

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP
March 27, 2011

Lesson No. 4

The Study of Ecclesiastes

Life Under the Heaven
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15



“a time for everything”

- The Need to Acknowledge
- The Need to Accept
- The Need to Appreciate
- The Need to Apply
- The Need to Answer

Key Verse: Ecclesiastes 3:1 to everything there is a season, and time to every purpose
“under the heaven”

INTRODUCTION: In Ecclesiastes the most common expression for limiting the view point of man’s perspective is *“under the sun”* However, Solomon has also used the phrase *“under the heaven”* which appears three times 1:13; 2:3; 3:1
Under the heaven suggest that we look at life from God’s perspective, His point of view.

The focus of chapter 3:1-15 is the sovereignty of God. Sovereignty characterizes the whole being of God. God is sovereign in all His attributes *“absolute, irresistible and infinite”* When we say that God is sovereign:

- We affirm His right to govern the universe, which He has made for His own glory, just as He pleases; as the right of the Potter over the clay. Jeremiah 18:1-6 and Romans 9:20-22
- We affirm that He is under no rule of law outside of His own will and nature; and that He is under no obligation to give an account of His matters to anyone. 1 Samuel 2:8
- God is sovereign in the exercise of **His power.** 1 Chronicles 29:11; **His mercy.** Exodus 33:19; **His grace.** Titus 2:11 and **His love.** 1 John 4:8-10

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 is a poetic masterpiece and is considered a **carpe diem** passage. Carpe diem is Latin meaning *“seize the day”* *“pluck the day, put no trust in the future”* *“strike while the iron is hot”*



Ecclesiastes 3 is not merely a description of what happens in life, but it is a description of what God sends.

The following 28 activities in 14 couplets or stanzas, 2 in each verse are events that are both *“the unpleasant as well as the pleasant experiences”* but always appropriate from God’s point of view.

I. We must ACKNOWLEDGE that God has a reason for all that happens in our lives. vv. 1-8 We all have things happen to us that cause us to ask, “why me? or why now?” God has a purpose for everything that happens in our lives:

verse 2 + birth – dying
+ planting – uprooting




verse 3 – killing + healing
– tearing down + building up




1. The Providence of God: God controls the affairs of people’s lives.
 - Psalms 115:3 *“but our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased”*
 - Psalms 31:15 *“my times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me”*
2. The Purpose of God: God has a specific purpose behind all that happens.
 - Genesis 50:20 *“but as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive”*
 - Acts 17:25-28 *“for in him we live, and move, and have our being”*
3. The Power of God: God can cause things to happen whenever He wants.
 - Genesis 18:14 *“is anything too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son”*
 - Isaiah 40:25-31 *“but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength....”*

II. We must ACCEPT God’s purpose and control over all that happens. vv. 9-11

verse 4 – weeping + laughing
– mourning + dancing



verse 5 – throwing stones + gather stones
+ embracing – not embracing



1. It affects our Evaluations: vv.9-10 we may not always see God’s reasons, but we see what happens to us in confident; that God is exercising His purpose and control. Romans 8:28

2. It affects our Expectations: v.11 God has put eternity in our heart. Everyone at some time or another will consider their eternal destiny

- The closer we get to the inevitable fact that we will die, the more eternity becomes a great question.

III. We must APPRECIATE the time we have as a gift from God vv.12-13

verse 6 + searching – stop searching
+ keeping – throw away



verse 7 – tearing apart + sewing together
– being silent + speaking



Seeing that God is in control, He knows all the days of my life. What then should my reaction be?

- Psalms 39:4 *“LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am”*



1. It affects our Attitude: Once the issue of our eternal destiny is settled, we can relax and begin to enjoy life as a gift from God.

- After trusting Christ as savior most Christians begin to appreciate God’s creation differently, because we now know and appreciate our Creator differently

2. It affects our Actions: We should do good works *“under the heaven”* because this is the only time we have.

- 1 Timothy 6:17 *“charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate”*

IV. We must APPLY these facts to our own attitude toward God. v.14

- Realizing that God is the master of our lives, this should result in personally acknowledging His control.
- Revelation 15:3-4 *“Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints”*

V. We must ANSWER to God for how we have used our time. v.15

- God controls life and death; however, He has given us freedom to use the time that we have to do good *“under the sun”*
- We need to enjoy life and know that God will require an account of what we have done.
- Ecclesiastes 12:14 *“for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”*