

**GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90**

INTRODUCTION

Moses was the author of this Psalm, therefore it makes it the oldest of all the Psalms!

It is believed to have been written in connection with Israel's failure at Kadesh-barnea in Numbers 13-14!

What happened there was that the people of God, the Israelites, (except for Joshua and Caleb) refused to follow Moses and to trust God to deliver the Promised Land to them!

Instead of entering the land by faith, they turned back in unbelief, and God judged them!

He made the nation wander for forty years in the wilderness until all the people who had been over twenty years of age there at Kadesh-barnea died!

Keep this in mind as we read Psalm 90 (especially vs. 7-11), and it will take on new meaning!

This psalm is Moses' personal reaction to the crisis; he turned to God in prayer and sought an eternal abiding place in the Lord!

Years later he would say to Israel, "*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms...*" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

It was this kind of faith that sustained Moses during those trying years in the wilderness!

Let's READ THE PSALM

I. GOD'S ETERNALITY AND MAN'S FRAILTY. (PSALM 90:1-6)

A. GOD'S ETERNALITY. (Vs 1)

What a contrast we see here. The eternal God exists far above history!

**GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90**

We find here a most important truth!
Generations come and go, but God is still the same!

Malachi 3:6—"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Hebrews 13:8—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever".

There is a difference between being *immortal* and being *eternal*.

Man is *mortal* in that his body dies. Man is *immortal* in the sense that his soul will never cease to exist; but God is *eternal*—He has neither beginning nor ending.

God existed before the mountains (that was one of the most durable things known in Moses' day)!

God existed before the earth; in fact, God created the earth!

Through faith in Jesus Christ, we become a part of eternity and possess His eternal life!

1. God Is The Saints Eternal Dwelling Place. (Vs 1)
That is, God is a protecting shelter!

In all generations, people have found a place of refuge in Him!

2. God Is Above The Limitations Of Time. (Vs 4)
A watch in the night was between 3 to 4 hours time.
(2 Peter 3:3-4; 8-9)

GOD'S ETERNALITY...

B. MAN'S FRAILTY.

1. Man Returns To The Dust. (v. 3)

**GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90**

The Bible says that we are made in the image of God, yet we are made of dust.

Genesis 2:7–“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

The words “turnest” and “return” mean “to return again or to turn back again.”

“man”– “mortal”

“destruction”– “crushed” (literally–“powder.”)

Genesis 3:19–“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Were it not for sin, there would be no death or decay in our world!

Psalms 104:29–“Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.”

Man Returns To The Dust.

2. Man’s Time Here Is Brief. (Vs 4-6)

- a. Like a watch in the night, about 3 to 4 hours long (v. 4);
- b. Like a brief flood after a shower that soon dries up (v. 5);
- c. Like a sleep that seems but a few minutes long (v. 5);
- d. Like the grass that suddenly shoots up, but before evening has been cut down (vv. 5-6).

**GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90**

These verses explain why human beings need an eternal refuge!

We are frail, we are dust, we are creatures of time; and unless we are rightly related to the eternal God, we are nothing!

Only through faith in Christ can we know God and share in His eternal life!

GOD’S ETERNITY AND MAN’S FRAILTY.

II. GOD’S HOLINESS AND MAN’S SINS. (PSALM 90:7-12)

A. Sin Has Consequences! (Vs 7)

Israel’s rebellion at Kadesh-barnea brought forth the wrath of God. (See **Numbers 14:11-24**)

God offered to strike the nation with disease and disinherit them, but Moses pled with God on the basis of God’s own promises and covenants!

Moses asked God to pardon their sins, but the Lord, though he did pardon, still judged Israel by causing the older generation to die in the wilderness during the next forty years!

It was the world’s longest funeral march! Every soul that died rang out the truth that “*The wages of sin is death.*”

B. God Sees The Secret Sins As Well As The Open Ones!(Vs 8)

Numbers 32:23–“...be sure your sin will find you out.”

Hebrews 4:13– “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

God knows all of our sins as if they were spread out before Him!

**GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90**

Psalm 139:1-4—“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.”

It is foolish to try and cover our sins!

Proverbs 28:13—“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

In spite of all that God knows about us, He still loves us!

Romans 5:8— “But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Sin Has Consequences...God Sees All Our Sins...

C. Our Life Here Is Short. (Vs 9-10)

Human days decline like a sunset, from light to darkness.

Our days are as a “*tale that is told.*”

Some tales have good endings...

Some tales have bad endings...

Our days are so brief and empty and pass by so quickly.

Think about how long (or we should say how short) humans live.

That generation in Moses’ day (from twenty years up, Numbers 14:29) would live but forty more years or less. Add twenty to forty and you get sixty years.

Moses speaks of seventy years as the limit, unless God grants an extra ten years.

The older people in Israel at that time would not live to reach their eightieth birthday because of their sins.

**GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90**

It is interesting to note that believing Caleb was forty years old at Kadesh-barnea and was allowed to enter Canaan at the age of eighty-five (Joshua 14:6-15).

**D. We Should Redeem The Time We Do Have! (Vs 11-12)
(i.e. Make The Time We Do Have Count For God.)**

Verses 11-12 draw a practical conclusion: number your days and make your life count!

Who really understands the power of God’s anger? If we did understand it, we would not waste our lives as we do in so many useless endeavors!

We must fear the Lord and honor Him, and use our brief lives for His glory!

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom! Since we are frail, and we are sinners, we need a Savior; and the only Savior is Jesus Christ!

GOD’S ETERNALITY AND MAN’S FRAILTY...

GOD’S HOLINESS AND MAN’S SIN...

III. GOD’S BLESSING AND MAN’S YEARNINGS. (Vs. 13-17)

This final section contains a series of prayers that God will bless His people and crown their lives with glory.

Man is not just an animal that lives and dies. He is made in the image of God, and he yearns to have his life accomplish something and mean something.

Multitudes of people today are caught in a meaningless existence without purpose or challenge! Oh how man needs to yield to Jesus Christ and say with Paul, “*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*” (*Philippians 1:21*)

Moses prays for God’s favor! (**vs. 13**)

GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90

Of course, we know that God does not “*repent*” as man does, for God never sins.

When God repents, He changes His dealings with His people! God had just judged Israel; now Moses prays that He will forgive Israel and restore them to the place of favor and blessing!

He prays for joy! (vs. 14-15)

Imagine facing forty years of constant wandering and death. Imagine having to bury hundreds of people day after day. How could there be any joy or gladness in such a situation? Only through the Lord!

Verse 14 can carry the meaning, “*Satisfy us in the morning with Your mercy.*”

What were the Jews to do every morning? Go out early and gather the heavenly manna. (Exodus 16) Moses is saying, “Meet us each morning, Lord, as we awaken to the new day! Feed us with your Manna! Give us joy in Your presence!”

It is just as important for the NT Christian today to start the day with the Lord, reading the Word and praying!

In **vs. 15** Moses asks for gladness in proportion to the sorrows they have tasted. As Christians, we have an even greater promise in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**.

Romans 8:18—“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Moses prays for God’s work to be done! (vs. 16)

He longs to see God’s power work on behalf of the people. Historically, of course, this referred to Israel’s possession of the land of promise.

GOD AND MAN
PSALM 90

It was certainly no glory to God while Israel wandered in the wilderness; however, it was to His glory when Israel finally crossed the Jordan and claimed her inheritance in power.

Note how that Moses in vs. 16 is more concerned with God’s glory than his own enjoyment!

He prays for God’s blessing on man’s work! (v. 17). There is a wonderful connection between **vs. 16 and 17**: “*Thy work*” (vs 16) — “*establish the work of our hands*” (vs 17)”;

“*Thy glory*” (vs 16) — “*Let the beauty of the Lord our God upon us.*” The word “*beauty*” means “*God’s grace and kindness.*”

What does Moses mean when he prays about “*the work of our hands*”? Simply this: that our lives might not be wasted, but that God would guide us and bless us so that what we do will last for eternity!

As Moses watches the Jews wander in the wilderness, their lives seem so wasted and useless. Being a man of God, he does not want his life to be wasted; he wants it to count for God’s glory. Therefore, he prays that God would establish his works in and through His people.

Apart from Jesus Christ, life would be unbearable! Why endure the trials of life if there is no God and no glory? Then we would be like the sinners who say, “*Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*” (1 Corinthians 15:32).

With Jesus Christ in control, life is an adventure, a challenge, an investment for eternity!

We should pray “*Teach us to number our days, Lord, and help us to live every day for Jesus Christ with Your wisdom!*”