

Musings About Death

by Jere E. Frost

Death does not seem as stark and harsh to me as it did in the days of my youth. There are several reasons for this, but two of them tower above all the others.

The first and foremost is that the righteous will dwell in a better place and be clothed with a better body. Hence, it is only a doorway, a change of worlds. We know little about the place to which we go, or the body that we shall have. But we do know that (a) there will be joys forevermore and the former woes of death, disease and disappointment will be no more (Psalm 16:11; Rev. 21:4), and that (2) our bodies will be like His (I John 3:2).

The second is that so many who were near and who still are dear to me have passed on. What form recognition will take, I do not know, but that there is such is inherent in the idea of being acknowledged and confessed by Jesus (Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8). Even the angels have their individual identities, such as Gabriel and Michael. Abraham and Lazarus had their identities beyond death in the scene Jesus gave us (Luke 16:19f). The idea of being an anonymity among the anonymous is foreign to the very idea of intelligent beings who are but a little lower than the angels. In a single word, I fully expect to see and know dear ones from the past as well as the great and good of other ages. Why should I not want to be there?

It is the passage — **death** — the thought of which is so painful. To some, it is altogether sad and forbidding. It is a passing into the unknown. It is a leaving behind of the earthly body and all earthly possessions and ties. Therefore the last steps of this passage are likened to a walking through a valley of shadows (Psalm 23). "We are going down the valley one by one." This last mile must be haunting and bleak to those who must travel it truly alone, who have no fellowship with and therefore no sustaining comfort from the Lord at all. But the comfort the psalmist felt is common to all who trust in His person and promises; *"I will fear no evil, for thou art with me."*

So let be for us that *"to live is Christ, and to die is gain"* (Philippians 1:23). Let us live until we die, and may we hold this life dear until the end. And then, as those embarking on a great voyage and waving to well-wishers on the shore, whose ship that will carry them on the same journey is even now to be seen approaching on the horizon, let us say, "Until we meet again."

"Farewell, mortality, Jesus is mine! Welcome, eternity, Jesus is mine. Welcome, O loved and blest, Welcome, sweet scenes of rest, Welcome, my Savior's breast, Jesus is mine!" (Catharine J. Bonar)

Brother Jere Frost died, October 25, 2013

301901