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Everything in Life Has Its Time & Purpose (Eccl 3:1)

Life is full of changes. Eccl 3:1 teaches this. Solomon, King of Israel, was the probable human writer of Ecclesiastes. All that happened to Israel in the Old Testament had time and purpose. The family of Jacob spent 400 years in Egypt and emerged as a nation. She later spent 70 years in captivity and emerged largely cured of idolatry. There was a 400 years gap

between the Old and New Testament at the end of which there came Jesus the Saviour of his people. Everything had its time and purpose.

How do you cope with life's changes? First you must recognise that life will certainly have its changes. The present coronavirus pandemic is proof how the whole world can be changed in a moment. Secondly you must understand that changes have a purpose. They do not happen coincidentally. How you cope with changes depends largely on your beliefs. The book of Ecclesiastes gives us two possibilities. The first is a no-God belief. When the writer speaks of things under the sun, he is philosophising a view of no-God. This view presupposes an existence where there is no God but a life without God "under the sun". This no-God view leads to what the writer describes as vanity or futility. All changes in life seem meaningless. The other belief is that of belief in an almighty powerful God who does all things and these things shall be forever (Eccl 3:14).

This view calls people to understand that God is in control and that life's changes have their time and purpose. Consider the life of Jesus and note how everything in his life had its time and purpose. His birth came in the fulness of time (Gal 4:4) and was for the purpose of saving his people from their sins. His death was predetermined and happened at the determined time for a determined purpose (Acts 2:23). The

God's
Perfect
Timing

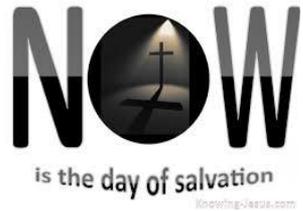




resurrection of Jesus occurred 3 days after his death. We note the precision of time. We note also the purpose of his resurrection which was to give to his people, among other things, hope of life beyond this temporary earthly life.

The ascension of Jesus occurred 40 days after his death. It was all according to time and purpose. The sending forth of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost occurred 50 days after Jesus's death. Its purpose was to give power to the church. If we apply the lesson of Ecclesiastes 3:1 to our lives we should understand that the changes we experience in life have their time and purpose. Things happen to us not by accident but according to God's time and purpose. You may be experiencing a change in your general health. Or perhaps your financial security is being shaken or perhaps you are uncertain about your job security.

Whatever your life-change rest assured that it has its own time and purpose. Believe in the Lord that He is in control. The most important change is that of conversion from unbelief to faith in Christ. Paul declared that this change should be now, not the future (2 Cor. 6:2). Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.



Come to Jesus this morning before the end of this service and experience the greatest change in your life. May you become a child of God today and a new creation.

Rev David Yan
Emmanuel Church
Auckland, New Zealand

Is there a biblical basis for a Christian to be a Vegetarian?

This is an interesting and appropriate question. I understand that there is a general interest lately in vegetarianism from both a healthy lifestyle standpoint and some claim even from a religious or Christian perspective. The first may be tenable but the second is doubtful. Let us discuss.

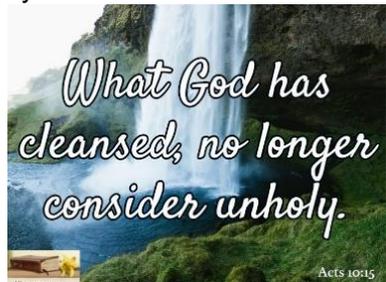


We applaud the efforts by some to stay healthy with a disciplined diet and regular exercise. There is a sense in which doctors advised that reduced meat (especially red meat like beef and pork) content is beneficial and a regular intake of fresh fruits and vegetables are definitely helpful for a balanced nutritional diet but the case for total abstinence of meat is something else altogether.

There are arguments advanced by some that in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, Adam and Eve ate only fruits and vegetables, therefore we should do the same today. In the same token, the argument not to wear clothes today following the example of Adam and Eve before the fall can also be stretched to its ridiculous limits and can be morally disastrous. Dan 1:12-16 has often quoted in support of vegetarianism but it reveals a superficial understanding or misunderstanding of the historical context. Daniel refused meat for religious reasons because it was offered to idols (the Babylonians who were polytheistic, often practised that as in the courts of the king) not because it was just meat per se.

1Tim 4:3,4 says, "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Note the advice of the apostle Paul when he warns against those who forbid those to take meat in vs 3 and the proper response to it. Now from a biblical worldview, it is noteworthy that in Acts 10:9-15, the Apostle Peter was told by the Lord in a vision to eat all kinds of



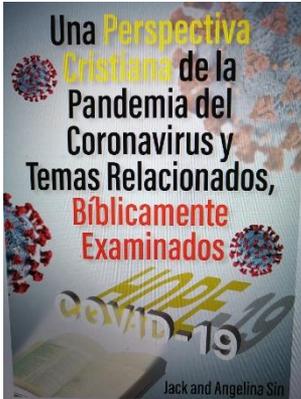
animals (ie. meat) that were paraded before Him (ie. the food laws of the Old Testament are dispensed away with). A more convincing case is the fact that our Lord Jesus Himself (who is our supreme example) was not a vegetarian. He partook of the Passover meal, which invariably had meat (ie. lamb) in it and he ate fish with the disciples by the Sea of Galilee after His resurrection (Jn 21:7-13). If vegetarianism is to be a binding rule of Christian living, why did not our Lord and the Apostles write about them in the Gospels and the Epistles? Paul informs us in Col 2:16,17 says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Beware also of a cult In Singapore who teaches that we should still follow the Old Testament food laws and we are forbidden by God to eat certain kind of animals and meat which has no sound theological basis at all.

We appreciate the need to have a proper diet for healthy living today and those counselled by their doctors do well to heed their medical advice. But to assert conclusively that the Bible supports, requires or encourages vegetarianism is unwarranted and has no biblical foundation. Our ultimate aim in life is to glorify God and to enjoy all things that he has created with moderation. Enjoy your greens and do not feel guilty about a moderate helping of meat for a balanced diet as well. Let us end with this verse in 1 Cor 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God".

Jack Sin



The Spanish Edition of the Pandemic Book



Just got back to the States after a week there. During the time, our publisher has published all the pages of the pandemic book and today he is publishing the cover. He says he will put them together and have the books ready by Wed (28 Apr) or Thu (29 Apr). This is a note to let you know what is happening. Praise the Lord!

Thanks for the “Biblical Appraisal of Spiritual Declension” in Spanish. We sent it out and it’s going to be given on one of the Christian radio stations.

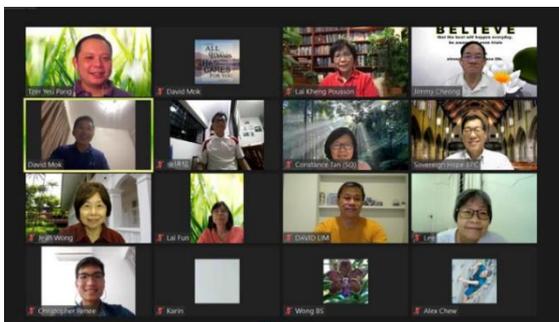
*In Christ,
Rev Hal Ricker
Guatemala*

(NB. The pandemic book is finally published in Spanish and it would be distributed to some of the churches in Latin America. Our church weekly of 18 Mar 2021 will be read and broadcast in Spanish too. Pray that it will edify and exhort the believers there. Our Sunday weeklies have been translated by Josue Pacheco Sanhueza, the son of an elder of a Reformed church in Chile.)



Sharing on the Message at the Military Christian Fellowship (MCF) Prayer Meeting

I am honoured to be invited to participate in the monthly prayer meeting of the MCF on 20 April 2021. Pastor Jack Sin of Sovereign Hope BP Church was the invited speaker and he preached from 2



Kings 4:1-10 on the theme “The Faithfulness of God in Trying Times” to encourage the 16 participants which included some SAF commanders and mothers of NS men.

Pastor Jack shared the following main thoughts from this passage:

1. The Widow's Crisis - A Test of Faith (vs 1-2)

The wife of a prophet's disciple begged Elisha and said, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he fears the Lord. Now a creditor is coming to take my two sons as slaves." Elisha asked her, "What can I do for you? Tell me what you have in your house." She said that there was nothing but a bottle of oil in the maid's house.

Often in good times, we forget God and we do not pray nor seek Him. Let us now only Call to God only when you are in trouble and always. We recognise that apart from relying on God wholeheartedly and praying to God, we cannot do nothing.

2. The Prophet 's Command - A Trial of Obedience (vs 3-5)

Elisha said, “Go and borrow empty vessels from all your neighbours. Don't borrow less. Go back home, close the door, you and your son are to pour the oil into all the vessels inside, and put the filled ones aside.” So the woman left Elisha, closed the door, and was inside with her son. When the son brought the utensils, she poured oil.

We have our human duty too and we need to do our part as well. For example, in this Covid crisis, we have the responsibility to wear masks, wash our hands, and maintain social distancing. God can often intervene in our lives and perform miracles with existing things for example, the feeding of the five thousand people with the 5 loaves and 2 fishes from a young lad.

God used a small bottle of oil in the widow's house to perform a great miracle and provide for all her needs due to her faith. We are to humbly cooperate with and submit to God's leading and guidance. Pastor Jack shared of 4 verbs namely (1) "Go" to borrow empty vessels from the neighbours, (2) "borrow" empty vessels, (3) "close" the door, (4) "pour" oil into all the vessels. Indeed, we need to submit to God's leading and do our part as well.

3. The Oil Continued - A Testimony of Divine Power (vs 6-10)

When the utensils were full, she told her son to bring her more utensils. The son said, "there are no more utensils." Then the oil stopped. The woman went to tell the man of God who told her to do the following: "Go", "sell" the oil, "pay" off the debts and "live" for the Lord i.e. the woman and her son could live on what was miraculously provided. We are to trust and obey for there is no other way.

Another day, Elisha walked to Shunem where a woman invited him to have a meal. Since then, Elisha went in to eat whenever he passed by. The woman said to her husband, "I see that those who often passed by are holy men of God. We can build a small room and place a bed, table, chair and lamp stand in it. When he comes to us, he can live in the room."

Pastor Jack shared the following 4 important things that we need in our home just as the woman who provided for the prophet Elisha in vs 9-10, namely:

- A Bed
- A Table
- A Chair or stool
- A Lampstand

This is our way of life: [bed] to take a good rest, [table] to do our work, read the Bible and self-study, [chair] to sit down and to pray and reflect and ponder about things, [the lampstand] as a light to illuminate others the truth of the gospel and share with others in the Lord as we witness for Him.

2 Kings 4:1-10 teaches us to have faith in God, to follow and cooperate with God's sovereign leading and He will bless and guide us.

The meeting ended with a time of intercession for our nation and the SAF. I have learnt much from this meeting.

Amen.

Bro Kam Weng

Lessons in Godly Prudence from a Wise King

Studies into Ecclesiastes



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04

APRIL 2021

- 2 Good Friday: Who killed Jesus? (Luke 23:1-26)
- 4 The Implications & Impact of the Resurrection (1Cor 15:1-21,51-58)
- 11* The Matters of the Heart (Eccl 1:1-18)
- 18 The Meaningless of Labour under the Sun (Eccl 2:18-26)
- 25 The Opportune Time for Everything (Eccl 3:1-12)

05

MAY 2021

- 2 The Beauty of Two in God's Economy (Eccl 4:4-21)
- 9* The Management of the Tongue (Eccl 5:1-13)
- 16 The Mindless Pursuit of Wealth (Eccl 6:1-12)
- 23 The Basis for True Spiritual Discretion (Eccl 7:1-17)
- 30 Reverence and Fear of God (Eccl 8:1-13)

06

JUNE 2021

- 6 The Intervention of God (Eccl 9:7-18)
- 13* Speech and Danger of Laziness (Eccl 10 :12-20)
- 20 Wise Counsel for Young and Old (Eccl 11:1-10)
- 27 Gospel Sunday: Fruitful Aging and the Chief Purpose of Man (Eccl 12:1-13)

Memory Verse

Eccl 4:6 Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! For our visitors, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave.
2. Pastor Jack speaks today on “***The Beauty of Two in God’s Economy***” (**Eccl 4: 1-16**), continuing the quarterly sermon series on “Lessons on Godly Prudence from a Wise King – Studies in Ecclesiastes”.
3. Pastor Jack speaks next Sunday on “***The Management of the Tongue***” (**Eccl 5: 1-13**). We will commemorate the Lord’s Supper.
4. Sunday School classes continues in church after the worship service:
 - WCF Shorter Catechism Class – Pastor Jack
 - New Testament Survey – Dn Choo Siang
 - Studies in Numbers – Dr Kwong Leen
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The May prayer list is available from Dn Choo Siang.
7. Monthly Neighbourhood Bible Class meets on **this Friday 7 May at 7.30pm** in church on the study of 2 Samuel. Do come and join us for a time of learning God’s Word.
8. The Pandemic book can be purchased through Dn Yue Kay (Hp: +65 97450311) or via email at sovereignhopebpc@gmail.com.
9. Do kindly observe the safety measures of the church and assist with the weekly cleaning of the premises.
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**
