

From the Bits and Pieces (#412) series by Elder Ralph Harris

TIME'S SWIFT PASSAGE

It is interesting to note that when Stephen was stoned, Saul is referred to as "a young man" (Acts 7:58) and only about 30 years later he refers to himself as "Paul the aged" (Philemon 9). There was a period between Paul's conversion and his martyrdom of about 35 years, so even if he was as much as 30 years old when the Lord appeared to him on the Damascus road, that would have made him only 65 years old when he died. I turned 66 this year, and it is still difficult for me to think of myself as an aged person. You who are young will be amazed at how soon you will find yourself among the older generation. It is strange how one's perspective on age changes as they get older. At least that has been the case with me. When I was young I thought of people the age I am now as being very old, but since I am no longer young, people that age do not seem so old anymore.

I've always heard that the longest lifetime is short to look back upon, and I have found it to be very true with regard to my own brief existence on earth. To reflect back on it, it surely does not seem like a very long time. I sometimes think to myself, "Where has the time gone?" Truly does James refer to life as "a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). Our days on the earth are spoken of "as a shadow" (I Chr. 29:15), as being "swifter than a weaver's shuttle," and "a post" (Job 7:6 & 9:25) and "as an handbreadth" (Psa. 39:5). When Jacob was a hundred and thirty years old he said the days of the years of his life had been *few and evil* (Gen. 47:9).

Even though the trials of life have been numerous, and some of them very severe, yet the time has gone by quickly in retrospect. There were times during periods of great suffering when time almost seemed to stand still, and an hour seemed to drag on forever, but when viewed in retrospect and at a distance, the time element seems to disappear.

It is now pleasant to consider the fact that for us time will soon be no more and we will be completely absorbed in the glory and beauty of the Lord and will be wrapped up in praising Him in perfection. Each day and each moment draws us nearer to that indescribably glorious state, and I do not begrudge a moment of time that is past. I only wish I had made a better use of some of it. ---Elder Ralph Harris