

What is Your Life?

“Come now, ye that say, Today or to-morrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that. But now ye glory in your vauntings: all such glorying is evil. To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:13-17).

Mankind has a natural manner of believing that tomorrow will bring another day, week, month and year. Mankind believes that they have control over the events of their lives and will be able to do what they want to do, when they want to do it, and all without the consideration of God’s active part in their lives, and so it was with those to whom James spoke.

Making preparation for the moment in which each will stand before the Creator should be of utmost importance to all. The Apostle Paul said, “For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10). The individuals to whom James wrote were arrogantly boasting in presumption that their future was certain, without any regard to the Lord.

King David once said, “Jehovah, make me to know mine end, And the measure of my days, what it is; Let me know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as handbreadths; And my life-time is as nothing before thee: Surely every man at his best estate is altogether vanity” (Psalms 39:4-5). In David’s analogy of life, he refers to a “handbreadth:” that is “any unit of length based on the breadth of the human hand” or the width of the palm of the hand. The analogy emphasizes the shortness of life, which agrees with the statement of James, saying, “ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time.”

Although mankind gives little attention to the fact that today may be one’s last, when that distant day becomes reality, the life will be, as it were, a vapor that appeared “for a little time” and then vanished away. On that day, which will come upon all men, “There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power over the day of death” (Ecclesiastes 8:8).

If you are not daily prepared for that inevitable day, consider the warning given to the nation of Israel that shunned the chastening of the Lord, and were told, “Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this

unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; Jehovah, the God of hosts, is his name” (Amos 4:12-13).

Remember the words of the Hebrew writer, saying, “And in as much as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:27-28). ret