

Ecclesiastes

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[0 : 00] The Lord may be pleased to help me, I would direct you to Ecclesiastes chapter 3 and verse 1.

Ecclesiastes chapter 3 verse 1. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3 and verse 1. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Friends, we come into many scenes, many experiences in life.

Not only the people of God but the world. We all come into many experiences and times alike.

[1 : 18] But the people of God will come into pathways and exercises and concerns that the world know nothing of.

And they will have to do business with temptations.

There will be dealings with the devil. For he hates the Lord's people.

He hates those that fear God. That are striving to be obedient to their God.

Well, we are reminded in this word that our times, they're in his hand.

[2 : 37] We are reminded there is a time. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Friends, we come into pathways from time to time which trouble us, distress us.

And the more we look at them and fight against them and resist them, the more troublesome and painful they are to us.

But it is a mercy when we are able to consider that there is a season and a time to everything.

That is, they are appointed by God. That is, friends, that nothing takes place by chance.

[3 : 59] You may feel that you are in a strange place. You may be troubled by many things.

You may be troubled by many things. You may be tempted that this is not of the Lord. That you are in the hands of the devil.

Well, friends, don't forget there was a time when Job was in the hands of the devil. But does that mean that we are not equally or more so in the hands of our God?

Was it not the Lord who had permitted Satan to trouble Job? But had he not also commanded that Job should only go so far and no further, that he should not touch his life?

The commandment of God. And my friends, we need to consider this in respect to our pathways, our afflictions, our trials, our tribulations.

[5 : 39] We need to acknowledge and realize that these things are in the hands of God.

God is not the Lord. And he can stop these things. He can prevent these things. Or he permits them.

And my friends, there are many things that the Lord permits to take place in our pathways, in our lives, in our experiences.

But it is a great mercy when we are able to realize that even in these things, the Lord is in them.

A child of God, when he is rightly exercised, that comes into a trial, an affliction, a tribulation, a trouble, they are very troubled when they go into one of these trials, and whatever it be, and come out of them with no apparent reason.

[7 : 11] The truly exercised child of God wants to know why it is, what there is to learn learn in these trials, in these afflictions.

My friends, do these things. Humble us. Do they bring us to the footstool of mercy, inquiring of the Lord, inquiring what the reason is.

Is there something for us to learn? Is it a word? Is it a trial, an affliction to correct us?

Is it a punishment? There are many thoughts, exercises that will come into our hearts if we are concerned and exercised about the things that we come into?

Ah, my friends, there is a season and a time to everything. A season and a time.

[8 : 40] So, friends, we need to remember this. We need to consider there is a season, there is a time when we shall be dealt with by the Lord.

Oh, my friends, as the Lord may help me, let us go back to the beginning. The pathway that the Lord's children walk in, there is a season and there is a time when they are called by grace.

My friends, this is a very, very important subject. It is something, I believe, if we are rightly exercised, that we shall want confirmed to us.

We want those evidences in our hearts of being born again. We shall want to, we shall want the Lord to show us whether he has brought us into that season where he has changed our heart, where he has drawn us after himself.

There is a season and a time and my friends, I believe there are those of us here that can look back, yes, to a season.

[10 : 33] And in that season, we were conscious that the Lord was beginning the work in our hearts, exercising our heart, bringing us into concern about our own pathway, our own walk, the things that we were doing, the places we were going.

My friends, it was a season. It was a, if you like, a new season.

In the seasons of the weather, we get new seasons. we get the spring, the summer, and the autumn, and the winter, and they are seasons.

And so it is in the child, with a child of God, he comes into these seasons. There is the autumn, there's the winter, there's the spring, there's the summer.

time, and my friends, they're all essential, there's much teaching in them. Well, the Lord, my friends, he begins the work in the heart.

[12 : 07] And when he begins the work in the heart, my friends, there's the autumn, and the winter, there's the dying.

You see, in autumn, and the winter, you see all the, many of the leaves fall from the trees, many plants die, the trees look dead.

And my friends, this is an experience that the Lord's children come into.

It's a season. The Lord does it. It's something that is beyond our control. We can't control the elements.

We cannot cause the sun to shine. We cannot cause the frost to come. We can't cause the snow to fall.

[13 : 17] Neither can we quicken ourselves into light. No, friends, it's a season that the Lord's children come into.

And it is appointed by God. What a mercy. The time is in his hands, not at the season and the time.

And my friends, there's no set pattern. the Lord's children come into that season and the timing of it is in the Lord's hands.

With some, it will come young in years. With others, it is during, as we might say, middle lines.

With others, it comes when one is aging. But my friends, it will come in the heart of every one of his dear children.

[14 : 47] they'll come into that season. The Lord knows when to do it.

For he knows the end from the beginning. We read in this chapter together that there's a time to be born and a time to die.

time. And the Lord knows that time. And my friends, with that in mind, the Lord knows when to begin the call by grace.

He's never too late. With some, it might seem that it's too late. you take the dying thief that was suffering, that was dying.

He'd been a thief. He'd been a robber. He'd been a crook. He was dying.

[16 : 04] People would have looked upon him and say, well, there's no hope for that man. that's too late now for him to be called by grace. He's dying.

But friends, he wasn't dead. And the Lord did call him by grace. He did work in his heart.

He did change it. He did bring him to repentance. How wonderful friends. How wonderful to consider there is a season, there is a time, and there is no setback.

There it was in the last hours of that man that he was called by grace, a sinner saved by grace.

grace. When thou comest into thy kingdom, remember me. This day thou shalt be with me in paradise.

[17 : 13] Oh, the love and the mercy friends. Not one of the Lord's children can be lost. There is a season and a time to everything.

Oh, friends, have we got any evidences of coming into that season when the Lord has begun his work?

You might not be able to pin it down to a moment when the Lord first spoke, first begun. But if you look upon it as a season, you might well say, yes, I remember that season.

I remember the Lord changing my heart. I remember the feelings of my heart and the prickings of my heart.

I remember when I had to stop doing this and that. I couldn't go to that place no more. My friends, there's been many that have been called by grace that have gone into the pleasures of this world for a time, for a season, yes, with their friends, with their mates.

[18 : 51] They've gone to the pictures, they've gone to the theatre, they've gone to many places of worldly pleasure, sports, football, cricket, many other things, many other places of amusement.

people, they've gone in with the world to try and enjoy themselves. And perhaps they did for a time.

But friends, have any of us here been in those paths? Can we look back now to a season when the Lord began to work in our hearts, when we were concerned, when we were troubled, when we could no longer feel ease of mind, we could no longer enjoy, it wasn't a pleasure, it was a trouble.

And the time came when we had to stop. We couldn't go no more, we didn't go no more, it causes too much trouble in our hearts and consciences.

This was a season, friends, as we look back upon it, it was a season the Lord brought it into. Blessed be the Lord for doing it, friends.

[20 : 32] Where would you and I be but for that? why we would have went deeper and deeper into the things of time.

And you know, friends, this work goes on and on through life. You know, there are many things that you and I don't want to part with.

there are many things we're determined not to part with. We still like them. They still trouble us.

They still plague us. They still tempt us. It's the weakness of our flesh, friends. It's our carnal heart.

And we have to prove that it's no better than anyone else left to itself. we need the Lord, friends.

[21 : 35] More and more, I feel, as we journey along, the Lord says, come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing. And this season, friends, will go on and on.

In one sense, this season, when we enter into it, that is the call by grace, it goes on for the rest of our life.

Ah, there is teaching in it. And there's these spots and places, these times where we shall come into, where we shall, taught by the Lord, to everything there is a season and a time, to every purpose under the heaven.

To everything there is a season and a time. we might go back before we are called by grace.

there is that season when we are unconcerned. There is no exercise.

[23 : 33] There is no prickings of heart. We are full of ambitions. Maybe proud, self-righteous.

We may go to the house of God. We may feel, well, we are as good as the next person. We are as good as the church members.

Oh, yes, friends, we may be filled with self-righteousness and pride. We may feel we are as good as the next man. And my friends, it's a sad place because, my friends, there's no repentance.

No repentance. and that is a sad solemn season. Except you repent, you can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.

and my friends, we all enter into that season when we are born into this earth.

[25 : 06] earth. The Lord says very clearly in the word of God, ye must be born again.

So we see, friends, that everyone that is born into this earth enters into that season, that season of unregenerous, when we are unconcerned.

And there is a season to that. There is a time to that season.

Oh, friends, what a mercy, if we have been brought into that time, where the Lord has begun his work.

And I believe this, friends, that if he has done this in your heart and mind, that we shall be looking for others.

[26 : 31] You know, friends, I would that there were more fathers and mothers in Israel to die. The churches, as you know, are in a very, very low state.

But my friends, let me ask this question. are we exercised about it? Are we travelling at the throne of grace that the Lord should work in the hearts of those that are his, that are as yet in the world?

Is there a travelling in our hearts, friends, that the Lord would bring in others, quicken them into life, into the house of God?

God. We read this in the word of God, when Israel travelled, she brought forth, she brought forth.

my friends, I ask the question, is this why there is not a bringing forth in the churches today?

[28 : 07] Is there no or very little travail in the hearts of the Lord's children? when did you and I last ask the Lord to bring in one or more into the house of God?

Either a particular person or person or persons unknown to us?

You know, friends, we do get despondent. I don't make excuses, but we do, we get despondent.

And we say, what's the use? Perhaps we have prayed and begged of the Lord many, many times that he would quicken a particular one or more into life and bring them into the house of God.

But he doesn't. He hasn't. My friends, there are those that I've looked for, waited now for years.

[29 : 41] and as far as I know, they're still quite satisfied to be in the world, to keep away from the house of God.

My friends, how many times have you come into the house of God here and looked to see if a particular person was in this place?

You long to see them brought in, but it may well be you haven't seen them yet come in. You may have seen them in years gone by in this place, and they've gone away, and you want to see them come brought back again.

it may be you've never seen them in this place, but my friends, the Lord will be inquired of to do these things for us.

It's his work. This season, this time, when the Lord, caused by grace, grace is in his hands, and who can prevent it?

[31 : 14] Ah, friends, we have to learn this, that the Lord is the potter, the heavenly potter, and the Lord's children are his clay.

he does as he pleases with them. He teaches them. He calls them by grace. He leads them in his path.

They have to pass through many trials, many floods, many fires, but the Lord is with them.

Have you and I got any evidence, his friends? of the Lord being with us at this time, this season that we are walking in, passing through?

What is the season that you are passing through? You know, the Lord knows, it might be with some that you feel death within, spiritual death.

[32 : 45] You may feel there isn't any evidences of spiritual life.

My friends, this is a very painful season that the Lord's children come into, and there are those seasons when they come into this, and the timing of it is in the Lord's hands.

Sometimes it is a short time, other times it is a long time. But friends, it's in the Lord's hands.

our carnal hearts and the devil will say, well, this is a sure evidence that you're wrong, you're not one of the Lord's, the Lord doesn't care about you, else he would appear, he would deal with these things.

But my friends, there is a season and a time to everything. when this is in the Lord's hands, you say, but how am I going to know that I am one of the Lord's and not the devil's?

[34 : 31] How am I going to know that I am called by grace and that the Lord has an eternal love toward him? My friends, I believe it will be by an exercise, by a concern in the heart.

God's love to love to love to be by God. We shall have to cry to him for mercy. We shall have to plead with him for those evidences of being born again.

we shall be brought face to face to the promises that the Lord has spoken in the word of God.

And they can be an exercise, they can be a trouble to us, friends, when you have words like, seekers shall be finders.

You say, but I am seeking, and I haven't found. Is this why? Is it an evidence that I'm all wrong? my friends, it isn't.

[35 : 54] We have in the word of God those times, those seasons, a time when the Lord hides his face, when the Lord answered them nothing, not a word.

Ah, friends, this is the pathway, this is a season, this is one of the times that we have to pass through, when we have to be proved.

You say, but why? Why is the Lord silent? Why? Well, friends, the Lord, he knows the end from the beginning.

And if I may refer once again to that, account in the word of God, of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, you know the two, they sent after the Lord, they said their brother was sick, they needed the Lord to come quickly.

But, my friends, the Lord did not. he was silent. Had he returned, friends, and delivered Lazarus, it would have been a wonderful thing.

[37 : 32] There would have been praise to the Lord for it. but think, the Lord did not come.

He tarried, he waited, till Lazarus was dead. then the Lord returned.

Now, friends, first of all, the Lord knew what he would do. The timing is in his hands.

And by tarrying, and not coming, until Lazarus was dead, and then coming, and raising him from the dead, he had much more honor and praise.

And, Mary and Martha had to solemnly learn, what a lot of unbelief they had.

[38 : 42] They doubted. The Lord said, take away the stone.

But, was it Martha said, but Lord, by this time, he's stinky. You see, she couldn't believe that it could be possible now.

He's dead. But, the Lord rose him up from the dead. And so, friends, don't be surprised if you and I come into these seasons, these times, when the Lord is silent.

And what makes it so worse, the devil roars. The devil fires his fiery darts at us. The devil tempts us.

And the weaker we grow, and the more despondent we become, the deeper we sink. But, friends, what a mercy that these things are all in the Lord's hands.

[40 : 13] There is a season and a time to everything. What a mercy, friends, that these things are not left in the hands of men or devils.

There is a season and a time to everything. There is a time, friends, when we are called by Christ.

There is that season and time when death is upon us, spiritual death. When we are drawn unto the Lord for mercy, save, Lord, or I perish.

Friends, there is a time, there is a time when the Lord will heal his people, he'll heal them.

Some of us have been, we've been, we've come to that time. The Lord has healed us. He's healed our wounds.

[41 : 45] He's forgiven our sins. there are other friends that are waiting for the Lord.

They are waiting for these promises. They are waiting to be healed. And perhaps it's many years. You remember the man at the pool, possessed as pool, he had waited there for 38 years.

But he didn't wait in vain. The day came, the time came, when the Lord came right where he was and healed him.

But what a long season that was, 38 years. Affliction and trials.

That my friends, he proved it, that everything worked together for good.

[43 : 01] Have you ever been there? You say, well, I haven't come there yet. I'm in the midst of trials. I'm in that season of tribulation.

Friends, there's times when we shall be in those seasons of trial and tribulation when the dear Lord will draw near and he will comfort, he will sanctify.

He won't take it away. He won't make the crooked things straight. No, not then, not always.

I know something of it, friends. I've had to walk through these trials. I've been in those trials and the Lord has not been pleased to remove them.

I have them to die. They're still with me. sanctified. But there have been those times when the dear Lord has drew near to me and he's sanctified.

[44 : 16] And I've been able to say the Lord has done all things well. I've been able to say, choose thou the way and lead on.

This is right. Oh, friends, when the Lord draws near, it puts everything right. But you see, the season is in the Lord's hands.

He causes this season to come and the timing of it is with him and the duration of it is in his hands.

As we know, in nature, the seasons come to an end. The summer comes to an end. The winter comes to an end.

And so the seasons that his children come into, they come to an end. There's those seasons when they are cast down, when they feel that they will perish.

[45 : 23] But then there are those, there is the spring time, when the birds come back and they sing.

Oh, a lovely time, as we all know. But so it is in grace. There's the spring time, when after the cold, dark winter, when there's been so much pain, so much suffering, so much guilt, so much guilt, and the Lord comes, and he heals.

He raises up to a hope in his mercy. He sheds his love abroad in your heart. Then, friends, how, how the season changes, the spring time comes, the singing of the birds is heard.

You pull down your heart from the willows, you sing a new song of praise unto the Lord. What a sacred season.

What a blessed time. Friends, do we know anything of these things? Well, it's here a little, and there a little.

[46 : 56] The Lord leads us. It's his leading. We would never know anything of these sacred things, were it not, for the Lord's hand, for the Lord's voice.

The Lord calls. Remember, friends, that time when young Samuel, a lad, was serving Eli, and my friends, the Lord called him Samuel.

Ah, friends, Samuel had many things to learn. He didn't even know the Lord's voice. voice. And my friends, we're all the same until the Lord opens our eyes.

But there's one thing we shall know, we shall hear the voice. We shall hear the voice. But, friends, there are times, especially at the beginning, but even now, there are times when we hear the voice, we don't know whose voice it is.

Samuel thought it was Eli that was calling him. But you see, it wasn't. it was the Lord.

[48 : 39] But he heard the voice, and that is what the important thing is, friends. And do you and I hear a voice? Is the Lord speaking into your heart and mind, into our consciences?

He does. He speaks. He directs us. He directs us into the path that we are to walk in.

Well, I'll leave a few things. May the Lord bless his word to us. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.