

Passages to Live By

by Bill Crews

Man has received “*life, breath, and all things*” from God (**Acts 17:25**). Indeed, in God “*we live, and move, and have our being*” (**Acts 17:28**).

We must realize, with Job, that in God’s “*hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind*” (**Job 12:10**). Not only is our breath in His hand, but all our ways are His (**Daniel 5:23**).

When thinking of **our course in life and of our eternal destinies**, let us say with the Psalmist, “*My soul is continually in my hand*” (**Psalms 119:109**). Using our God-given volition, we decide.

When thinking of **the brevity of life**, let us say with Job, “*Man ... cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not*” (**Job 14:1-2**). This from a man who, as a test from Satan and permitted by God, had lost all his children, his herds and flocks, his crops, and his health. Who also said of God, “*Though He slay me; yet, will I not deny Him.*”

When thinking of **the uncertainty of life**, let us say with David, “*There is but a step between me and death*” (**1 Samuel 20:3**).

When thinking of **the finality of death** (it takes man from a stage – this life – to which he can never return), let us say with the wise woman of Tekoa, “*For we must needs die and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again*” (**2 Samuel 14:14**).

When thinking of **how death closes the book and seals our destiny**, let us say with Solomon, “*And if a tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be*” (**Ecclesiastes 11:3**).

We “*know not what a day may bring forth*” (**Proverbs 27:1**) or “*what shall be on the morrow*” (**James 4:14**). Will time endure? Will there be a tomorrow? If time endures and tomorrow comes, if perhaps many tomorrows come, will we still be here? We do not, and cannot know.

We do not know how much longer the world will endure (not because of “global warming,” but because of the Father’s decision to bring about the resurrection of all the dead and the judgment of the living and the dead (**Matthew 25:31-46**).

“*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up*” (**2 Peter 3:10**). “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only*” (**Matthew 24:35-36**).

We do not know when death may usher us from this life and transport our spirits to the unseen realm to await the day of resurrection and eternal judgment: “*For the living know that they shall die,*” but, “*there is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power over the day of death*” (**Ecclesiastes 9:5; 8:8**). “*And inasmuch as it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this cometh judgment*” (**Hebrews 9:27**).

Let us plan our lives wisely for time and eternity. Let us live right today and plan to do so tomorrow. Let God and God’s will be in our plans. Let spiritual things – God’s word, our souls, the souls of others, worship and service – be paramount. May the above passages help us to accomplish these things.

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