

## Three Wishes

Read: Psalm 90:10-15

The days of our lives are seventy years; ... it is soon cut off, and we fly away. —Psalm 90:10

I once read that almost every culture on earth has a folktale about "three magic wishes." Most feature a genie or some other mythical figure who grants the requests of a patron. Almost all of these tales end in tragedy.

I suppose these stories come from the desire to have everything we want in this life, even though we've learned that we'll always be frustrated in that pursuit. If anything, life teaches us that nothing in this world can satisfy us fully, for even if we gained the whole world we would eventually lose it.

Among the most poignant of these stories is the tale of a stockbroker who encountered a genie on the way to the office. When offered a wish, the man asked for and received a copy of his local newspaper dated one year into the future. He hurriedly turned to the financial page, hoping to "make a killing" in the market. But he found more than he bargained for. On the opposite page he saw his picture in an obituary describing his death in an automobile accident the preceding day.

Life is short and very uncertain. We cannot know what the future will bring. We can only ask God to turn us away from trivial pursuits and direct our hearts to follow Him. So we pray as Moses did, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

—David Roper

## 三个愿望

读经: 诗篇90篇10-15节

金句:「我们一生的年日是七十岁，...转眼成空，我们便如飞而去。」(诗篇90篇10节)

我曾经读过一篇文章，说到几乎在世上所有的文化中，都有关于「三个愿望」的民间传说。多数的传说都描述一个精灵或其它某些神话人物，他们会应许请求的人所提出的愿望，这些故事大都以悲剧收场。

我想这些故事源自于我们想在生活中拥有一切的愿望，尽管我们知道我们所要追求的目标是徒然的。假若要讲人生教会了我们什么，那就是它告诉我们，这个世界上没有任何一件事可以完全满足我们，因为即使我们拥有整个世界，我们最终仍会失去它。

在所有的传说里，最让人印象深刻的是一个关于股票经纪人的故事，这位股票经纪人在去办公室的途中遇到了一位精灵。当那位精灵同意满足他的一个愿望时，他要求取得一年之后当天的当地报纸。于是他马上翻阅到财经版，期望在股市好好挣一把。但他所找到的却远超过他所预料的，在财经版的反面那页，他看到自己的照片在一则讣告上，那讣告说他在前一天已经死于车祸。

人生短暂无常，我们无法预料未来的事。我们只能请求上帝帮助我们，不要去作那些无谓的追求，并引导我们的心去追随他。所以，我们当如摩西所祷告的：「指教我们怎样数算自己的日子，好叫我们得着智慧的心。」(诗篇90篇12节)

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