

PSALM 90

TEACH US TO NUMBER OUR DAYS

Bible Study: Jordan Lutheran Church

Psalm 90 is the only Psalm written by Moses. The psalm focuses on God's ultimate judgment upon sin, which is death. But it also points us to the Lord, who is victorious over death, and whose heaven extends beyond death. Psalm 90 is often read at Christian funerals because those who die in Jesus have now received the crown of eternal life won for them by Jesus. Psalm 90 is also read at New Year's Eve worship services. As God's people mark the passage of time as they head into a new year, they turn in confidence and trust to the One who is timeless and the same 'yesterday, today and forever.'

PSALM 90

A Psalm of Moses

BACKGROUND

Moses lived during the 1400's B.C. His parents were Israelites but he grew up in the Egyptian royal house. His adoptive mother named him "Moses" because she "drew him up" out of the Nile.

HISTORY

God used Moses to persuade the Pharaoh to release the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. This was accomplished by ten plagues God sent upon the people of Egypt.

God enabled Moses to part the Red Sea to allow the Israelites to cross on dry ground.

Moses led the people of Israel through many years of wandering through the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

From everlasting, to everlasting, you are God
Psalm 90:2

Teach us to number our days aright Ps. 90:12

INTERESTING FACT

The beloved Isaac Watts' hymn, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," is based on Psalm 90

1. O God, our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come.
Our shelter from the stormy blast
And our eternal home.
3. Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God,
To endless years the same.

THE FIRST ARTICLE (Creation)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth. *What does this mean?*

I believe that God created me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my mind and all my abilities. And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil. All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it. For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him. This is most certainly true.

Psalm 90:1-3

¹ Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. ² Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. ³ You turn people back to dust, saying, “Return to dust, you mortals.”

1. In what way is God our ‘dwelling place’?
2. Why do you suppose Moses begins this Psalm – which is about man’s mortality – with words about the timelessness of God?
3. A/D: Verse 3 tells us that God is responsible for turning people back to dust. Therefore cremation is a sin.

A. Not necessarily. Attitude is everything here. There are some people who opt for cremation because they want to mock God or demonstrate their lack of faith in Him. Their idea being: “I’m going to spread my ashes so that God can never find them. This is unbelief – and pretty silly. The Christian, however, knows and trusts that, upon death, the soul departs to be with the Lord in heaven. The earthly remains can be buried or cremated – the Bible does not command or forbid either one. The Christian can, in good conscience, opt for cremation knowing that Jesus will on the Last Day refashion our bodies into ones that are fit for heaven.

Psalm 90:4-11

- ⁴ A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.
- ⁵ Yet you sweep people away in the sleep of death— they are like the new grass of the morning:
- ⁶ In the morning it springs up new, but by evening it is dry and withered.
- ⁷ We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. ⁸ You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.
- ⁹ All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan.
- ¹⁰ Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.
- ¹¹ If only we knew the power of your anger! Your wrath is as great as the fear that is your due.

4. The point of verse 4 is that time really flies when you’re in heaven.

A. Actually, the main point of this verse is that God does not operate on linear time like we do. He is timeless, and eternal, compared to human beings who have an expiration date—at least as far as this life is concerned.

5. Vs. 5 “you sweep people away in the sleep of death.” What should be the Christian’s attitude toward euthanasia? (mercy killing)

A. God’s Word teaches that human life is to be protected throughout its stages of development growth and decline. Unless God has made an allowance for or commanded it to occur, human life is not to be ended actively or passively by anyone...Even when life loses its earthly quality we care for it as a precious gift from God, created by Him and redeemed by Him through Jesus. (*christianliferesources.com*)

Psalm 90:12-17

¹² Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. ¹³ Relent, Lord! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. ¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. ¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us for as many years as we have seen trouble. ¹⁶ May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. ¹⁷ May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands.

6. What does it mean to number our days? How does that lead to a ‘heart of wisdom’?

7. After all the pain, death and judgment that Moses has been talking about in the psalm, how is it possible to ‘sing for joy’ and be ‘glad all our days’?