

## Things That Will Outlast It

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by Bill Crews

The fool not only says in his heart, *"There is no God"* (Ps. 14:1; 53:1); he also says, *"There is nothing beyond this life; there is only this life."* But he will have his doubts, and they will grow as death approaches. Besides avowed atheists, skeptics, and agnostics, there are also those who profess to accept the existence of God and the fact of life beyond this life, but live as though they reject both. There are many ways of saying there is no God and no life after this life.

**Life is brief.** It is likened to a weaver's shuttle (Job 7:6), a runner or messenger (Job 9:25), a swift ship and a bird of prey (Job 9:26), a flower and a shadow (Job 14:2), a vapor (James 4:14), grass or vegetation (1 Pet. 1:24).

**Life is uncertain.** *"There is but a step between me and death"* (David to Jonathan in 1 Sam. 20:3). *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"* (Prov. 27:1). *"Come now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away"* (James 4:13-14). *"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"* (Lk. 12: 9-20).

**Death is sure.** *"It is appointed unto men once to die..."* (Heb. 9:27). *"And behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth"* (Joshua 23:14; cf. 1 Kings 2:2). *"For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again"* (2 Samuel 14:14). *"For the living know that they shall die..."* (Ecclesiastes 9:5). *"There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power over the day of death"* (Ecclesiastes 8:8).

**The resurrection, the judgment, and eternity lie ahead for all mankind.** *"And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh the judgment"* (Heb. 9:27). *"And reckonest thou this, O man, who judgest them that practice such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?"* (Rom. 2:3). *"For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God..."* (Rom. 14:10). *"Marvel not at this; for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice. and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil. unto the resurrection of judgment (or damnation)"* (John 5:28-29).

**There are things that we cannot take with us, things limited to this earthly life alone.** We cannot take our physical bodies with us. *"Our outward man is decaying..."* (2 Cor. 4:16). *"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"* (1 Cor. 15:44). *"For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God..."* (2 Cor. 5:1). We cannot take this earth or our earthly homes with us (2 Pet. 3:10-12 — these shall *"pass away," "be dissolved with fervent heat," "be burned up"*). We cannot take any of our material possessions with us. *"For we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry nothing out"* (1 Tim. 6:7). *"And shall take nothing for his labor, which he may carry away in his hand"* (Ecclesiastes 5:15). We cannot take earthly fame, glory, or honor with us (see John 5:44 and 12:42-43).

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