

As I See It by Joan Barnett

Time for a Review

Ecclesiastes 9:1. NIV. So, I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in god's hands.

In 2013 there was a request for more articles to be submitted for the church magazine. Quite why I volunteered to write a few about living with sight loss I do not remember. I had written a short item about the subject looking at the funnier side of life. Someone was compiling a book although I was not sent the promised copy, maybe it was never published.

I certainly did not expect I would still be coming up with these articles ten years later. Now I am into year eleven wondering where the time has gone.

Many things have happened in our lives during these ten years, not least the Covid Pandemic affecting us all in various ways. Prime Ministers coming and going! A new King and of course Brexit! No wonder it is unlikely there will be a shortage of subjects to write about.

One difference for me has been the deterioration of my useful vision. I have always been grateful this was a slow process, waking up one morning with no vision would have been very frightening. Fortunately, only my right eye was affected at the time despite the fact that it had been my better one. I was left with the situation of vision with distortion and a missing patch in the centre due to my extreme short sight. A consultant had informed me years earlier that my eyes were stretched and shaped rather like a rugby ball. Over the following years after the operation for the detached retina in my right eye which was unsuccessful, I was eventually told that my eyes were far too fragile for any other operations. This did not come as a surprise, gradually learning to cope with less vision and being amazed as to how much I 'see' with my fingers makes daily living in a sightless world, normal.

The book of Ecclesiastes is full of comments about life, the word meaningless crops up frequently in this modern translation. Some of the comments make me smile. The above verse sums up our general look at our lives.

I wonder what the next ten years will bring? For those of us who are visually impaired, new technology has brought vast improvements to our lives and no doubt this will continue. The mobile phone is available in various forms from the very basic to smart ones which can be adapted to talk to us. Computers can be adapted for all disabilities.

Similarities to Star Trek with the hand-held gadget spring to mind! One day, will it really be. 'Beam me up Scottie!'