



October 4, 2009

You Just Never Know

“For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.” (Eccl 9.12). We sometimes may make the statement that if we had the knowledge that we possess today at some point in the past, things would be different. Lost opportunities abound in the lives of everyone. It is difficult to recognize the trends and signs of the times so to speak and because of that we may feel inadequate. We then hear or read stories of those who have been successful in some venture; how they happened to be in the right place at the right time and everything just worked out for them. As Solomon wrote above, none of us can accurately predict the future, although some try. We can only make decisions based on the best information at hand, trust that we are doing something that will be beneficial, and hope for the best. Some are better than others at making sound decisions. A few appear to be gifted at what they do. We sometimes refer to these individuals as having some sort of gift, knack or talent for doing certain things. Others will argue that the true key to being a success is to keep trying and refuse to give up or settle for less than what we desire. The problem is that there are many factors that are left to chance and random influences. These influences are unpredictable and somewhat chaotic in a raw form. Investments are many times weighed against a certain speculation of risk before entering into an agreement with anyone. The bottom line is that most folks want some sort of guarantee that they will not lose out when they begin to invest their time and resources in a venture. God has made things easier in a spiritual sense. We don't have to wonder about what the outcome of a life of service to the Lord might be. He has told us in advance. We don't have to look for reasons for believing in him, he has provided ample evidence in his word. The external world is simply a living proof of the things that we read in the scriptures. Of course that is still not good enough for some people. We can look at things another way, from God's point of view. There is an absolute guar-

antee. Our return on investment will be far more than we could possibly put into the venture. We only have to be faithful and God will see that we receive that which we are entitled to. **(Rev 2.10, John 14.1-3).** God has already fronted the initial investment and taken the losses for us by sending his son into the world to offer the only acceptable sacrifice for sin. *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom 5.8).* He has stated over and over that there will not be any loss for any of us to incur as we are protected by the sacrifice that Christ made for us. The scriptures contain numerous examples so that we can learn from them and be further established in our dedication and resolve toward the Lord. To that end we can consider the Bible as a training manual. God has taken the guess work out of many of the problems and questions that are common to all of us. From the scriptures we learn who God is and what he has done for mankind. We can determine where we came from and what forces have been at work to bring about the current state of affairs. We don't have to study markets or trends to make a decision about what to believe or what we should do. Guidance has been provided in all of these areas. All we are required to do is learn. Unfortunately too many times we find people who seem more caught up in generating questions and dwelling on things that have not worked than thinking about what we have been given in the pages of the scriptures. We can be assured that the word of God is true and that we can have confidence in the things he has stated. If we are not Christians, we are lost. There is an answer for that. If we become Christians there are ample statements of what to do and how we should live. We don't have to live in the dark or fear the unpredictable. We can rely on the Lord and his directions.

TLC