

## Four Good Effects of Contemplating the Brevity of Life

“To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. I said, "I will guard my ways, Lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, While the wicked are before me." I was mute with silence, I held my peace [even] from good; And my sorrow was stirred up. My heart was hot within me; While I was musing, the fire burned. [Then] I spoke with my tongue: "LORD, make me to know my end, And what [is] the measure of my days, [That] I may know how frail I [am]. Indeed, You have made my days [as] handbreadths, And my age [is] as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state [is] but vapor. Selah Surely every man walks about like a shadow; Surely they busy themselves in vain; He heaps up [riches], And does not know who will gather them.” (Psalms 39:1-6 NKJV)

David was worried about sinning because of his anger towards the wicked. He initiated two strategies to ensure his holiness. The first one was remaining silent. He did not want to sin with his tongue, a very easy thing to do.

The second strategy he used was asking God to show him how short his life would be. He concluded that at the best it was but a vapor. If you have ever noticed the steam that comes of a pot of boiling water, you know how vapor dissipates very quickly. We too are only here for a very short time compared to eternity. Keeping this in mind will prove to be a good defense against waywardness.

First, it does this because it humbles us. We are but dust and to dust we will return (Gen. 3:19). What are we but clay? We are nothing without the hand of God to fashion us. His touch makes a vessel of honor or dishonor (Rom. 9:21).

Second, contemplating the brevity of life makes sin more odious. When we contemplate an audience with God as being near, we are prone to prepare for that encounter by fashioning our life to holiness. Most criminals go before the judge with prepared speeches of remorse as they beg for mercy. If we would remember that not very long from now we would stand before a judge, an all-knowing judge, we would not be so eager to add to the list of complaints against us.

Third, thinking about how short our time on earth is to be, we would lose our affection for it and the things it offers. Why cling to something that will not last? Instead, we would be more incline to store up treasures in heaven where rust and moth does not destroy (Matt. 6:20).

Fourth, the nearness of eternity would cause us to spend our time more wisely. Would you not read more, pray more, and contemplate more if death's door appeared to be opening. I tell it has been so with many who were lying on their deathbed. In those last days, Jesus becomes their all. Don't wait until then to be with Him. Contemplate the brevity of life and spend time with Him now!