

Now and Then

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.

– 1 Corinthians 13:12 –

Human existence has boundaries. We live within a space-matter-time continuum. Though our soul and spirit longs for eternity, we cannot fully conceive of life outside these intrinsic universal parameters. Our faith bridges the gap to some degree, but can really only do so to a point. We understand we shall live forever, and even breathe a bit of the ether of that everlasting realm on a day-to-day basis when we commune with God in prayer, devotion, and Bible study. But when we stop to really contemplate the nature of eternity, our mental and spiritual faculties strain toward exhaustion, falling far short of any type of satisfactory result. We are like a caged bird, longingly beholding the vast expanse just outside the bars. We flap excitedly, yearning for the moment the door will open but a fraction and we find ourselves free, taking flight into the boundless atmosphere that surrounded us but heretofore excluded our full participation from its tangible reality.

There is so much mystery about our God and His ways that we cannot comprehend here. Though we take hold of them by faith, our heavenly entrance and subsequent glorification will open a new phase of understanding, relegating these stunningly profound enigmas to merely elementary in stature. How can God be omnipresent? Now, we know it to be true by His Word; but then, we shall experience its overwhelming verity with every fiber of our eternal being. What is the nature of the Trinity? Now, we apprehend the triune God-head by faith; but then, we shall interact with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in ways we currently cannot even begin to imagine. What happened at Calvary? Now, we fondly and tenaciously embrace our salvation secured upon that lonely hill outside Jerusalem; then, will we perhaps be permitted to plumb but some of the depths of the moment our Lord mysteriously cried, “My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?” Now, while we may not understand the why’s and wherefores to the painful events of this life, we nevertheless trust our God’s superintending care; but then, shall we not only understand the heartaches, but actually rejoice in them, finally beholding the tapestry and totality of our lives from heaven’s gracious and guiding vantage point?

This life is fleeting. It is a vapor. Then is what we are awaiting. And when it finally arrives, time will be no longer. At long last, we shall know as we are known. Hold tight, anxious Christian. The cage is soon to open, and we shall fly away to worlds unknown. Until THEN, let us resolve to trust our wonderful God in every NOW. --- D. Murcek