

## REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 2/25/19

***"Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly." - Deut. 32:35***



I photographed this peregrine falcon at an avian center in the mountains of West Virginia as it looked over its morning breakfast, an unfortunate mouse. These falcons are among the fastest birds on earth, reaching speeds of well over 100 mph as they strike their unsuspecting prey. Death is swift and unexpected. As I edited this image, I thought of a sermon Jo and I have been pondering recently. It was what may well be the most famous (some would say infamous) sermon ever preached in America. The preacher was Jonathan Edwards, the 1741 sermon was entitled "Sinners in the hands of an angry God", and the reaction of those who heard it was an impetus for the revival called the Great Awakening. Edwards pressed upon his audience what is seldom pressed from pulpits today, the coming wrath of God upon all unbelievers. There is a price to pay for sinning against the holiness of God. Judgment will come suddenly and unexpectedly, and the swiftness of it will allow no time for escape. God is a God of love, but He is also a God of justice. We must come face-to-face with our own sinfulness and flee to the One who bore our punishment in his own body. Those who seek shelter in Christ will receive mercy, all others will receive justice. We don't like to think about what Edwards warned us of, but facing that truth is what fires our motivation for seeking shelter, and the only true shelter is found in Jesus. Know this: the end of days will come swiftly and without warning. Don't be caught unexpectedly like this mouse. - John