

Time and Chance

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Ecclesiastes 9:11 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race [is] not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

Have you ever been far away from home and found yourself returning to things that had changed? I read this scripture and it is as if a man traveled the world seeking wonders and understanding. On his homecoming he found that men at home were no different then men like himself. I think what that scripture is saying to me is that we all have our chance and we all have our time. But not all of us understand when it comes.

Over the years I have been brought low by a multitude of sickness and disease. This body fought and lost so I found myself stricken upon my bed for months while I recovered. And when I would arise I would be weak and sore and barely able to walk. I would begin a regimen of exercise walking half a block and then more increasing it until I could walk around the entire section of blocks. But when I pressed too hard I experienced serious setbacks which brought me back to start. Each time I arose chance and circumstance knocked me down and I grew low again. It was a battle I seemed destined to lose. A battle I could not win. A war that was fought by me but a war that was fought around me as well.

And yet in the midst of this battle I recognized one thing. That my strength was not enough. My power over limb and mind and brain were not enough. I was fighting a battle progressing towards death and each time I skirted the edge I had to fight against pain and fear and terrors by night. It was a war that few have fought like I did and perhaps few will ever have to fight.

Yet in the midst of my suffering I found a solution to the weakness and worry and frustrations of life at its weakest. I found a path which few knew existed but I did not discover this path until I had trodden all other forms and ways and passages. Men rise up with ideas and men fall into failure because they missed this path. It was one I saw but not until I had expired all other avenues. And in a sense isn't that what we are dealing with? The question of expiration? We are men of time and chance. We are built on a foundation of flesh and broken upon a shore of stones. We break easily and yet we heal well if we learn the simple secret of hope.

Hope is like a single star that shines in the night sky. Like its counterpart the sun it rises at night and sets at sunrise. It shines in the darkness and it carries with it my wishes. And each wish I make is made in the moment of torture and pain. Now torture doesn't exactly sound like an inspiring thing and its not. But torture can be considered the exercise of the enemy against the hope of the eternal. The torture we face is the enemy and that enemy above all else is our mind. Now I can blame the devil and death and suffering and all the other dark spirits that exist. I know they exist and I know they carry pain

with them as a gift they enjoy passing on. But there is one thing they cannot touch and that is the mind with which God has given us. Now I know there are those touched mindwise with simplicity and lack of understanding. To them I suspect God might say they will have their day in court as in a day when judgement will render mercy towards them.

But for myself I see a measure of understanding that had to be broken. I carried it all my life and loved it because with it I could understand things. But when it came to the Hope star I had to cast aside the temporal for the eternal. And the eternal was the real equation and measure we are dealing with. My fragile mind was broken by pain but carried into the eternal arms of God. And there in my suffering He spoke and said "I am here." And that being there for me reminded me that it happened in a way I did not want nor expect but God carried my wishes and held on to them and protected them from being lost. Not one was lost and in all time and in all circumstance God watched over them and nest egged them so they produced. Well, I could say that we who are Gods children are brought to a place of darkness sometimes so we might see. It was Jesus who said the blind lead the blind and the blind of this world are those who walk by sight and not by faith and faith is born on the treasures of heavens Hope.

And sometimes we have to measure the eternal because our temporal fragile body is broken too soon for us to enjoy the pleasures of this world in any measure. Pleasures God has wrought for us from the earth. But perhaps in the midst of this we learn secrets that make up for the loss of anything we can see or touch or find upon the earth. We learn of the secrets of the creator who gave us that star to wish upon. We learn of the joys and hopes and progressions that are yet to come. For I do see a time coming when all men will worship God in spirit and in truth. I see that we who are here below are measured in a filter and a filter is like a progression from course to fine. And sometimes to ultra fine.

But many are looking still for answers and want to know. Do we need to be afraid of the rise of the anti-christ? Do we need to fear destruction upon the land? Do we need to fear earthquakes in divers places? If this are the questions of the day then perhaps they are wise. But in this measure we can be sure that God is God and will answer them in His time. For a man cannot exceed his daily bread and his bread is matched by the seed he sows. For the seed is broken upon the stones of those who would feed upon his measure. He is given a daily measure that cannot be held by human hands. For the measure is built on pain or suffering but that is a measure of time and not of need or help from above. For God would say that we are a work in progress and not meant to have all things by measure or mete. But in the midst of that suffering there is a day approaching when we will be brought low. And in the bringing of low we will be measured by the height we are. For myself I stand at six foot two. For you it may be five two or three two or 1-2 as in a joke I think. But what we are is people who live by choice. And each choice we walk leads us on a path towards pain or joy. So live by faith and not by sight. In this the will of time and chance are brought out in a man and that man or woman is the time of chance and the chance of time. So be it. Amen.