

Time

We never seem to have enough of it, yet we often squander it on foolish and vain things which would glorify us, rather than He who made us. We engage in theosophical debates about its nature, try to describe its ownership and make unsubstantiated and undefendable statements alluding to what we will or won't do in the eventuality that we happen to have a larger quantity of this item lavished upon us. We try to make more of this by working at a breakneck pace throughout our lives, only to find that rather than giving us more of this item, we in reality have wasted some of that little bit of this item we were given in the first place. We have only been proving, to our regret, that there are no rewind buttons on the clock of life. Sadly, we often find that we are "dealt" a series of ubiquitous challenges to our life that we not prepared our selves, to handle. We must compromise previously set up priorities in order to accommodate these unsettling challenges for which there seemed to be no warning. Solomon was right when he said there is a time for every purpose under heaven[1].

The book of Ecclesiastes seems to me to be the poignant reflection of a man in the autumn of a life which has been spent, at times foolishly, in a futile attempt to find the meaning of life. Like the "baby boomers" of today, he tried everything imaginable to indulge his wants while ignoring his needs as he went on through life totally oblivious to the steadily unrelenting encroachment of one of the enemies against which he has no defense....Time.

One of the ironies of this concatenation called life, is, that though we spend thousands to purchase wrist watches to measure more precisely units of time, our lifestyles seem to support a philosophy which divides these units into much larger packets, supporting a time philosophy best described as "measure with a micrometer, but cut with an Axe". We become nanosecond wise, but lifetime foolish; the general direction of these precisely measured out units of time granted us becoming warped in the heat and pressure of our precision temporal bookkeeping system.

New records are being set everyday in the realm of track and field, horse racing, and motor sport racing. We shave off seconds or tenths of a second to the explosive accolades of the millions of adoring fans who paid money to see new records being set and new multi million dollar contracts being signed as one of the "lucky ones" are being washed in a sea of champagne to celebrate the duration being anticipated of a contract which lasts, perhaps ten years. Even though God has placed eternity in the hearts of men[2], we are seemingly totally oblivious to the ravages of a lifestyle which focuses only on the temporal and occludes the eternal with a shroud of materialistic, secular diversions. We should take a lesson from Solomon who speaks from experience about the meaninglessness of a devotion to the acquisition of wisdom, wealth, pleasure, and advancement at the expense of a relationship with God. Consequently, he is jaundiced and morose as he expounds on the vanity of following after things our society normally values. We are cautioned to remember our Creator when we are still young and have time to do so, because the bottom line is to fear God and keep His commandments.[3] Coming to terms with God in this fashion takes time; time is in His hands.

God controls time. This is evidenced by His making the sun and the moon stand still to give Joshua and Israel time to conquer the Amorites[4], and making the shadow on the stairs recede to give Hezekiah a sign that he would be healed[5] by God. God seems to want to invest time in order that His Name might be glorified. This is evidenced by Jesus' healing of the many who were suffering from maladies ranging from blindness to paralysis. This proves that Jesus is Lord, not only over the maladies, but also Lord over the sun and moon and time itself.

Jesus healed a man born blind that the healing might be a testimony to the Jews that He is Lord over all. This healing was a focal point which precipitated a heated discussion with the Jews about spiritual blindness[6]. From this we have further evidence of the Deity of Christ. The time spent on the lifespan of the healed man seemed to be merely for development of the condition from which the man would be healed that the work of God might be evidenced in him[7].

Job developed his character over the years of wealth only to be tested by the maladies which fell upon him. Though he was put under unimaginable trials he still echoed a true faith in God[8]. When his trials were completed, God spoke with Job to teach him the error of his ways, admonishing his two friends who have not spoken of God what is right, and instructing them to make a sacrifice, and Job to pray for his friends. When all had been accomplished God restored the fortunes of Job twice what they were before[9]. God is again glorified, man put in his proper place, and the time it takes is incidental.

Physicists have described time as motion. Speed has as one of its components, the concept of time. Relativity says that time is warped under the force of gravity. We also learn that the faster we travel the more time is stretched out. If we travel at speeds approaching the speed of light, we may return only minutes older than we left, but to a world decades, if not centuries older. Science fiction fans have followed the concepts of time machines, time travel, and changing the courses of history as we travel back and forth in time. While time may be the component of the 4 dimensional space/time continuum which appears, at this point, to be under the control of God, we still are not content with this idea. Would that we could echo with Solomon in his apparent resignation to the fact that it is God who created a time for every purpose under Heaven, and He has made all things beautiful in their time[10]. As a Christian, I should learn acceptance of God's Divine Control over all aspects of life; from the small to the large, from the important to the seemingly unimportant.

[1] Ecclesiastes 3:1

[2] Ecclesiastes 3:11

[3] Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:14

[4] Joshua 10: 1-15

[5] 2 Kings 20:1-11

[6] John 9:1-41

[7] John 9:3

[8] Job 13:15

[9] Job Chapters 38-42

[10] Ecclesiastes 3:1-14