

## Just Passing Through

**Job 14:1** Man *that is* born of a woman (*in other words, everyone. Show me a person that doesn't have a mother and I'll show you a person that doesn't exist.*) is of **few days**, and **full of trouble**. **2** He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he flees also as a shadow, and continueth not.

- This is also a subject found in **Greek** mythology in what was known as “the riddle of the sphinx”. A sphinx was a mythological beast with the head of a woman, body of a lion and wings of a bird. The **Egyptian** version of the sphinx has the head of a man but no wings. The riddle goes like this:

*"What goes on four legs at dawn, two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening?"*

Would the traveler fail to solve the riddle, he was cursed to die.

No one was ever capable of answering correctly... until one day, Oedipus came along. Oedipus was promised the hand of the princess should he interpret the riddle correctly. As he was famous for his wisdom, Oedipus found the answer to the riddle with ease, replying:

*"Man, who as a baby crawls on four legs, then walks on two legs as an adult and in old age walks with a cane as his third leg..."*

The Sphinx became so frustrated about this answer that it committed suicide immediately, throwing herself from a high rock.

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- Every one of us can identify with the subject of this riddle. We've all been born, we all mature into adulthood and eventually age and death will claim us.

**Jas 4:14** Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is **even a vapour** (*Gk.822- mist*), that appeareth for **a little time**, and then vanisheth away.

- Not a pleasant subject, unless you are ready for it. But isn't it interesting that as we go through life we accumulate “stuff” that we can't take with us and we somehow miss the point of its futility. Thus we refer to the wisdom of **God** through **Solomon's** writings.

**Ecc 2:11** Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all *was* vanity (*Heb.1892- emptiness; something transitory*) and vexation (*Heb.7469- a feeding upon, that is, a grasping after*) of spirit (*Heb.7307- life*), and *there was* no profit (*Heb.3504- gain*) under the sun.

- Work consumes us! All the sweat, body aches, blisters and pain (*mental anguish as well*) that we receive in pursuit of things we **think** we need will one day seem as nothing. We are only stewards of what we don't own. Why then have so much since it takes more to be a steward over the more we're entrusted with? You may have heard me say more than once that “someone else will play with my toys after I'm gone” no matter how much time and money I've invested in them. (*I won't even know if they're sold at auction.*) The same has been true down through the ages as **Solomon** well understood.

**Ecc 2:18** Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should **leave it unto the man that shall be after me.** **19** And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity (*empty*).

- All we have we have for a moment. It goes from our hands into another's from one generation to the next. Think about all the time and energy wasted that could have gone into the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge.

**Ecc 2:24** *There is* nothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God. **25** For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I? **26** For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good in His sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner He giveth **travail**, to **gather** and to **heap up**, that he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit (*to the sinner here*).

- Not that **Christians** aren't to prosper either. But when the quest for prosperity becomes our focus **God** will allow us to succeed beyond what we had hoped for in order to get us to finally realize what **Solomon** eventually did. Of all the wealth he accumulated he took nothing with him. Even the lost one who accumulates all his wealth will eventually die. He won't be able to buy one millisecond more with all that money. How can you purchase something from the **One Who** already holds your debt? So why labor over something someone else will possess once we're gone? Which is not to say that we are to allow our possessions to decay because of our lack of maintaining them. Everything we own came from **God** and belongs to **Him** so...

**Col 3:17** ...whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the **Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to **God** and the **Father** by **Him**.

- What does it say about a **Christian** who lives in an old rundown shack **unless** he keeps it neat and tidy? Our houses say something about who we are. Not that that should be a sign of true piety, but to the man on the street it says a lot. When we remember everything good that we have is a gift from **God**, we will know to take care of it to **His** glory. "Oh but the money I have I received as an inheritance." That's good, but it still came from **God**. Even the non-**Christian** receives good from **God**...

**Mat 5:45** ... for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

- Whether it be from an inheritance, a gift from someone else or income we've **worked for**, as long as it was **obtained honestly** it came from **God**. "But what about my lottery winnings? The lottery is legal. Isn't that a gift from God as well?" Remember, **God** blesses the unjust as well as the just so you might want to be careful what you believe on how you received it whether honestly or not. And would you have been so willing to part with an inheritance that you may have earned as quick as you would be with lottery winnings that you didn't? It's easier to give someone else's money away.

**Pro 13:11** Wealth *gotten* by vanity (*Heb.1892- transitory*) shall be diminished: but he that gathereth **by labour** shall increase.

- Anytime we rely on income that can't be trusted to continue, from ill-gotten gain, from someone else's losses, we rely on its transitory (*sinful*) nature to sustain us. And concerning those lottery winnings...

1Th 4:6 That no *man* go beyond and **defraud his brother in *any* matter**: because that the **Lord** is the avenger of **all** such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

1Ti 6:6 [*and*] godliness **with contentment** is great gain.

- The wealthiest person is the person with the least, as long as they are content.

Luk 12:13 And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 14 And He said unto him, **Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?** 15 And He said unto them, **Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.**

- All the wealth in the world will one day perish. Even inheritances that have been passed down for many generations. That is not a sign they'll escape "the coming day of God".

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation (*Gk.391-behavior*) and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Luk 12:20 ... **then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?**

- In his pursuit to spread the message of the gospel the apostle suffered so much that even when the **Philippian** brethren supported him he said this...

Php 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

- There are so many passages that explain to the faithful where **God** will always take care of us. We only need to have faith in **His** providence, understanding that in the end...

Rom 8:28 ... all things work together for good to them that love **God**, to them who are the called according to *His* purpose.

Heb 13:5 ... *and be* content with such things as ye have: for **He** hath said, **I** will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

- But alas, how often has the lack of faith in some people caused them to doubt? And what would it take to remove all such hesitation and distrust?

Mar 9:20 And they brought him unto Him: and when **He** saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. 21 And **He** asked his father, **How long is it ago since this came unto him?** And he said, Of a child. 22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but **if Thou canst do anything,**

have compassion on us, and help us. 23 Jesus said unto him, **If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.** 24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, **Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.**

- This Jewish man was conflicted in his belief of Jesus being able, through the power of God, to heal his son of the evil spirit within him. He had already taken him to the disciples but they couldn't exorcize the demon within. Jesus afterward told them why.

Mat 17:20 ... **Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.**

- Obviously, Jesus was speaking concerning faith as it pertained to miracles back then. But isn't faith as necessary today as it was then? Because...

Heb 11:6 ... without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that *He* is, and *that He* is a rewarder of them that **diligently seek Him.**

- How many of us can sympathize with this man? How often has our faith wavered in situations where we began to question good and evil and blur the lines as we would like them to be? If we haven't been convinced that we are all but passing through and are no more permanent a resident than the seemingly ageless Sequoias in California, then we can't think we will receive anything good once this life is over. If such is the case, we've not yet been persuaded of the truth, we are not as convinced as Abraham was.

Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting (*Gk.3049- to take an inventory: -conclude*) that God *was* able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

- Abraham understood God's promise to him that his seed would continue through Isaac. He also believed that in taking Isaac's life God would have to raise him from the dead in order to fulfill His promise to him. As Abraham's was, our faith has to be such to the point of believing beyond a shadow of doubt, that this life is but transitory along with trusting that a life beyond imagination awaits us in glory. Even though those mentioned in this chapter of Hebrews didn't receive the fulfillment of the promised spiritual holy land (*Heaven*), they still had faith that it exists and are looking forward to inheriting it from where they currently await the resurrection in the spirit realm known as *Paradise*.

Heb 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers (*Gk.3581- foreign, guest*) and pilgrims (*Gk.3927- alien alongside, that is, a resident foreigner*) on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country (*Gk.3968- heavenly home*). 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them **a city** (*New Jerusalem- Rev 21:2*).

Joh 14:2 In My Father's house are many mansions: if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place (*Gk.5117- a spot [space, but limited by occupancy]*) for you.

- We have been blessed with free agency, we have been given the free will to do whatever we wish. We can either set our sights on **Heaven** or we can be seduced by the trappings of this current life. Nothing stops us. Not even a loving **God**. It's our choice if we wish to live it up while we still have the time to do so or we can...

Php 2:15 ... be blameless and harmless, the sons (*Gk.5043- children*) of **God**, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I (*Paul*) may rejoice in the day of **Christ**, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

- But, as those of us who adhere to the “doctrine of **Christ**” (*2 Jn 1:9*) and who have taken on the name “**Christian**” (*Act 11:26*) we need to understand our covenant relationship with **God** is as...

1Pe 2:9 ... a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation (*Gk.1484- race*), a peculiar (*Thayer: possession, one's own property*) people; that ye should shew forth the praises of **Him Who** hath called you out of darkness into **His** marvellous light: 10 Which in time past *were* not a people (*you did not belong to God*), but *are* now the people of **God**: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

- **New Testament Christianity** is to be considered a race set apart, that is inclusive of all races and backgrounds but exclusive according to the word of **God**. We belong to **God** having been “bought with a price” (*1 Cor 6:20*) [*our freedom wasn't free*] “with the precious blood of **Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (*1 Pet 1:19*). Only the redeemed, those thus bought, will receive of the promises, even though the lives of all people are transient.

1Pe 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation (*Gk.391- behavior*) honest among the **Gentiles** (*Gk.1484- pagans*): that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify **God** in the day of visitation (*Gk.1984- inspection*).

- Our ultimate goal in life **should** be to lead others to **Christ**. What else could there be when we understand all else is vain, empty, transitory and worthless. And the way we conduct ourselves, the way we are consistent in living according to what the **Bible** teaches, could make a difference between the salvation or loss of a soul.

Col 3:5 Mortify (*Gk.3499- subdue*) therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence (*Gk.1939- a longing [especially for what is forbidden]*), and covetousness (*Gk.4124- extortion: -greediness*), which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of **God** cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

- How can we be known as **God's** possession if we can't control our passions or our desire for owning “stuff”? What is it that would separate us, make us stick out as oddballs, as did **Israel** in the **O.T.**? Just as there were things that distinguished an **Israelite** from a **Gentile** then, so should there be evidence of our faith in everything about us now!

Heb 13:5 *Let your conversation be* without covetousness; *and be* **content** with such things as ye have: for **He** hath said, **I** will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Mat 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

- What makes us better than all the animals on Earth is the fact that we have something they don't. We have souls. And God loves us and will take care of us as long as we have faith that He will.

Mat 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

- There have always been those certain groups that have taken this passage way out of the context that Jesus tried to convey here. They think all they have to do is lay back and others will take care of them. But not according to Paul's admonition where "if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thes3:10). Others were led to believe His coming was so eminent that they sold everything and gave it all away in accordance to what some false prophet taught them. They have also used such passages as Mat 19 to defraud others for personal gain.

Mat 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? (Like Naaman [2 King 5] who felt he needed to do something that would bring attention to himself in order to be cleansed.) 17 And He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. 18 He saith unto Him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, 19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

*"Why do you give to me a title that belongs only to God? [like reverend- Ps 111:9] You suppose me to be only a man, yet you give me an appellation that belongs only to God."*

*"Christ did not intend here to disclaim divinity, or to say anything about his own character, but simply to reprove the intention and habit of the young man - a most severe reproof of a foolish habit of compliment and flattery, and seeking pompous titles."*

Albert Barnes

Mat 19:20 The young man (also a ruler of the synagogue- Lk 18:18) saith unto Him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? ("These are expected of a common man. I want to stand out!") 21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect (Gk.5046- complete [in various applications including mental and moral character, etc.]), go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me. 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great (Gk.4183- much) possessions.

- Like the question of lottery winnings toward advancing the work of God and how sacrificing something personally labored for carried such a different perspective. One, the possessor didn't have much at stake of his own to receive from the labors of others and the other, something he worked hard to obtain. This rich young ruler was asked to give up wealth that he must have worked hard for, and not from other's labors. This was the ultimate test of his faith in God. Like Abraham's test with Isaac. "But what's wrong with having possessions?" Once again, nothing. As long as those possessions would be easy to give up, if it came to it, for the kingdom of God. Otherwise they would be considered "idolatry" (Col 3:5) since anything we put before God would cause Him to be jealous of where our focus is.

Mat 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

- We all need to be satisfied with whatever God has blessed us with to get by in life. Some don't want to just get by though. But as long as God supplies our "daily bread [Thayer: food of any kind]" (Mat 6:11) what more do we actually need?

Pro 30:7 Two things have I required of Thee; deny me them not before I die: 8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient (Heb.2706- appointment: -necessary) for me: 9 Lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

- Taking God's name in vain has been reduced to using it while cursing. But it goes beyond that. When Christians live as the world does we take His name, by Whom we are named, as though it means nothing. This proverb carries so much wisdom. The writer asks that he only be blessed with an allotment of what was necessary to survive. Nothing more. Not that we are to expect as much because we know how there have been times in many of our lives that we had to go without and others there was a windfall. But we still survived! Such was the case with Paul.

Php 4:12 I know both how to be abased (Gk.5013- to humiliate), and I know how to abound (Gk.4052- be in excess): everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.

- To go from one end of the economic spectrum to the other can take its toll. But notice again Paul's words. After suffering from poverty and flourishing in wealth, he understood that whatever the condition of his financial status, Christ would always see him through as long as he sought after Him first. Everything else was considered nothing.

Php 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

- Paul's life pursuit was to please God. One avenue was through knowledge. But gaining knowledge takes time. Time we seem to misappropriate in the pursuit of "things". At first he sought to do so in ignorance (1 Tim 1:13) but once he understood the truth he sought

Him from knowledge. Do we seek God in truth? Has our own misunderstanding of the Bible kept us in the dark from getting the facts about life and death, salvation and condemnation, Heaven and Hell, right and wrong?

2Co 4:16 ... though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. 17 For our light (*Gk.1645- easy*) affliction (*Gk.2347- pressure: -tribulation*), which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight (*Gk.922- abundance*) of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are temporal*; but the things which are not seen *are eternal*.

- When we understand the fact that we are all “just passing through” it will hit us that once this life is over, we will all go somewhere. And there are only two choices. And yes, we have a choice as to where we’re headed once our soul leaves the body. That choice isn’t just made by **deciding** where we want to go. It’s made by how we approach the word of God and the path we need to follow found therein. Think about it, where do you want to spend eternity and what are you willing to give up to someday go there? What do you understand the Bible’s answer to be?

You’ve heard.  
Do you believe?  
Will you repent?  
Will you confess Jesus as your Savior?  
Will you have your sins washed away and walk a new life in Christ?

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