

Number Our Days

EACH Sabbath evening during school term here at Ingwenya in Zimbabwe, we have an English service. Sometimes it is taken by Mr. Mpofo, the technical teacher and boarding master. Recently he spoke to the pupils about verse 12 of Psalm 90, which says, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom". It was remarkable, as well as solemn and sad, that one of the pupils died from cancer not long after this talk was given. Here are a few things Mr. Mpofo said to us that Sabbath evening.

"We all make plans for the future and we don't think that our days are numbered. We do not know what the number of our days is, but God knows it. We all have known people whose end has come even although they had lots of plans for the future. Their days were numbered — when God's time came they had to go! . . .

"When you bring your desks for repair to my workshop I see some of you have a timetable for your work stuck inside — so much time to be spent on each subject. You know that if you are to pass your exams you must plan your time. You have to count the time until the exam and prepare for it. What would you think of a boy or girl who thought, 'Exams are a long time away', and who did no work but just played around? They

would not be able to cope later on and get their work up-to-date. Exam time would find them unprepared. . . .

"I remember a little story we have for children. An ant and a grasshopper played together in summer when everything was green. The ant also prepared for winter by storing food; but the grasshopper, seeing plenty of leaves to eat, thought this was not necessary. Then winter came and everything dried up. The ant went down a hole into his nest and lived on what he had prepared. When he came out of his nest in spring he saw his friend, the grasshopper, lying dead on the ground. He had made no preparation until it was too late. . . .

"We do not know the number of our days, and so we must pray this prayer, 'Teach us to number our days . . .'. We need the Holy Spirit to teach us that the number of our days is much less than we think, and that we must apply our hearts to wisdom without delay. We must seek and have this true wisdom of knowing Jesus Christ and believing in Him. Then our sins will be forgiven and we will have eternal life; and we will be prepared for the judgment. . . .

"When people who belong to the Lord are making plans they say, 'If the Lord will'. They say this because they know that their times are in the Lord's hands and that He may call them away at any time. . . .

"So we need to learn these important lessons:

- (1) Our days are numbered and only God knows the number.
- (2) We need to ask Him to teach us to number our days.