

DAILY BIBLE VERSES AND PRAYER THOUGHTS

The Bible has 1300+ references to death including the words: death, dead, and forms of die.

MONDAY - VERSES: Genesis 5:5,8,11,14,17,20,27,31 - These men had extremely long lives, but all died as we will. PRAYER

THOUGHT: Ask for help in accepting the certainty of death.

TUESDAY - VERSES: Luke 8:41-42, 49 - Death comes even to the young. PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask for courage to remind the young and healthy to be prepared for death.

WEDNESDAY - VERSES: Hebrews 11:21-22; Revelation 2:10 - Jacob and Joseph kept their faith in God even though they didn't receive the promises in their lifetimes. PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God to strengthen your faith as you get closer to death.

THURSDAY - VERSES: Job 7:6-10 - We can't come back from the dead to correct our mistakes or complete unfinished business.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask for God's help in living each day to the fullest and keeping things right with others.

FRIDAY - VERSES: Romans 6:1-9 - We should all be dead to sin and alive to God. PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God to help you keep the sins of your past buried with the old man.

SATURDAY - VERSES: Revelation 2:11;20:6,14;and 21:8 - We must all die physically, but there is something worse, spiritual death, and we can avoid it through Christ. PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God to help you live so that you never have to face an eternity in Hell.

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Life is hard. Then you die. Then they throw dirt in your face. Then the worms eat you. Be grateful it happens in that order. - David Gerrold

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No one can confidently say that he will still be living tomorrow. - Euripides

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ASSIGNMENTS

1. At least once a day read over this material and read or sing the song.
2. Place the scripture where you will see it each day.
3. Think of times you have thought about your own death at a funeral.
4. Pray for God's help in recognizing that you could die anytime.
5. Write down the ways you have considered your death.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH REGIMEN - WEEK 36

DEATH - 3-24-13 TO 3-30-13

SCRIPTURE - Ecclesiastes 7:2 It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

COMMENT - It is better for us to go to funerals than to go to parties because it helps us realize that we all face the same fate. When we realize that one day the funeral will be for us it should affect the way we live our lives now.

SONG - I'LL FLY AWAY

1. Some glad morning when this life is over, I'll fly away,
To a home on God's celestial shore, I'll fly away.

2. When the shadows of this life have grown, I'll fly away,
Like a bird from prison bars has flown, I'll fly away.

3. Just a few more weary days and then, I'll fly away,
To a land where joys shall never end, I'll fly away.

REFRAIN: I'll fly away, oh, glory, I'll fly away; When I die,
Hallelujah, by and by, I'll fly a way.

THOUGHTS

A man had a check-up and then went in to see his doctor to get the results. The doctor said he had bad news and worse news for him, which did he want to hear first? The man was a bit non-plussed and said he guessed he'd hear the bad news first. The doctor said, "The bad news is that you only have twenty-four hours to live." At this the man jumped up, totally flabbergasted and distraught. He paced the doctor's office and complained, "Twenty-four hours to live? I can't possibly get my affairs in order that quickly. I can't believe this, it is incredible! What could be worse news than this?" The doctor said, "The worse news is that I was supposed to tell you this yesterday but I forgot."

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SAY IT OUT LOUD

I am not a writer but I am taking some space in the newspaper to write something special about Kathy. We weren't so special, you know, I'm just a little insurance man, but when someone makes your life so good, you just hate to let her leave the world without some kind

of memorial to let people know she was alive. I want to tell people to look over at their husbands and wives and say to themselves, "Wow, look what I have here." People take so much for granted. It's as if they think everyone is going to live forever and they can put off their love and appreciation until they have time. Here I am saying these things about Kathy today and it seems like I never said them to her when she was alive. She'd have come to me now with kisses. I am sitting home alone at night and I see her in the hallways. I see the furniture we bought, and I see her sitting beside me on the couch. If I could go back again I would do everything different. I would let her know how much she meant to me, but I can't do that, and it seems like the only thing I can do is try to make other people know it. Look at your husband. Look at your wife. If you think you have things pretty nice, say it out loud. Don't assume that they are going to be there forever. Some day they are going to walk out the door and never come back again. I didn't think of that until Kathy was dead. It's too late for me, but it's not too late for you. Letter in the Chicago Tribune,



WHAT IS YOUR HOPE?

You may remember the story of the long and rough Atlantic crossing where the seasick passenger was leaning over the rail of the ocean liner and had turned several shades of green. A steward came along and tried to cheer him up by saying, "Don't be discouraged, sir! You know, no one's ever died of seasickness yet!" The nauseous passenger looked up at the steward with baleful eyes and replied: "Oh, don't say that! It's only the hope of dying that's kept me alive this long!"



BREAKING THE BAD NEWS

A man was out of town on a trip and he asked his brother to take care of his cat for him while he was away. The cat was a beautiful Siamese and meant a great deal to the man, although the brother who was caring for the cat didn't like cats at all. When he got back from the trip he called his brother's house and asked about his cat. The brother was very curt, and replied, "Your cat died." And then he hung up. For days the man was inconsolable. Finally, he phoned his brother again to point out, "It was needlessly cruel and sadistic of you to tell me so bluntly that my poor cat had passed away." The brother demanded,

"Well, what did you expect me to do?" He said, "Well, you could have broken the bad news to me gradually. First, you could have said the cat was playing on the roof. Later you could have called to say he fell off. The next morning you could have reported he had broken his leg. Then, when I came to get him, you could have told me he had passed away during the night. But you didn't have it in you to be that civilized. Now tell me -- how's Mama?" The brother pondered momentarily, then announced "She's playing on the roof."



PRE-TERMINAL

I recently visited a very seriously ill man in a local hospital. I was told that he was "pre-terminal" which evidently isn't quite terminal, but is expected to be so. I started thinking. Can't that really be said about everyone? Aren't we all "Pre-terminal?"



EPITAPH

I am told that an Indiana cemetery has a tombstone (over 100 years old) which bears the following epitaph: "Pause Stranger, when you pass me by, As you are now, so once was I. As I am now, so you will be, So prepare for death and follow me." An unknown passerby read those words and underneath scratched this reply: "To follow you I'm not content, Until I know which way you went."



BETTER TO GO TO THE HOUSE OF MOURNING

INTRODUCTION - ECCLESIASTES 7:1-4

QUESTION - WHO SHOULD CONSIDER THEIR END?

I. YOUTH - ECCLESIASTES 11:9 & 12:1-7

II. THE RICH - LUKE 12:15-21 & 16:19-31

III. THE WICKED - PROVERBS 14:32 & ACTS 5:1-10

IV. THE RIGHTEOUS - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:26, 55-58; HEBREWS 2:14-15 & PHILIPPIANS 1:21

V. THE MARRIED - ECCLESIASTES 9:9-10

CONCLUSION

A. NIGHT IS COMING - JOHN 9:4

B. JUDGEMENT FOLLOWS DEATH - HEBREWS 9:27

C. WE SHOULD NUMBER OUR DAYS - PSALM 90:12

BETTER TO GO TO THE HOUSE OF MOURNING

SCRIPTURE - (Eccl 7:1-4) A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth; {2} Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart. {3} Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. {4} The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

INTRODUCTION

A. A Story To Live By by Ann Wells (Los Angeles Times)

My brother-in-law opened the bottom drawer of my sister's bureau and lifted out a tissue-wrapped package.

"This," he said, "is not a slip. This is lingerie." He discarded the tissue and handed me the slip. It was exquisite; silk, handmade and trimmed with a cobweb of lace. The price tag with an astronomical figure on it was still attached. "Jan bought this the first time we went to New York, at least 8 or 9 years ago. She never wore it. She was saving it for a special occasion. Well, I guess this is the occasion." He took the slip from me and put it on the bed with the other clothes we were taking to the mortician.

His hands lingered on the soft material for a moment, then he slammed the drawer shut and turned to me. "Don't ever save anything for a special occasion. Every day you're alive is a special occasion."

I remembered those words through the funeral and the days that followed when I helped him and my niece attend to all the sad chores that follow an unexpected death. I thought about them on the plane returning to California from the Midwestern town where my sister's family lives. I thought about all the things that she hadn't seen or heard or done. I thought about the things that she had done without realizing that they were special.

I'm still thinking about his words, and they've changed my life. I'm reading more and dusting less. I'm sitting on the deck and admiring the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden. I'm spending more time with my family and friends and less time in committee meetings. Whenever possible, life should be a pattern of experience to savor, not endure. I'm trying to recognize these moments now and

cherish them. I'm not "saving" anything; we use our good china and crystal for every special event-such as losing a pound, getting the sink unstopped, the first camellia blossom. I wear my good blazer to the market if I feel like it. My theory is if I look prosperous, I can shell out \$28.49 for one small bag of groceries without wincing. I'm not saving my good perfume for special parties; clerks in hardware stores and tellers in banks have noses that function as well as my party-going friends'.

"Someday" and "one of these days" are losing their grip on my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing or hearing or doing, I want to see and hear and do it now. I'm not sure what my sister would have done had she known that she wouldn't be here for the tomorrow we all take for granted. I think she would have called family members and a few close friends. She might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles. I like to think she would have gone out for a Chinese dinner, her favorite food. I'm guessing-I'll never know.

It's those little things left undone that would make me angry if I knew that my hours were limited. Angry because I put off seeing good Friends whom I was going to get in touch with-someday. Angry because I hadn't written certain letters that I intended to write-one of these days. Angry and sorry that I didn't tell my husband and daughter often enough how much I truly love them. I'm trying very hard not to put off, hold back, or save anything that would add laughter and luster to our lives.

And every morning when I open my eyes, I tell myself that it is special. Every day, every minute, every breath truly is...a gift from God.

B. FUNERALS CHANGE OUR LIVES MUCH MORE THAN PARTIES DO.

C. THE GRAVE IS THE END OF ALL

1. (Eccl 2:14-16) The wise man's eyes are in his head, But the fool walks in darkness. Yet I myself perceived That the same event happens to them all. {15} So I said in my heart, "As it happens to the fool, It also happens to me, And why was I then more wise?" Then I said in my heart, "This also is vanity." {16} For there is no more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever, Since all that now is will be forgotten

in the days to come. And how does a wise man die? As the fool!

2. (Eccl 9:1-4) For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred by anything they see before them. {2} All things come alike to all: One event happens to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so is the sinner; He who takes an oath as he who fears an oath. {3} This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead. {4} But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

TRANSITION - WHO SHOULD CONSIDER THEIR END

I. YOUTH

A. (Eccl 11:9) Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.

B. (Eccl 12:1-7) Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them": {2} While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain; {3} In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim; {4} When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low; {5} Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets. {6} Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at

the well. {7} Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

II. THE RICH

A. THE RICH FOOL - (Luke 12:15-21) And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." {16} Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. {17} "And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' {18} "So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. {19} 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" {20} "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' {21} "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

B. LAZARUS & THE RICH MAN - (Luke 16:19-31) "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. {20} "But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, {21} "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. {22} "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. {23} "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. {24} "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' {25} "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. {26} 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' {27} "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, {28} 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' {29} "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

{30} "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' {31} "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

III. THE WICKED

A. (Prov 14:32) The wicked is banished in his wickedness, But the righteous has a refuge in his death.

B. (Acts 5:1-10) But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. {2} And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. {3} But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? {4} "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." {5} Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. {6} And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. {7} Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. {8} And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." {9} Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." {10} Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

IV. THE RIGHTEOUS

A. (1 Cor 15:26) The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

B. (Heb 2:14-15) Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, {15} and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

C. (1 Cor 15:55-58) "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades,

where is your victory?" {56} The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. {57} But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. {58} Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

D. (Phil 1:21) For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

V. THE MARRIED - (Eccl 9:9-10) Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun. {10} Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

CONCLUSION

A. NIGHT IS COMING - (John 9:4) "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.

B. JUDGEMENT FOLLOWS DEATH - (Heb 9:27) And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment

C. WE SHOULD NUMBER OUR DAYS - (Psa 90:12) So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 7:2

Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart.

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