## **II. Psalm 90.1 – You Can Know God**

1 Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.  
(Psa 90.1)

A. You can know the Lord, because

1. He is not far away,
2. as Paul told the Athenians centuries ago,

27 “...in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being...” (Acts 17.27–28).

B. Therefore, the Lord has not only been Israel’s dwelling place, but

1. all generations of men,
2. all cultures,
3. all languages,
4. all classes,
  - a) from Adam and Eve to you and your family,
  - b) the Lord has been the dwelling place for all of us.
    - (1) Therefore, wherever you go,
    - (2) you are at home, because
      - (a) the Lord is your dwelling place, and

(b) He is everywhere.

C. The Christian enjoys something even more, because

22 in [Jesus] you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in *the Spirit* (Eph 2.22).

1. You see, to say that we live, move, and have our being in God
2. as our dwelling place,
  - a) does not mean that God lives in us.
    - (1) We live in Him.
    - (2) Does He live in us?

### **III. Psalm 90.2 – God Is Eternal**

2 Before the mountains were brought forth,  
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,  
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.  
(Psa 90.2)

A. All generations have dwelt in Him, because

1. He is the One who has always been, and
2. He created us.

B. Moses looked around and saw the oldest things on Earth.

1. He saw the mountains.
2. He saw the world.
  - a) As old as they are,
  - b) our God already was.
    - (1) Time is simply a parenthesis to eternity.
    - (2) Before the left parenthesis He existed.
    - (3) After the right parenthesis He shall continue to be.

(4) Now, in time He is here.

#### **IV. Psalm 90.3-6 – Man Is Transitory**

3 You turn man to destruction,  
And say, “Return, O children of men.”  
4 For a thousand years in Your sight  
Are like yesterday when it is past,  
And like a watch in the night.  
5 You carry them away like a flood;  
They are like a sleep.  
In the morning they are like grass which grows up:  
6 In the morning it flourishes and grows up;  
In the evening it is cut down and withers.  
(Psa 90.3-6)

A. Although the Lord has been our dwelling place since the Garden of Eden,

1. He turns us to destruction.
2. We do not live here forever.

B. We are like the morning grass.

1. It grows up.
2. It looks good.
3. Then we cut it down.
  - a) During the Spring, the grass at our house grows one inch per day.
  - b) We let it grow some, then we whack it down.
    - (1) Moses said that the life of man seems that way.
    - (2) We grow up fast, only for the Lord to cut us down.

C. The Bible elsewhere affirms the brevity of life.

1. Our life is a vapor that appears momentarily (James 4.13-14).
2. Man’s vain life passes like a shadow (Ecc 6.12).

D. How much death did Moses see?

1. During the last 40 years of his life,
2. he saw about two million people die, sometimes thousands at a time!

E. Since God has always been, and

1. since He was before the mountains and the Earth,
2. then a thousand years are nothing to Him.
  - a) When one thousand years have transpired,
  - b) it is like yesterday to Him.
    - (1) Let us go back one thousand years to AD 1013.
    - (2) Do you know anything about that year?
      - (a) God knows that year like you know yesterday.
      - (b) I discovered this about the year 1013.
        - i) It started on a Thursday.
        - ii) After the King of Denmark invaded England, he was proclaimed King within the Danelaw region of England.
        - iii) By December 25, he became King of all England, forcing Æthelred the Unready to flee to Normandy.
        - iv) Henry II, Holy Roman Emperor, signed a peace treaty at Merseburg with Duke Bolesław I Chrobry of Poland who recognized him as overlord.
        - v) He gathered an army at Augsburg to begin his second Italian military campaign.
        - vi) The Jews were expelled from the caliphate of Córdoba.
        - vii) The Poles withdrew from Pomerania.
        - viii) Kaifeng, capital of China, became the largest city of the world, taking the lead from Córdoba in Al-Andalus.
        - ix) The largest of the Four Great Books of Song is completed in 1,000 volumes of 9.4 million written Chinese characters.

x) Lyfing is appointed by Æthelred the Unready as Archbishop of Canterbury.

xi) The Al-Hakim Mosque is completed in Cairo.

xii) Sancha of León, wife of Ferdinand I of León, was born.

c) Are not glad that I checked up on that stuff, because

(1) we all thought Sancha of León had been born in 1023.

(2) So he was actually ten years older than we thought!

(a) She always did take good sculptures.

(b) Some women can just look younger in their sculptures.

3. Did you know all this stuff?

4. However, God knows every detail of every person from that year!

#### **V. Psalm 90.7-11 – God Consumes Us in His Wrath**

7 For we have been consumed by Your anger,  
And by Your wrath we are terrified.  
8 You have set our iniquities before You,  
Our secret sins in the light of Your countenance.  
9 For all our days have passed away in Your wrath;  
We finish our years like a sigh.  
10 The days of our lives are seventy years;  
And if by reason of strength they are eighty years,  
Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow;  
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.  
11 Who knows the power of Your anger?  
For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath.  
(Psa 90.7-11)

A. The Lord has shortened our lives by His anger.

1. Why He has He been angry?

2. Our bodies have the capability of living forever, but

a) the Lord consumes us and

- b) we do not even come close to living forever.
- B. Verse 8 reveals the problem.
- 1. Our sin, even our secret sin, God sees.  
  
“Secret sin on earth is open scandal in heaven!” (Lewis Sperry Chafer).
  - 2. That sin violates His holy will and ruins us.
- C. Therefore verse 9 says, our days pass away in God’s wrath.
- 1. The reason our bodies deteriorate and we die
  - 2. is that the Lord said sin brings on death.
    - a) Therefore, our bodies start to break down.
    - b) We experience a long death over the decades.
- D. So then, verse 9, we finish our years like a sigh.
- 1. Even if we live 70 or 80 years,
  - 2. we still die, and
    - a) labor and sorrow consume our years.
    - b) Then we are cut off and we fly away somewhere else.
      - (1) Moses was not proscribing the length of our years, but
      - (2) merely describing what is typical.
        - (a) Some of us do not make it to 70, and
        - (b) some of us go past 80.
          - i) However, that states the average lifespan, and
          - ii) it has been since before Moses.
- E. Jacob spoke of life in a similar way, when Pharaoh asked the age of Jacob,
- 9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in

the days of their pilgrimage” (Gen 47.9).

1. We have good moments, but
2. life is rough, especially toward the end.

F. We see these things, but

1. who truly knows the power of God’s anger.
2. What if He unleashed the fullness of His wrath? So then please:

### **VI. Psalm 90.12-17 – Let the Beauty of God Be upon Us**

- 12 So teach us to number our days,  
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.
- 13 Return, O LORD!  
How long?  
And have compassion on Your servants.
- 14 Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy,  
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days!
- 15 Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us,  
The years in which we have seen evil.
- 16 Let Your work appear to Your servants,  
And Your glory to their children.
- 17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us,  
And establish the work of our hands for us;  
Yes, establish the work of our hands.  
(Psa 90.12-17)

A. Since our lives are short,

1. teach us to number, not merely our years, but our days.
2. We need to be reminded that we will not live here forever.
  - a) How many people born in 1013 are still with us?
  - b) How many of them made it to 1113?
    - (1) According to what Moses said, and
    - (2) according to what we observe,

- (a) not many of them made it.
- (b) Some lived to be 100, but
  - i) even as now,
  - ii) so it was then, an exception.

B. Therefore, if you know that you do not have a thousand years before you,

- 1. what should you do?
- 2. What should you accomplish?
  - a) Moses by the Spirit of God said let us get wisdom.
  - b) Solomon agreed,

7     Wisdom is the principal thing;  
          Therefore get wisdom.  
          And in all your getting, get understanding.  
          (Pro 4.7)

C. Knowing of how we have damaged things,

- 1. Moses pled with the Lord to return to man,
- 2. showing compassion on those of us who are His servants.
  - a) Moses continued to call for God's mercy
  - b) that we might experience gladness rather than sorrow.

D. In verse 16, the man of God wanted to see God's work and His glory.

E. Then Moses pled for the beauty of the Lord to be upon His people.

- 1. Rather than having things destroyed,
- 2. Moses wanted the Lord to establish the work of His people.
  - a) God in heaven, Since we live here for such a short time,
  - b) let your beauty be upon us
    - (i) that the few things we do

(2) might be established and be productive.

### **Exhortation:**

#### **I. Who is your dwelling place?**

- A. What or who do you believe has always been?
- B. Do you see how time flies?
- C. Can you believe that you are as old as you are?
- D. Do thoughts of God run your life?
  - 1. Do you want His beauty dwelling upon you?
  - 2. Do you know what you have to do to have your work established?

#### **II. Psalm 90 dealt with all these issues.**

- A. The life of Moses had its every meaning in the existence of God.
- B. The same God who watched over Moses and
  - 1. helped him with the massive job of leading Israel,
  - 2. also watches over you.
    - a) He wants to know whether you will commit your life to Him.
    - b) In just a little while, you will meet Him.
- C. Are you ready for that meeting?

#### **III. To God we say,**

Life Is Short

You are Lord from beginning to end.  
All of time in a flash You transcend.  
Lifelong plans You abort.  
But since time is so short,  
make our life's work to be a God-send.

<http://www.biblelimericks.com/?limerick=psalms-9017-the-prayer-of-moses>

**IV. Receive Him, believe Him, obey Him.**