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THE TIGER PICTURE

A few years ago, I saw a picture that I have not forgotten. It was a picture of several friends posed around a dead tiger. It was evident from the picture that the men had gone on a hunt, and this tiger was killed on their hunt. The men were all smiles as they posed in the photo. They had obviously had a wonderful day and were happy with the day's events. It was a neat picture. By the way, did I mention this picture was in a *nursing home*, and one of the men in the photo was an Alzheimer's patient? The first time I saw that picture, I was impressed with what I saw, then saddened. I had several other occasions to see the picture and reflect on it. This caused me to think seriously about my life. The tiger picture is fascinating to me because this one picture reveals several Bible principles. **The Brevity Of Life.** The tiger picture showed men who were physically in the "prime" of their lives. It looked like they were very happy. In a few short years, though, those men in the picture changed, just as

picture ended up in a nursing home with little chance of going home. How things change so quickly in life! Proverbs 27:1 (LSB) reminds us, *"Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth."* Moses said, *"As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to might, eighty years, yet their pride is but labor and wickedness; for soon it is gone and we fly away So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom"* (Ps. 90:10-12). The Holy Spirit inspired James to write, *"Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are a vapor that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away"* (Jas. 4:14). The men in the picture aged as we all do. Life passed by quickly for them, just as Moses and James said it would. Since we know we are here on earth for a little while, are we using our time wisely, or are we wasting it? The Ephesians were told they needed to *"redeem the time"* because *"the days are evil"* (Eph. 5:16)! Think about it —

earth, the “days” to do the Lord’s work do not equal 70-80 years! When we subtract the years of infancy, the years we were living in sin, and for some, the years of old age when their mental faculties leave them, most people are looking at a window of perhaps 20-40 years to do the Lord’s will. Therefore, how are we spending our brief time on earth to serve God? Life passes quickly, and we must prepare ourselves for eternity! **Circumstances Change In Our Lives.** I don’t know how many of the men in that picture had died since that picture was taken, nor all their life experiences, but I know at least one man who was not going hunting again! How ironic that at least one of those men in the picture could not even enjoy the memories of his hunt! As time passes, circumstances change in all of our lives. Solomon spoke of this in Ecclesiastes 12 as he wrote about the aging process and how things change physically in the body. He said, *“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days happen and the years draw near in which you will say, ‘I have no delight in them’; before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain; in the day that the watchmen of the house tremble, and valient men bend down, the grinding ones stand idle because they are few, and those who look through windows grow dark; and and the doors on the street are shut as the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one will arise at the sound of the bird, and all the daughters of*

song will sing softly. Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place, and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blooms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home, but the mourners go about in the street. Remember Him before the silver cord is snapped, and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the spring is broken and the wheel at the cistern is crushed; then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it” (Ecc. 12:1-7). Circumstances change in our lives, but we have an eternal soul that must prepare for the life to come! The tiger picture captured a moment of the past, as all photos do. It said nothing, however, about the present or the future! That image stood as a testimony to what was! At one time, these men were strong, healthy, and able to do what they pleased. Those days are over. Time passes, and life changes. Knowing this, are we holding to God’s “unchanging hand”? Do we have *“hope ... as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast”* (Heb. 6:19)? Christ is *“the same yesterday, today, and forever”* (Heb. 13:8). He is unchanging in a changing world! Have we been baptized into Christ and added to His church due to that baptism (Acts 2:38-47)? Our lives change often, but Christ, salvation, and the promise of a home in Heaven stand unchanging for those ready to live by faith! **The Picture Revealed Nothing About The Condition Of Their Souls.** This fact struck me hardest as I looked at the tiger picture over several

months. The tiger picture might bring back pleasant memories to those involved, but it says nothing about the condition of the souls of those in the picture. I might add that in like manner, one's bank account does not reveal the state of one's soul. One's friends, family, name, occupation, house, or any other physical indicator men use to define "success" cannot reveal the condition of one's soul! In fact, when we read passages such as Hebrews 11:38; I Corinthians 1:18-31; and others, we learn that God's standard for "success," who and what God considers "wise," and a host of other things stand diametrically opposed to man's standards. Therefore, who will we please in our years on earth – God or men? (Gal. 1:6-12) **Conclusion.**

We are *"strangers and pilgrims"* (I Pet. 2:11). Let us remember who we are and to Whom we will one day give account for what we have done (Rom. 14:12; Ecc. 12:13-14; II Cor. 5:10). Solomon spoke to generations of young people, reminding them to *"Be glad ... during your childhood, and let your heart be merry during the days of young manhood. And walk in the ways of your heart and in the sights of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you into judgment for all these things"* (Ecc. 11:9). Do we remember who we are and our responsibilities to God? Do not waste any more time! Obey God! – Jarrod Jacobs **To Those Mothers Who ...** Have suffered the physical pain of child-bearing and/or the mental anxieties of a courtroom adoption," Love their husbands, children, and family and show it," Present themselves

with *"shamefacedness, [modesty], and sobriety,"* Work hard at being *"keepers at home,"* Serve their families with energy and commitment," Are the positive force in all relationships and associations," *"Rightly divide"* the Bible with their husbands and children," Dress their children for church services," Labor outside the home to help earn a living to pay debts," Speak favorably and lovingly to their husband, children, neighbors, friends, and even those who are contrary," Drive children to ballgames, band concerts, 4-H meetings, and school carnivals," Prepare their husbands and children to be preachers, elders, deacons, and faithful Christians. I thank you for your knowledge and practice of Titus 2:3-5! – Gary Fiscus

People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



1st Jerusalem Evidence of Quake From

Archaeologists excavating in Jerusalem, near the Temple Mount and a First-Temple-era wall unearthed evidence of an 8th century BC earthquake. The earliest floor of the southernmost room of a building bore evidence of destruction, but not by fire, and was dated to a time period when no known conquest of Jerusalem occurred. Stones from an upper part of the northern walls had collapsed, shattering a row of vessels that had been along the wall beneath. The excavation directors from the Israel Antiquities Authority, Dr. Joe Uziel and Ortal Chalaf, believe this corresponds to the great earthquake which occurred in the days of [King Uzziah](#), and is mentioned in Amos 1:1 and Zech. 14:5. Archaeological evidence for “Uzziah’s earthquake” has been found at other sites in Israel, including at Hazor and Tell es-Safi/Gath, but this is the first time archaeologists have identified evidence of this earthquake in Jerusalem. A similar 8th-century destruction layer was noted in a collapsed building 100 meters south of the current dig, which was excavated by Yigal Shiloh in the 1970’s, but it was not associated with Uzziah’s earthquake at that time. The multi-year coronavirus pandemic is now firmly branded as a benchmark in modern memory. Likewise, in the first verse of the Book of Amos, the 8th century BCE biblical prophet referred to “two years before the earthquake” as an anchor to the events he was about to relate. Two centuries later, the prophet Zechariah again referred to this destructive earthquake period, so deeply was it ingrained in the collective psyche. Now, for the first time, a team of Israel Antiquities Authority archaeologists in Jerusalem’s City of David report that they have found unprecedented concrete evidence of this 8th century BCE earthquake in the ancient capital. In an upcoming research paper, the archaeologists chart, for example, that in one particular 8th century BCE structure the destruction layer did not show signs of fire, yet other factors suggested the building had been damaged in a traumatic event, apparently in an earthquake. “This was most notable on the earliest floor of the southernmost room,” they write. “In this room, a row of smashed vessels was uncovered along its northern wall, above which fallen stones had been found. It appears that these stones were the upper part of the walls of the room, which had collapsed, destroying the vessels which had been set along the wall.” Until now, the earliest destruction layer of Jerusalem comes from the Babylonian conquest of 586 BCE. For archaeologists, an earlier historical anchor — if proven through hard, securely dated evidence — serves as an important

