

**Teach Us To Count Our Days**  
**Psalm 90; Ecc.3:9-13; James 4:13-16**

0.0 Introduction

- 0.1 The next part of James fit well with reflection on recent losses: avoiding presumption (and one can be presumptuous about financial or other success)
- 0.2 Grief is the emotional and physiological experience that comes with loss of person we Love – evidenced in sadness, weakness, sleeplessness, anxiety, feeling lost
- 0.3 God designed us to *feel* as well as think – and we *feel* brokenness in many ways (and we don't have to learn or practice it, for grieving is already built into us)
- 0.4 Death (and its impact) is ultimate message and reminder: we cannot control world nor ourselves. With/without warning, things change and some are lost
- 0.5 “God has set eternity into our hearts” (Ecc.3:11) – something bigger than mortal frame; Moses (note introduction tag) experienced this over his 120 years

1.0 A Song of Eternity and Mortality (Ps.90)

- 1.1 Eternal God (vv.1-2)
- 1.2 Human frailty contrasts with God's infinity (vv.3-4) – pictured in metaphor (vv.5-6)
- 1.3 God's righteous justice (vv.7-8)
- 1.4 Reflection on our present state (vv.9-10) – yet only some will do this (v.11)
- 1.5 May God instruct, show mercy and grant wellbeing (vv.12-14)
  - “teach us to count our days” (v.12) – reckon with your span of mortality
- 1.6 May we find joy and God's favor in this life (vv.15-17)

2.0 Lessons From the Song (Jas.4:13-16)

- 2.1 Personal success is fine, but avoid presumption (v.13)
- 2.2 Know what you cannot know (v.14)
- 2.3 Deo Volente (D.V.) (v.15)
- 2.4 Caution about pride – humility preferable (v.16)

3.0 More on the Importance of This

- 3.1 God is just *and* merciful – and we need to grow in harsh times
- 3.2 Love your neighbor energetically (opportunities come & go fast)

*Next week (April 4) – Those Who Wait - James 5:7-11*

# Psalm 90 (NASB)

## BOOK 4

### God's Eternity and the Brevity of Human Life.

#### A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

90 Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

<sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were born

Or You gave birth to the earth and the world,

Even from everlasting to everlasting,

<sup>3</sup> You turn mortals back into dust

And say, "Return, you sons of mankind."

<sup>4</sup> For a thousand years in Your sight

Are like yesterday when it passes by,

Or *like* a watch in the night.

<sup>5</sup> You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep;

In the morning they are like grass that sprouts anew.

<sup>6</sup> In the morning it flourishes and sprouts anew;

Toward evening it wilts and withers away.

<sup>7</sup> For we have been consumed by Your anger,

And we have been terrified by Your wrath.

<sup>8</sup> You have placed our guilty deeds before You,

Our hidden *sins* in the light of Your presence.

<sup>9</sup> For all our days have dwindled away in Your fury;

We have finished our years like a sigh.

<sup>10</sup> As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years,

Or if due to strength, eighty years,

Yet their pride is *only* trouble and tragedy;

For it quickly passes, and we disappear.

<sup>11</sup> Who understands the power of Your anger

And Your fury, according to the fear that is due You?

<sup>12</sup> So teach *us* to number our days,

That we may present *to You* a heart of wisdom.

<sup>13</sup> Do return, LORD; how long *will it be*?

And be sorry for Your servants.

<sup>14</sup> Satisfy us in the morning with Your graciousness,

That we may sing for joy and rejoice all our days.

<sup>15</sup> Make us glad according to the days You have afflicted us,

*And* the years we have seen evil.

<sup>16</sup> Let Your work appear to Your servants

And Your majesty to their children.  
<sup>17</sup> May the kindness of the Lord our God be upon us;  
And confirm for us the work of our hands;  
Yes, confirm the work of our hands.

## **Ecclesiastes 3:9-13 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup> What benefit *is there for* the worker *from that* in which he labors? <sup>10</sup> I have seen the task which God has given the sons of mankind with which to occupy themselves.

### **God Set Eternity in the Heart of Mankind**

<sup>11</sup> He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, without *the possibility that* mankind will find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

<sup>12</sup> I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime;  
<sup>13</sup> moreover, that every person who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor—this is the gift of God.

## **James 4:13-16 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." <sup>14</sup> Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. For you are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while, and then vanishes away.  
<sup>15</sup> Instead, *you ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." <sup>16</sup> But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.