

## WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

January 4, 2015

James 4:1-17

**“Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” James 4:14**

### 1. To whom is the question directed?

Twelve tribes scattered abroad (1:1)

Brethren, begotten of God (1:2, 18)

Beloved brethren (1:16, 19)

Those whose zeal for worldly success preempts God-consciousness (4:13)

\* They presume upon God, not contemplating that He gives/takes away life

\* They plan as if there is no divine sovereign rule

\* They esteem earthly gain more than they esteem God’s will

\* They boast of their plans, heedless that it is evil to do so (16)

\* They live as practical atheists

### 2. How is the questioned answered? **“It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”**

The vapor “appeareth:” A result of other forces, with no say in its appearing

“He causeth the vapor to rise” (Psa. 135:7; Jer. 10:13; 51:6)

The vapor “appeareth for a little time:” A brief, small duration, nothing lasting

“Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee” (Psa. 39:5a).

The vapor “appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth:” Insignificant & forgotten

“As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone: and the place thereof shall know it no more” (Psa. 103:15, 16).

### 3. How does this relate to the teaching of Scripture as a whole?

“Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Psa. 39b).

“For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told” (Psa 90:9).

“Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity” (Psa. 62:9).

*(over)*

### Psalm 49:6-20

“They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is

precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish” (Psa. 49:6-20).

#### **Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14**

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:13, 14).