



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – June 1, 2021

The Lord be with you.

The other night, we were at some friend's house where the woman is a very wonderful, accomplished painter, and we were looking at a painting that she had just started, it was just the bare outlines of a painting, I couldn't see what the painting was going to be, but knowing the artist and knowing her work well, I knew that the painting would be beautiful when she was finished.

Now, my thoughts about that artist and her unfinished painting takes me to a wonderful scripture verse that I wanna share with you. It's one of my favorite verses in the Bible. It's Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 11, where Solomon portrays God as an artist, and Solomon says, God has made everything beautiful in its time, he has also set eternity in the human heart. Yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I think of this verse as the Old Testament equivalent to what the Apostle Paul says in Romans 8-28, about how God works all things together for good for those who love Him. Okay, there were three things in this verse by Solomon that I wanna look at. First, God has made everything beautiful in its time. Second, God has put eternity in our hearts, and third, we cannot fathom the big picture of what God is doing.

Okay, first Solomon says, God has made everything beautiful in its time. This follows quick on the heels of Solomon's words about time earlier in Chapter Three, in those immortal words, for everything there is a season and a time for every matter under Heaven. And Solomon shows how that includes in God's plan, things like the time to be born, a time to die, a time to weep, the time to laugh. As Solomon includes all the heartache of life, all the joy of life. To then conclude that God has made everything beautiful in its time. In its time. You see, God has an appointed time for everything, a time for everything in its proper season. As God, makes it beautiful part of his design, God's harmony. And one day, you and I will see that everything fits. That all those things we can't understand how God makes everything beautiful in its time. Even those times of great tragedy, when it seems that everything is a loss, God takes the ugliest and makes it beautiful in its time. And God's not finished yet.

Now, the second part of this first, God has put eternity in our hearts. Now, you and I live in time but God has put eternity in our hearts. Part of our dignity in being created in God's image is that we do think about eternity, we have an inborn consciousness of eternity. The Hebrew word translated, eternity carries the idea of eternity backwards and eternity forwards. That there was an infinite past and an infinite future, you and I live immersive, but we want to know the eternal to see the whole as God sees it.



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Which takes us to the third part of this verse. Yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end, that means that God is an artist who is working on a big, big canvas that stretches across the ages across the cosmos, so that no one living in time can fathom what God has done from beginning to end, from eternity, past to eternity future. We can fathom it. We see only a portion here in time. We cannot see the completed whole from beginning to end. We cannot fathom what God is doing in time, but we do know this, we do know that God is making everything beautiful in its time. For now, we see through a glass darkly, but then face-to-face.

CS Lewis his book, *The Great Divorce*, which is a dream vision of heaven and hell. Lewis writes, well, about our pain and struggle here in time, and Lewis says, "You cannot in your present state understand eternity. That is what mortals misunderstand. Mortals say of some temporal suffering that no future bliss can make up for it. What mortals do not know is that heaven once attained, we'll work backwards and turn even that agony into glory." Heaven once attained, we'll work backwards and turn even that agony into glory.

God isn't finished yet. One day, God will complete this wondrous masterpiece, and we will see, and we will praise God that He has made everything beautiful in its time.

I just have to close today with the doxology of the Apostle Paul at the end of Romans Chapter 11. Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments? And his ways past finding out.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.