Daily Devotion #136

Prolong Your Days

*Deuteronomy 5:33 – “You shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you will possess.”*

Life certainly seems to pass quickly. Although we know the clock never speeds up and neither does it slow down, the days do seem to fly by. Each of us can remember significant events that have happened to us along the journey of life. Just this morning I was recalling to my mind the names of people who I once worked with over twenty-five years ago. In many ways, it seems like yesterday, I can still hear their voices and see what they wore to work regularly. I can even see their mannerisms as we interacted over various business topics and life topics. But yet, that has been a lot of years ago.

And truthfully, God says our days will be short. Job said in chapter fourteen verse one that man is short-lived and full of turmoil. He even says that our days are numbered. *“Since his days are determined, the number of his months is with You; And his limits You have set so that he cannot pass.”* (Job 15:5) God knows the days we have because He has determined them.

But did you know that your days can be prolonged on the earth? And further, did you know your days can be shortened? God makes it clear that our days will be prolonged when we live in obedience to Him. The Hebrews learned that when Moses gave them the passage we are looking at today. And the writer of Proverbs makes that clear as well. *“The fear of the Lord prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened.”* (Proverbs 10:27)

The emphasis is that God will change the length of our days on earth depending on how we live. If we live in obedience to Him, He will give us more days on the earth to serve Him and make Him known to others. But if we live disobediently to Him, He will take from the number of our days. I remember a young man with whom I went to high school. He was a rebellious kid - always in trouble and doing very wicked things. I’ll never forget when I heard that he was killed in a motorcycle accident. He was driving down the main street of our town that was posted as thirty-five miles per hour, but he decided to travel at seventy. Sadly, he took the life of an innocent woman along with his own.

Both of them had days that were numbered by the Lord. I don’t know about the woman’s life and whether or not she lived for the Lord, but it was her time according to God. But I must believe the wickedness of the kid who was being so irresponsible caused God to take away from the number of his days on earth.

So how do we reconcile the fact that God has numbered our days but yet He also prolongs or takes away from them? We must first remember God is sovereign and all powerful. He has the ability to do whatever He wants or sees best. So even though He has numbered our days, as Job says, that doesn’t mean He hasn’t calculated that according to the way we live. God can change what He wants to change. But that’s not the issue. The issue is that we affect the length of our lives by how we live.

So, the better question is, how are you living? Is God your priority? Is following Him your purpose in life? Is your goal every day to walk in obedience to Him and His Word? Do you strive each moment to make sure you are living according to His truth? If so, God has said, He will prolong your days. But if you are more concerned about what you want and what you will get in this life, whether or not you listen to Him, God may decide to shorten your days.

Which is the better decision? Obedience out of love for the One who rescued you from eternal damnation or living life the way you choose? You decide. But be careful because your choice may have drastic consequences.