

ONLY HERE FOR A LITTLE TIME

by John Isaac Edwards

James asked, “...*For what is your life?*” and then answered, “...*It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*” (Jas. 4:14). To impress upon our minds the fact that we’re only here for a little time, I’m calling attention to Biblical words and phrases that express the brevity of life.

1) **A VAPOR.** James likened life to “...*a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*” (Jas. 4:14). Acts 2:19 mentions “...*vapour of smoke.*” A good exercise: Light a candle. Blow it out. Watch the vapour of smoke vanish away. That’s your life!

2) **SWIFTER THAN A WEAVER’S SHUTTLE.** Job uttered, “*My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope*” (Job 7:6). A weaver’s shuttle is an instrument used by a weaver in weaving cloth. We never know just when the thread of life will run out. A few more shoots of the shuttle and all will be over! Live as if we are to see the shuttle fly for the last time!

3) **WIND.** Job 7:7 finds the patriarch saying, “*O remember that my life is wind...*” Life is as “...*a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again*” (Ps. 78:39).

4) **A SHADOW.** Job 8:9 expresses it this way: “*For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow.*” Again it is written, “...*he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not*” (Job 14:2). “...*our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding*” (1 Chr. 29:15). You might think of a shadow on a sun dial, like Ahaz’s dial mentioned in 2 Kings 20:9-11. As the shadow is always changing and goes down in the dial, time is filled with swift transition, life’s evening sun sinks low and we “...*walk through the valley of the shadow of death...*” (Ps. 23:4).

5) **SWIFTER THAN A POST.** Job declared, “*Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good*” (Job 9:25). This is not a fence post, but a fleet-footed messenger. Jeremiah used the word “post” in this way: “*One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another...*” (Jer. 51:31).

6) **AS THE SWIFT SHIPS.** Job continued, saying of his days, “*They are passed away as the swift ships...*” (Job 9:26). Watch a boat or vessel under full sail. How quickly days pass by!

7) **AS THE EAGLE HASTETH TO THE PREY.** Job went on to

state of his days here on earth: “...*as the eagle hasteth to the prey*” (Job 9:26). Few things in the natural realm are more rapid than the motion of the eagle darting upon its prey.

8) **FEW DAYS.** In Job 10:20 the question is asked, “*Are not my days few?*” Job 14:1 affirms, “*Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*” When Jacob was before Pharaoh, he was asked, “*How old art thou?*” The patriarch responded, “*The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years...*” Does 130 years sound like a long time? Here’s what Jacob said about that, “...*few and evil have the days of the years of my life been...*” (Gen. 47:9).

9) **LIKE A FLOWER.** Like daffodils, irises, lilies, tulips, roses? Better enjoy them, for they are soon gone! Job said of man, “*He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down...*” (Job 14:2). The Psalmist reported, “*As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more*” (Ps. 103:15-16).

10) **AS AN HANDBREADTH.** David expressed the shortness of

life in this manner: *“Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity”* (Ps. 39:5). Stick out your hand. How far is it from one side to the other? That’s life!

11) AS A TALE THAT IS TOLD. Psalm 90 teaches, *“For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten [that’s 70]; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years [80], yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away”* (vv. 9-10). The tale starts; then it’s told. Life begins; then it ends!

12) A MOMENT. Paul spoke of *“...our light affliction, which is but for a moment...”* (2 Cor. 4:17). Not only is life of brief duration, but that which is present with us now or immediate is as nothing compared to the future glory. Such should encourage us to endure to the end!

***SINCE WE’RE ONLY
HERE FOR A LITTLE TIME...***

1) LOVE WHO NEEDS LOVING. Love God with all heart, soul, and mind (Mt. 22:37) and neighbour as self (Mt. 22:39). Love husband, wife, children (Eph. 5:25; Titus 2:4). Love one another (Jn. 13:34-35).

2) FORGIVE WHO NEEDS FORGIVING. Forgiveness from God hinges on our forgiveness of others (Mt. 6:14-15).

3) WORK WHAT NEEDS WORKING. *“...there is no work...in the grave, whither thou goest”* (Eccl. 9:10). *“...abounding in the work of the Lord...”* (1 Cor. 15:58). *“...the night cometh, when no man can work”* (Jn. 9:4).

4) SAY WHAT NEEDS SAYING. Say: *“...If the Lord will...”* (Jas. 4:15); *“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”* (Acts 8:37); *“I have sinned”* (Lk. 15:21).

5) DO WHAT NEEDS DOING. *“...to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin”* (Jas. 4:17). Remember, *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and*

may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14).

6) LIVE A LIFE WORTH LIVING. *“...live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world”* (Titus 2:12).

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Ps. 90:12).

We Sing:

*“Each day I’ll do a golden deed,
By helping those who are in
need;
My life on earth is but a span,
And so I’ll do the best I can.*

*Life’s evening sun is sinking low,
A few more days and I must go
To meet the deeds that I have
done,
Where there will be no setting
sun.”*

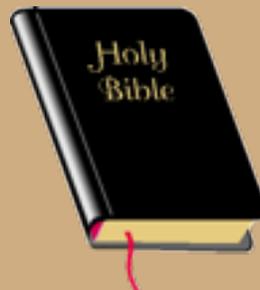
—A Beautiful Life

The Terre Haute **SPEAKER** is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

Assembling At:
4017 E Margaret DR
Terre Haute, IN 47803
[Exit 11 (I-70) W on HWY 46,
W on Margaret DR approx. 1 mile]

Assembling Times:
Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Come be with us!



***We Speak Where the
Bible Speaks.***

***We Are Silent Where the
Bible Is Silent.***

***We Do Bible Things in
Bible Ways.***

www.churchofchristatterrehaute.com