



“The God of the Unexpected”

Eccl. 9:10-18

August 2, 2020

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- 11 I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise nor wealth to the discerning nor favor to men of ability; for time and chance overtake them all.
- 12 Moreover, man does not know his time: like fish caught in a treacherous net and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men are ensnared at an evil time when it suddenly falls on them.
- 13 Also this I came to see as wisdom under the sun, and it impressed me.
- 14 There was a small city with few men in it and a great king came to it, surrounded it and constructed large siegeworks against it.
- 15 But there was found in it a poor wise man and he delivered the city by his wisdom. Yet no one remembered that poor man.
- 16 So I said, "Wisdom is better than strength." But the wisdom of the poor man is despised and his words are not heeded.
- 17 The words of the wise heard in quietness are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools.
- 18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

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- “hand”** = ability, **“find”** = opportunity, **“might”** = intensity.
- Man was not created to be idle.
 - Man was not justified to be idle.
 - Man is not sanctified to be idle.
 - Man will not be glorified to be idle.
 - When we die, our time to plan, be active, and execute wisdom will have come to a screeching halt.
 - Live life with intensity. Squeeze everything out of it.

Principle: When life is unpredictable and events are unexpected, find something to do and do it with 100% effort.

Col 3:23

23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,

Eph 5:15-16

15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

- By 50 years old a man or woman will have worked, if they worked consistently since school, 56,000 hours of work.
 - Make those hours count. Start each day - Thank the Lord for another day to use the gifts and the strength and the mind He has given you.
 - When death comes it will be too late “to finish that project.”
 - Don’t procrastinate.
- Procrastinators Creed -**
1. I believe that if anything is worth doing, it would have been done already.
 2. I shall never move quickly, except to avoid more work or to find excuses.
 3. I will never rush into a job without a lifetime of consideration.
 4. If at first I don't succeed, there is always next year.
 5. I shall always decide not to decide, unless of course I decide to change my mind.
 6. I know that the work cycle is not plan/start/finish, but is wait/plan/plan.
 7. I will never put off until tomorrow, what I can forget about forever.

“No man ever served God by doing things tomorrow.”
 - Spurgeon

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Why is that?

Solomon says 2 things disrupt the expected outcome:

1. Timing.
 2. Chance (unexpected events).
- From the worlds viewpoint, these random occurrences can produce an unexpected outcome.
 - From a spiritual viewpoint God does the unexpected by appointing the times and the occurrences.
 - **Timing** - God's sovereign providence.
 - **Chance** - פֶּה-גַּח - peh-gah - occurrence or event. God's sovereign plan of events which we did not plan.
 - Sometimes time and chance affect the outcome more than skill or ability.
 - There are a lot of unseen factors that may come in to play.
 - We all hear people say - "Who would have thought . . . ?"

Birth of the Church

Acts 2:2

2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

The Rapture

1 Cor 15:51-52

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Second Coming

1 Thess 5:2-4

2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.

2016 Presidential Election

Coronavirus

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5 examples of the unexpected:

1. The fastest runner does not always win the race.
2. The mighty warrior does not always win the battle.
3. The wise don't always get the bread.
4. The intelligent don't always have the most money.
5. The skillful worker does not always get the promotion.

Principle: Ability does not necessarily guarantee success.

The Flood

Matt 24:38-39

38 "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away;

David and Goliath

1 Sam 17:49

49 And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground.

Esther

Est 7:8-10

8 As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs who were before the king said, "Behold indeed, the gallows standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good on behalf of the king!" And the king said, "Hang him on it."

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai,

Not to the strong is the battle,
Not to the swift is the race;
Yet to the true and the faithful
Victory is promised through grace.

— Fanny Crosby

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• People are limited by the times in which they live and the circumstances into which they are born.

• They are often like fish caught in a fisherman's net or like birds caught in a snare.

• They swim along, minding their own business, and suddenly they are snatched up by a net...and there is absolutely nothing that they can do about it!

• In other words, they are trapped by their circumstances, and no amount of effort or achievement can change the times or overcome the circumstances that limit them.

James 4:13-16

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit."

14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

13 Also this I came to see as wisdom under the sun, and it impressed me.

• Solomon says – "time for an illustration."

• So if life is filled with "unexpected" events and circumstances, does it matter if I have wisdom?

• What Solomon saw in this illustration impressed him.

• Let's look at it . . .

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• "large siegeworks" - same Hebrew word appearing in verse 12 where it is translated "net." Solomon is intentionally associating the siege of the city with those adversities that might suddenly come upon either an individual or a community.

• But here is a wise man who outsmarts a great king.

• The poor man may have delivered the city by diplomacy or military strategy.

• He saves the day, yet he is unrewarded with wealth or social esteem.

• The point is that the city owed its survival to him, but he received no reward or lasting respect.

• Wisdom is sought out only in desperate times. That is why it is not remembered.

• Generally only those who have wealth or power receive the public attention.

• Although the wise man did profit from his labors, his wisdom did benefit others. People become absorbed by the events of their present day and forget the achievements of former days, even though their present benefits are a result of those former days.

• Especially they forget the people who sacrificed to create the benefits they enjoy.

• Solomon is impressed in 3 ways . . .

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Impression #1: Wisdom is better than strength but rarely honored or respected.

• People receive the benefits of a poor man's service, but they soon forget the man because he is poor and not prominent in the city.

• We usually say, "Give credit where credit is due." But that didn't happen here.

• The poor man had no lasting influence in the city.

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• **Impression #2:** Wisdom does not need an increase in decibels in order to provide wise solutions.

• "Speak softly and . . ."

• The king is shouting as the city is in peril.

• Fools listen to rulers who shout, who shoot off their mouths with no content.

• The wise listen for wisdom said with a whisper.

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Impression #3: Wisdom is preferred but it can be subject to destruction by only 1 sinner.

• Solomon sensed that it was much easier to destroy than to build.

• Establishing things by wisdom is much more difficult than destroying them by the work of even **one sinner**.

• The wisdom of the poor man's strategy delivered them from weapons of war.

The power of 1:

- "one rotten apple ruins the whole barrel"
- "one bad egg spoils the omelette."
- "a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough"

• Adam's sin infected the whole race of man.

• Therefore, for you and me, we are to be on guard; we are to watch out for this kind of sinful man. He will be forever defined by the way that he behaves.

• So a wise man can accomplish many things, yet the truth is that one stupid person can ruin everybody's day.

Life is filled with the unexpected
but remember
God is the God of the unexpected.