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**DAILY DEVOTIONAL THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12th**

- 1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.*
- 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.*
- 3 You turn us back to dust and say, "Turn back, you mortals."*
- 4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past,  
or like a watch in the night.*
- 5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;*
- 6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.*
- 7 For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.*
- 8 You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.*
- 9 For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh.*
- 10 The days of our life are seventy years or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;  
even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.*
- 11 Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.*
- 12 So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.*

*Psalms 90:1-12*

Here's your bit of Biblical trivia for the week: this is the **only** poem in the Book of Psalms associated with Moses. In many versions of the Bible, the superscription above the psalm says, "A Prayer of Moses, the man of God." Most likely, it does not refer to Moses as the author of the poem; the connection was made because of the psalm's theme of asking for wisdom in light of human finiteness and the story of Moses, who was not allowed to enter into the promised land.

More than a trivia winner, this prayer is an eloquent meditation on God, humanity, and time. It explores the relationship between God and human beings -- using the hands of time to examine the depths of the human condition and then to point mortals back to our eternal God.

The Lord is the one who is "from everlasting to everlasting" and for whom "a thousand years are ... like yesterday." We, on the other hand, are those who... "are like a dream" in the night; we perk up like grass fed by morning dew, but who fade and wither before evening. Our lifespan is "seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong" (Remember the old King James' Version: "threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore"? A nod to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address!) The psalm arrives at the conclusion that all human life passes under God's judgment -- "we are consumed by your anger ... our years come to an end like a sigh."

Our passage ends with verse 12: "Teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart." This is no *carpe diem* (seize the day!) warning, or an invitation to "Eat, drink and be merry!" Such denials of our mortality are exactly the foolishness this psalm prays against.

What is a wise heart? One that turns away from human attempts at self-deception, self-justification, and self-gratification. One that turns to God and knows "from everlasting to everlasting, you are God." One that further implores "Turn.... have compassion on your servants!" (verse 13).

The witness of Psalm 90 is that for us to find true hope for today and true strength for tomorrow, we can **only** turn to the eternal Lord. That isn't a bad prayer for us to start every day.

*Everlasting God, keep us turning to you...today and every day. Amen*