

The Brevity of Life

John Isaac Edwards

The Psalmist said, “Remember how short my time is...” (Psalm 89:47). Job 14:1 records, “Man that is born of woman is of few days...” The brevity of life is expressed many different ways in the Scriptures.

As Water Spilt on the Ground. It is written, “For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground which cannot be gathered up again...” (2 Samuel 14:14).

As a Flower. The book of Job describes man as one who “...cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down...” (Job 14:1-2). The Psalmist wrote, “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” (Psalm 103:15-16).

As a Shadow. “...our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding” (1 Chronicles 29:15).

As a Vapour. Life “...is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4:13-14). Put a pot of water on the stove burner. Watch the steam or vapor rise. Remove the pot and watch the vapor vanish away. That’s life!

As a Wind. “O remember that my life is wind...” (Job 7:7). In addition, “For he re-

membered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again” (Psalm 78:39).

As a Tale That Is Told. “For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told” (Psalm 90:9).

As a Post. “Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good” (Job 9:25). Our earth days are passing away like the fleet messenger.

As the Swift Ships. Our days “...are passed away as the swift ships” (Job 9:26). Stand on the seashore and watch the ships pass by. Life is swiftly passing by!

As the Eagle. The passing of man’s days are “...as the eagle that hasteth to the prey” (Job 9:26).

As a Weaver’s Shuttle. “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle...” (Job 7:6). Our earth days are short and few!

“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away....So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:10, 12).

Essentials for Spiritual Growth

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God expects His people to grow up and be strong, spiritually. Peter declared, “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...” (2 Peter 3:18). These are vital, if you expect to grow:

Being Born. You must first be born, before you will ever grow as a Christian! “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). This birth is accomplished “by the word of God” (1 Peter 1:23).

A Healthy Diet. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). We can’t stay on the milk, but need “strong meat” as well (Hebrews 5:12-14).

Lots of Exercise. “...exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things...” (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Are you spiritually out of shape?

A Good Environment. We must maintain an environment that is conducive to spiritual growth. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

The Proper Weight. Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar, “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting” (Daniel 5:27). “...The Lord weigheth the spirits” (Proverbs 16:2). How much do you weigh?

The Right Temperature. The Laodiceans were told, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:14-16). Have you checked your temperature lately?

Staying Free from Disease. Disease inhibits growth. “For the wages of sin is death...” (Romans 6:23).

Putting Away Childish Things. Paul said, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (1 Corinthians 13:11). Be a man!

Frequent Exams. “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves...” (2 Corinthians 13:5).

How’s your growth?

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Is Our
Only Guide!**