

Ecclesiastes Chapter 3

Verses 1-8: These verses speak of an appointed time. Not only does God fix the standard and withhold or dispense satisfaction (2:26), but He also appoints "times". Earthly pursuits are good in their proper place and time, but unprofitable when pursued as the chief goal.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 "To every [thing there is] a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:"

This is saying that God arranges even the smallest details of our surroundings. (Verse 1), is speaking of all the things collectively, that he will detail in the next few verses. God's timetable for this earth is perfect. Certain events are ordained from the foundation of the earth.

A very good example of this very thing is the fact that Abraham (the father of the faithful), was born 1948 years after Adam.

Then Israel became a nation in 1948 our time. Another time I believe to be very significant, is the approximate 6000 years of work for the people of the earth, then God will set up a thousand year day of Sabbath of rest. We are nearing the end of the six 1000-year days of work.

Jesus will come back to the earth as King and reign in perfect peace for six 1000-year day of rest. Things, like when we are born and when we die, are foreordained of God. The thing that is not already destined to be, is what we do with Jesus. We, of our own free will, accept Him or reject Him.

Ecclesiastes 3:2 "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up [that which is] planted;"

We see that we have no control of the day we are born. We have no control of who we are born to. We have no control over our gender. We have no control over the way we look, when we are born. All of these things are destined of God. I could go on and on.

We have no control over whether we are born into a wealthy family, or a poverty stricken family. All of these things are determined of God. We do not have control of the time of our death either.

Job 7:1 "[Is there] not an appointed time to man upon earth? [are not] his days also like the days of a hireling?"

Isaac is a very good example of God having a precise time for us to be born.

Genesis 21:2 "For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him."

Death is the same. God has set a time for each person's death.

Hebrews 9:27 "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

The following Scripture tells us the very best, what our life is.

James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

After a hard winter and spring just appears, we all get the urge to make ready the field, and plant something. We watch it grow, till it matures, and then, it is time to pluck it up. Jesus spoke of planting and harvesting. As long as the earth exists, there will be a time of planting, and a time of harvest.

In the spiritual sense, the time of the end is the time of harvest.

Ecclesiastes 3:3 "A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;"

The 6th commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill". Then how, can this Scripture say a time to kill? Thou shalt not kill, means thou shalt not commit premeditated murder. It does not mean that you are not to go to war to protect your family, or your country. A very good example of a time to kill is shown by God killing the firstborn in Egypt.

Exodus 12:12 "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I [am] the LORD."

Another instance when it was a time to kill, is when David killed Goliath. You see, there is a time to kill, but it must be a time that God has chosen for us to kill, not a time when we kill for selfish reasons. It is nearly always the time to heal. Most of Jesus' ministry here on the earth involved healing. Everyone who had faith enough to receive his healing was healed by Him.

1 Peter 2:24 "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

Our healing is spoken of as if it is already done in this Scripture. For us to be healed, we must apply this promise to our problem and believe. We must act upon the promise that Jesus has willed us.

John 14:12-14 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

Why did God not allow David to build His temple?

We read in 1 Kings 5:3 "Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet."

The very next verse tells when it was the right time for Solomon to build it.

1 Kings 5:4-5 "But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, [so that there is] neither adversary nor evil occurrent." "And, behold, I purpose to build a house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto my name."

Sometimes things have to be torn down to the foundation, before they can build on the spot.

Ecclesiastes 3:4 "A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;"

The shortest sentence in the Bible is in John 11:35 "Jesus wept."

Jesus is our example in everything, so we know there are times for us to weep. When we lose a loved one, it is a natural thing to weep. You have heard the expression (laugh and the world laughs with you, cry and you cry alone). This is very true.

Psalms 126:2 "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them."

A story of contrast of mourning and a time to dance quickly reminds us of David, when he danced before the Ark of the Covenant.

2 Samuel 6:14-15 "And David danced before the LORD with all [his] might; and David [was] girded with a linen ephod." "So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet."

David's mourning came at the loss of his firstborn child. David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then he had her husband killed in battle, so he might marry her. In punishment, God took their first child.

2 Samuel 12:14 "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also [that is] born unto thee shall surely die."

Ecclesiastes 3:5 "A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;"

A very good example of a time to cast away stones is when you are clearing a field for cultivation. The time to gather stones is when you are building a stone house. Embracing is a way of showing passion, or affection.

When two friends meet, it is alright to embrace in greeting. The negative side of this would be under the classification of passion. It is not, however, a very nice thing for a man and a woman to passionately embrace in public.

Ecclesiastes 3:6 "A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;"

Material things have been put on the earth for the use of mankind. One of the most vivid Scriptures about getting and losing is in Mark 10:29-30

"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's," "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

We see from this, if we give up our family to work for God, we will get blessings abundant in this life, and will inherit eternal life. The story of Job tells of a man who had received great wealth and blessings from God. Satan caused Job to lose them. God gave twice as many blessings back to Job, when he proved faithful.

There are a number of things we are admonished to keep. The most important of all, is keep the faith. We should cast our cares upon Jesus. We must cast off our sins and idols of this world.

Ecclesiastes 3:7 "A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;"

Rending of clothing is a sign of great mourning. The rending of the veil from the top to the bottom at the crucifixion of Jesus opened the way to the Father for all believers.

Matthew 27:51 "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;"

The sewing of this very curtain had been ordained of God. This curtain was sown with thread of beaten gold. No man could have rent it. It had to be Almighty God.

The following Scriptures tell of times to be silent.

Habakkuk 2:20 "But the LORD [is] in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him."

We see in the following Scriptures, that there is a time to speak also.

Luke 19:40 "And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

Luke 19:37 "And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;"

The most important time of all to speak, is in the following Scriptures.

Romans 10:9-10 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Ecclesiastes 3:8 "A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Hate is a word I do not like, but God says there is a time to hate. Look, with me, at the following Scripture.

Revelation 2:6 "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

Notice, He did not hate the Nicolaitans, He hated their deeds. We are to hate the sin, and love the sinner. God wants us to love everyone, even our enemies, as we read in the next verses.

Matthew 5:43-44 "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy." "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"

Jesus gave us two commandments that cover all. They both have to do with love.

Matthew 22:37-39 "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." "This is the first and great commandment." "And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Love is the greatest positive emotion we can have. God is Love.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The condition of the world is, and has been, the fact of wars and rumors of wars. This will not change, until Jesus (the King of Peace), comes and sets up His thousand year reign of peace upon the earth. God is not against war, when it is preserving the right.

One of the most interesting examples of God blessing in war is found (in chapter 17 of Exodus). Joshua fought while Moses lifted his arms in praise to God. Aaron and Hur held up the arms of Moses, until the battle was over and Joshua defeated Amalek.

Exodus 17:12-13 "But Moses' hands [were] heavy; and they took a stone, and put [it] under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other

on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." "And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword."

There is a day of peace coming when Jesus reigns.

We read in Micah 4:3 "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 Questions

1. To everything there is a _____.
2. What is a very good example of something in time, that God ordained?
3. When will Jesus come back and set up His 1000 year day reign?
4. What is not already decided for us?
5. What are some things we have no control over pertaining to our birth?
6. Who is a good example of someone being born at a precise time?
7. What is our life?
8. As long as the earth exists, there will be a time of _____ and _____.
9. When is the time of harvesting, in the spiritual sense?
10. What is the 6th commandment?
11. What does that really mean?
12. What is a good example, in the Bible, of a time to kill?
13. When is it time to heal?
14. Who can heal?
15. How can you do it?
16. What is the shortest verse in the Bible?
17. When is a good time to laugh?
18. Why did David's firstborn son with Bathsheba die?

19. When do you cast away stones?
20. When do you gather stones?
21. When is it alright to embrace?
22. When would it be wrong to embrace?
23. What was rending of clothing a sign of?
24. What was the curtain in the temple sewn with?
25. The LORD is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep _____ before Him.
26. What Scripture describes the most important time to speak?
27. Love the sinner, and hate the _____.
28. Who are all Christians to love?
29. When is God not against war?
30. What is a good example of God blessing in war?
31. They shall beat their swords into _____.
32. Neither shall they learn _____ anymore.