

The Last

by Wayne Goff

Once again, by the grace of God, we come to another year's end. As we briefly look back on 2014, we remember those brethren, friends and loved ones whose earthly lives came to an end. It is a sober reminder that life is fleeting and that none of us has a lease on life. We never know when this life will come to an end, Ecclesiastes 9:12. For some, 2014 was their last.

I remember my mother often replying to the word "**last**" with this witticism: "That's what the shoemaker killed his wife with." I didn't understand what that meant until I learned that "**last**" can also be defined as "that mechanical form that has the shape of a human foot and is used by shoemakers to make and repair shoes." So my mother was making a play on the word. But it has stuck in my head and I will remember it forever. I hope no shoemaker ever really did kill his wife with one, though that would be a formidable weapon!

Once again on a serious note, we should *reflect* back over 2014 long enough to **repent** of any sins which we might have committed, *give thanks* for the multitude of divine blessings, and be *thankful* for the continued life we have now going into the new year. It might be our last year as well. God knows.

Solomon's advice to us is to enjoy your God-given food and drink, behave yourself in a wise manner, live joyfully with your spouse "...for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun" (Eccl. 9:7-9). Yes, we do only go through life once, so do your best, live your best, and be thankful to God for all of it, always remembering to put Him first in your priorities.

When you die, your life will soon be forgotten by man (Eccl. 9:5). Also, your love, hatred, and envy will all perish because you will nevermore have a share in anything done under the sun (Eccl. 9:6). Perhaps this is a warning to only let the important things upset you. In the end, very little of our concerns will really matter.

So while man may forget you and me, God never will. We shall stand before Him in the eternal judgment (2 Cor. 5:10) to answer for our lives. **Goodbye 2014!**

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