

# Psalms 89:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

## Analysis

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**Remember how short my time is** זֶהָרֶאָנִי מֵהַ-חַלֵּד (zekhor-ani meh-chaled)—zakhar (remember) is covenant language, appealing to God's promises. Chaled (lifetime, duration) emphasizes life's brevity. The psalmist urges God to act before death makes intervention futile. **Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?** עַל-מַה- שָׁוֹא בָּרָאָת קָל-בְּנֵי-אָדָם (al-mah-shav barata kol-benei-adam)—shav means emptiness, futility, vanity. If covenant promises fail and death ends all, human existence is meaningless.

This verse raises existential questions: What is humanity's purpose if God doesn't keep covenant? The question anticipates Ecclesiastes: "Vanity of vanities...all is vanity" (1:2). Yet biblical "vanity" isn't atheistic nihilism—it's protest against a world that seems purposeless without God's faithfulness. Paul answers: God didn't create in vain; creation groans awaiting redemption (Romans 8:20-21). Christ's resurrection proves life isn't futile—death is defeated, covenant promises fulfilled. The brevity of life gains meaning when connected to eternity through Christ.

## Historical Context

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Exiles in Babylon faced mortality without seeing promises fulfilled. Would they die before restoration? Would the covenant fail with their generation? God's answer: restoration came, but the ultimate answer is resurrection. Life isn't vain because death isn't final. The "shortness" of earthly life (James 4:14: "a vapour") gains significance when it's the vestibule to eternity.

## 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 awareness of life's brevity affect your priorities and prayers?  
Should it create urgency or despair?
2. If God seems slow to act, does human existence become "vain"? How does Romans 8:20-21 answer this fear?
3. How does Christ's resurrection prove God didn't create humanity "in vain" despite death's apparent victory?

## Interlinear Text

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Remember	H589	מִזְכָּר	remember	אָנָּה	תְּהִזְכֵּר	לְזִיכָּר	לְזִיכָּר	מִזְכָּר	אָנָּה	מִזְכָּר	לְזִיכָּר	לְזִיכָּר	מִזְכָּר	אָנָּה	לְזִיכָּר	
	H2142			H4100	how short	H2465	H5921	H4100	in vain	H7723						

  
| my time is wherefore hast thou made | H1254 | תְּהִזְכֵּר | remember | אָנָּה | תְּהִזְכֵּר | לְזִיכָּר | לְזִיכָּר | מִזְכָּר | אָנָּה | תְּהִזְכֵּר | לְזִיכָּר | לְזִיכָּר | מִזְכָּר | אָנָּה | לְזִיכָּר |
|  |  | H3605 |  |  | all men | H1121 |  |  | H120 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Job 7:7** (Parallel theme): O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.

**Job 10:9** (Creation): Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

**Job 14:1** (Parallel theme): Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

