

more than his beginning. He said in chapter 5:7, that man is born to trouble, as the spark flies upward.

Solomon commented on the troubles and turmoil of man's life in Ecclesiastes 2:23 - For all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This is vanity.

We see troubles in our daily lives but others have more troubles than we do, and we need to try as much as we can to overcome our troubles and move on. We need to be concerned and sympathize with others in times of trouble. Even those who are in Christ are bound to go through troubles. It is not easy anywhere. So far as life and troubles are concerned, we will have our fair share of it but the important thing is how we handle it. Remember that troubles will come and they will come when you do not expect them. We ought to continue to look up to God no matter what we go through. Job said, "I will seek God and I will commit my cause to the Lord because He does great things" (Job 5:8-9). Man needs a redeemer and that redeemer is Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:11 -12; Galatians 3:13; Isaiah 41:14)

V. Man Comes Forth Like a Flower and Fades Away - (Job 14:2a.)

Here we see a comparison of man's life to a flower. Man comes forth like a flower and he fades away. David wrote, "As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more" (Psalm 103:15-16).

The summer seasons are times when we all admire and cherish the beauty and blooming of fresh flowers. We will all admit that they do not last. Let us look into our lives and make things right with God because we come forth like a flower but soon we will fade away. The flower fades and withers away because it has no longer energy to go on. So is our life. Think about the question of Job on this matter: Man breathes his last breath and where is he?

Ask yourself today, if I breathe my last breath where would I be? Would you be with the Lord? If not, seek the Lord for He is closer than you can imagine. The Lord is waiting to accept you. It is up to you to make the first step and He will sweetly and lovingly receive you. When you hear the gospel, believe that Jesus is the Son of God, repent of your sins, confess His name and be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins you will be saved. (Romans 10:17, I Corinthians 15:2-5, John 8:24; Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31; Matthew 10:32-33; Roman 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:2-5; I Peter 3:21.) Man needs a guide and that guide is Jesus Christ. (Psalm 48:14; Luke 1:79).

VI. Man Flees Like a Shadow and Does Not Continue - (Job 14:2b.)

One evening I was watching America's Funniest Videos, and I saw one clip of a cat that was trying to chase its own shadow in a house. The interesting thing about it,

is that the cat could not see or follow its own shadow where there is total darkness. This gave me a picture of what Job is talking about - Man flees like a shadow and he does not continue. When there is darkness we can not see, so is death. When death comes do we continue in life? No, we do not because we cannot see our shadow. Shadows are there for a brief moment and then it vanishes and that is how we need to view life.

It was a truly human tombstone, which bore the inscription: "I expected this, but not just yet." This reminds us that no one can predict the time of his death. Like the shadow which disappears in darkness, so are our lives, they disappear when death strikes. Some of us know a lot about death, we know of the pain, anguish, sorrow, grief and loneliness that it brings to us, but let us remember that those in Christ have hope and assurance. Death to those who are in Christ is a transport that carries them away to the bosom of Christ; it is a separation, rest, reward, and a going home.

Man's days are determined; the number of his months is with the Lord. For the Lord has appointed his limits, said, Job (14:5). We flee like a shadow and we will not continue. It will be the end of us when the death angel calls. It is a flash. For we were born yesterday and know nothing, because our days on earth are a shadow (Job 8:9). Man needs a protector and a preserver and that protector and preserver is Jesus Christ. (II Thessalonians 3:3; I Thessalonians 5:23).

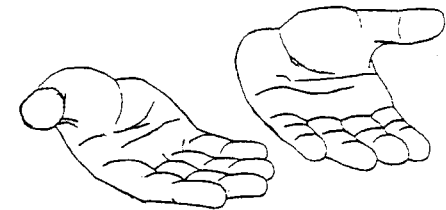
Man decays like a rotten thing; this tells us how sensitive life is. We need a savior. Man decays like a garment that is moth-eaten; this tells us how delicate our life is. We need a sustainer. Man is of few days. This tells us how brief our life is. We need a deliverer. Man is full of trouble. This tells us how burdensome our life is. We need a redeemer. Man comes forth like a flower and he fades away. This tells us how fragile our life is. We need a guide. Man flees like a shadow and he continues not. This tells us how quickly our life would disappear. We need a protector and a preserver. Job once asked this question: "If a man die shall he live again?" (Job 14:14-15). How do you see your life? Are you living according to God's direction? If your life is with God, then you are safe, but if not, think about your life. James said it's like a vapor that appears for a little while and it vanishes away. Commit your life to Christ because it will be taken away some day. Do you need a Savior, Sustainer, Deliverer, Redeemer, Guide, Protector and a Preserver in your life? Jesus is the only one who can help you.

What will it be? Where will you spend eternity? You will soon pass away so prepare yourself today. You may not see tomorrow. Come to Jesus today while it is day, darkness will soon fall and what would be your fate. We can help you today with your decision. Contact the Church of Christ in your community.

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The Days of Man



By Leonard A. Amanatey

THE DAYS OF MAN

Men are living today as if the world belongs to them. They do what they like, feel proud of their evil deeds, thoughts, and wicked ways and think their sinful lifestyle will bring happiness to them. Our world is turning against God and I wonder what will become of our children.

As a minister of the Gospel, it is one of my major concerns today to try to help bring men to the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is our duty to remind men about their days on earth because many people are living in sin and do not think of the pending judgment or when they will be meeting their maker. In the days of Noah, it is said that, ". . . the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart."(Genesis 6: 5-6).

Some of us do wonder about what it would take to change the attitude, lifestyle, mentality and behavior of men who are living in sin and wickedness and do not care what would become of themselves tomorrow. Perhaps we need the same punishments the Lord inflicted upon the children of Israel when they wandered away from the Lord or the kind of discipline He administered on the disobedient, wicked and sinful. In the past, the Lord acted swiftly and immediately when men disobeyed Him, but today He is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (II Peter 3:9).

Job was a man of wisdom and integrity. He lived in a time when men disregarded God's law, direction and ways. He was blameless and upright. He feared God and shunned evil. (Job 2:36). He was also rich and righteous. With all his wealth, Job did not deny God but was upright. The experiences of Job have been recorded for our learning.

Job's description of the days of man on earth seems to be very shocking and devastating, yet they are true. Job observed that man has only one life and he mourned because of that. (Job 14: 1-22). If we all will think like Job about our days on earth, we will be able to make amendments and try to live for the Lord. We will realize that life is too short. Let us learn from the descriptions of Job about the days of man.

I. Man decays like a Rotten Thing (Job 13:28a.)

Why did Job describe the passing away of man this way? Job knew what went on in his life and how he felt when he was struck with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head (Job 2:4-8). Job knew exactly how man decays like a rotten thing. Our flesh is very sensitive. It does not take long for our flesh to rot. In fact, wounds that are not properly nursed smell.

Any thing that is rotten smells, and that is how man has to view his days and life. We would not even want to be close to any rotten thing. We simply run or walk away from

those areas where there is a bad smell. In Ecclesiastes 12:7, the Bible clearly states that, our bodies which came out of the dust will return to the earth and the spirit to the Father who gave it. From the story of Job we can see the kind of changes man goes through in life. Man can decline in excellence, prosperity, and health. This description of the passing of man then reminds us that man is nothing without God. Man can pass away at any time. He needs a helper. Man also needs a savior and a provider. That savior and provider is Jesus Christ (II Timothy 1:10; I Timothy 4:10; Titus 2:11-14; Genesis 22:8).

II. Man decays like a Garment that is Moth Eaten - (Job 13:28b.)

Job's second description compares how man decays on earth to how a moth eats garments. A moth is a small yellowish insect whose larvae eat wool and furs. After these insects eat a garment, the garment is worth nothing. It becomes useless. No one will be able to use it again. Job says man decays in that fashion. The same way a moth-eaten garment cannot be restored is the same way any decayed body cannot be restored. You cannot buy a new body to replace the old one. Once it decays, it is gone forever.

The life of man is fragile and delicate yet precious and worth living. Our life may be gone in a twinkle of an eye. We ought to value life, look at life as God-given and hold on to the loved ones we have with us. Many family members, workers and loved ones are constantly fighting each other. Others have abandoned their loved ones and are not on speaking terms with them. If men will pause for a while and ask themselves the following soul searching questions, they would realize what they have and cherish it: How long will man live on earth? How much time do I have? What if today is my last day on earth?

I once watched a movie regarding a family that was torn apart due to hatred, jealousy, slander, cheating and lies. The lesson I gathered from the movie was very helpful to me. It was about forgiveness, cherishing and sharing our lives together while we still can. The mother had held grudges against her children for many years. Though these children were married and were no longer living home with their parents, it was still very painful for the children how the family was torn apart. Somehow they could not settle their differences. They heard that their mother was dying of skin cancer and so they all came home to be with her. The doctors told her that she would be dying within two weeks. When the children arrived at the hospital, she burst into tears, embraced them and said, "I have forgiven you, would you please forgive me before I die?" The reconciliation was too little and too late because she had wasted too much precious time. I said to myself, what a sobbing and painful moment it was for that family. If you are in a similar situation today, do not wait until you are about to die to settle your differences with others. Make it right today because man decays like a

moth-eaten garment. We are nothing without God. Think about what lies ahead of you and do what is right today. Man needs a sustainer and that sustainer is Jesus Christ (Psalm 41:3).

III. Man is of Few Days - (Job 14:1a.)

Indeed no one can tell exactly how long he or she will live on the earth. All we know is that we will die some day. We see the frailty of man's life - few days. We can also see the shortness or brevity of man's life. Job compares the life of a man to that of a tree. He said in Job 14:7-10 that, "For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its tender shoots will not cease. Though its root may grow old in the earth, and its stump may die in the ground, through the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant. But man dies and is laid away: indeed he breathes his last and where is he?" In verse 11.12 - He compares the life of a man to water that disappears: "As the waters disappear from the sea, and the river becomes parched and dries up, so man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more, they will not awake. Nor be roused from their sleep."

Job has done a very good job narrating the brevity of the days of man and if we will look at life the same way Job looked at life, we will surely find God and serve him. The Psalmist reminds us that we finish our years like a sigh, for we will soon be cut off, and we will fly away (Psalm 90:9-10). We have a short life to live and so we have to value our lives and make good use of them. Man is of few days. Job pleading with God said, "Why then have you brought me out of the womb? Oh that I had perished and no eye had seen me! I would have been as though I had not been. I would have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Cease! Leave me alone, that I may take a little comfort, before I go to the place from which I shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death, a land as dark as darkness itself, as the shadow of death without any order, where even the light is darkness" (Job 10:18-32).

Job clearly says our days are few; we are going to a place from which we shall not return and to the land of darkness. Dear loved ones and friends, we have few days on earth so let us use our days to serve God and live for Him. Man needs a deliverer and that deliverer is Jesus Christ (I Thessalonians 1:10; I Corinthians 1:10).

IV. Man is of full of Trouble - (Job 14: 1b.)

Job might be referring to his troubles in life. His life is a picture of how and why trouble rages on us. It is also there to teach us that we should expect numerous troubles in life. He lost all his possessions and children. His troubles came in sequence - one after the other. He had a very rough time but he endured till the end. We read in chapter 42:10-12 that the Lord restored Job's losses and gave him twice as much as he had before. His latter days were blessed