

Psalm 90:1-17

Introduction: A prayer of Moses, during the wandering in the wilderness. A time of transition; of waiting to see the reliability of God's promises in the face of difficulty.

- 1) Who is God? Related to human experience—90:1-2
 - a) The place of timeless refuge to those in transition—90:1 ¹ *Adonai* (Sovereign), *a dwelling place You have been to us in generation and generation.*
 - b) The eternal One of demonstrable strength and wisdom—90:2
 - i) In the eternal **past**—² *Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world,*
 - ii) To the eternal **future**—*even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God (El).*

- 2) Who is God and what does He do?—90:3-11
 - a) A **timeless** God who brings us to brokenness—90:3-4 ³ *You bring back mankind to crushed-ness and say, “Return, O sons of men,”...*
 - i) Why? ⁴ *because...*
 - (1) *a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it passes,*
 - (2) *or as watch (3-4 hours) in the night.*
 - ii) We, as mere humans, wait for a day like today (or a graduation, a wedding, the arrival of a new child/grandchild, etc.) with great anticipation, and then it is swiftly gone. The restraints of time are as nothing to the Eternal One.
 - b) An **active** God who deals with successive generations of temporary mankind—90:5-7 ⁵ *You flood them; they sleep; in the morning like the renewed grass. ⁶ In the morning it flourishes and renews; toward the evening it fades and dries,...*
 - i) Why? *because ...* (Israel's sin deserves God's anger and wrath)
 - (1) ⁷ *we are brought to an end by Your anger*
 - (2) *and by your wrath we are terrified.*
 - c) A **holy** God who knows all our sins—90:8-10 ⁸ *You have set our iniquities (what perverts God's perfect standard) before You, our hidden sin in the light of Your presence,...*
 - i) Why? ⁹ *because...*
 - (1) *all our days have passed in Your fierce wrath.*
 - (a) Wandering in the wilderness.
 - (2) ¹⁰ *The days of our years have in them seventy years, or if by strength eighty years, but their pride is labor and trouble...*
 - (a) Why? *because...*
 - (i) *it passes away quickly and we fly away.*

- d) A **powerful** God of limitless anger toward sin—90:11 ¹¹ *Who knows the strength of your anger and according to Your fear, Your fierce wrath?*
- 3) Based upon who He is, what is God asked to do?—90:12-17
- a) TEACH US because life is short—90:12 ¹² *In this way teach us to number our days...*
- i) Why? *that we may bring a heart* (the core of my being) *of wisdom* [hokmah].
- ii) Because You are a **timeless** God who brings us to brokenness, and an **active** God who deals with temporary people, and a **holy** God who knows all our sin, and a **powerful** God of limitless anger toward sin, then please teach us to walk carefully before You.
- iii) Remember that God had already revealed that all Israelites 20 years and older would die within the next 40 years. They were to use their limited time wisely.
- b) COMFORT US because life is difficult—90:13-15
- i) ¹³ *Return, O YHWH! How long?* (i.e. life is difficult) (only use of Yahweh in the entire psalm)
(1) *And have compassion [nacham] on Your servants.*
- ii) ¹⁴ *Satisfy us in the morning with Your loyal love [chesed]...*
(1) Why? *that we may shout with joy and be glad in all our days.*
- iii) ¹⁵ *Gladden us...* [proportionately]
(1) *according to the days You have afflicted us,*
(2) (According to) *the years we have seen evil.*
- c) REMIND US because life is transitory—90:16-17
- i) Concerning **God's** work and attractiveness—90:16-17a
(1) ¹⁶ *Let Your work* (acts in history, not creation; acts of grace and judgment) *appear to your servants*
(2) *and (let) Your majesty* (splendor) *(appear) to their sons.*
(3) ¹⁷ *Let the pleasantness* (loveliness) *of Adonai* (Sovereign) *our God* (Elohim) *be upon us;*
- ii) Concerning **our** work—90:17b
(1) *and establish the work of our hands upon us;*
(2) *and establish the work of our hands.*
(3) Focuses on the opposite of transitory existence. I want my work for God to outlive me!
- 4) Summary and applications
- a) Our lives today are still characterized as a vapor (James 4:13-17). Don't waste your life.
- b) Take sin seriously because you take God seriously. Take life seriously because you take God seriously.
- c) Remember that even though you are always "in transition", your God is permanent and unchanging. He is timeless, active, holy, and powerful.