

# James 4:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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**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.**

You do not know what tomorrow brings. Life is a vapor (atmis, ἀτμός) that appears briefly and vanishes. James urges eternal perspective, countering arrogance with mortality awareness.

Reformed eschatology stresses brevity of life and urgency of obedience. Recognizing vapor-like existence fosters humility and generosity.

## Historical Context

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In a world without modern medicine, mortality was evident, yet wealth fostered illusions of control. James reminds diaspora merchants that pandemics, persecution, and travel dangers could end plans instantly.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does remembering life's brevity reshape your priorities?
2. What unfinished reconciliations or obediences must occur now?
3. How can you steward today's vapor for eternal impact?

## Interlinear Text

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οἵτινες οὐκ ἐπίστασθε ἡ ἡ αὔριον  
**Whereas not ye know what shall be on what shall be on the morrow**  
G3748 G3756 G1987 G3588 G3588 G839

ποία γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν· ἀτμὶς γὰρ ἐστὶν  
**what For what shall be on life is your a vapour For It is**  
G4169 G1063 G3588 G2222 G5216 G822 G1063 G2076

ἡ πρὸς ὀλίγον φαινομένη ἔπειτα δὲ  
**what shall be on that a little time appeareth for then and**  
G3588 G4314 G3641 G5316 G1899 G1161

ἀφανιζομένη  
**vanisheth away**  
G853

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Peter 1:24** (Parallel theme): For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

**Psalms 39:5** (Parallel theme): Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

**1 John 2:17** (Parallel theme): And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

**Psalms 102:3** (Parallel theme): For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

**Psalms 89:47** (Parallel theme): Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

**James 1:10** (Parallel theme): But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

**1 Peter 4:7** (Parallel theme): But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

**Isaiah 38:12** (Parallel theme): Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

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