

# ECCLESIASTES

## DEVOTIONAL



DAY  
ONE

### THE POEM

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-15. Notice the repeated words throughout.

- What is the main topic of this passage?
- Look at the poem in verses 2-8.
  - How does the design of this poem illustrate the summary in verse 3:1.
  - What human activities are described literally or metaphorically in the list?
- Note: The author is using this poem to emphasize the overall theme that life seems to have a regularity, flow, and predictable cycle, rather than to speak specifically about each of the contrasts in each pairing. It is also important to note that this list is descriptive and not prescriptive. The Teacher is not actually commenting on whether or not we should participate in these things, he is merely describing the kinds of things that make up the human life.

*Prayer: As you reflect and pray today, consider the time God has given you in your life. How can you thank Him for the seasons He has allotted to you and what can you ask for as you seek to use this time well?*



DAY  
TWO

### THE COMMENTARY: GOD

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-15. Yesterday we considered the poem in verses 2-8. Today we will study the Teacher's commentary about the poem and its theme in verses 9-15.

- Notice how the Teacher considers time in reference to God. What do you learn about God from verses 9-15?
- What is the gift of God? (3:13, see also 2:24-25)
- What is God's purpose in what He does? (3:14)

*Prayer: Consider how this text teaches you to fear (be in awe of) God more. What can you praise Him for, confess to Him, or ask of Him because He is the one who does things that endure forever?*

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DAY  
THREE

### **THE COMMENTARY: HUMANITY**

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-15. Yesterday we studied the Teacher's commentary to note what we learn about God. Today, we're going to look at what we learn about humanity from this passage.

- What is the Teacher's first question in response to the poem? (3:9 - notice it is repeating the same ideas from 1:3 and 2:11) What does this question tell us about the Teacher's goal?
- What is the conflict that humanity faces according to verse 11?
- What does the Teacher conclude is the best that people can do/expect in life according to verses 12-13?
- Reflect: According to these verses, how are people different from God? What response should this cause in us?

*Prayer: As you pray today, consider in what way you need to submit to God's control and His timing, and confess this before Him.*

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DAY  
FOUR

### **BIBLICAL CARPE DIEM**

By reading through Ecclesiastes slowly we have so far seen the Teacher's conclusions: that we can't really control anything, it's best to just be happy (3:12), enjoy food and drink and the satisfaction of the work of our hands (3:13). These conclusions could lead us to think that this life is all there is. It could sound a lot like our cultural anthem: "Carpe Diem! Seize the day!"

- Read Ecclesiastes 3:12-15 again. How do these verses point to something more than just living for today and for our own enjoyment?
- Read Acts 17:24-31 and consider how Paul views God's appointment of the times.
  - What is the difference between God and human beings? (vv. 24-25)
  - What has God appointed for every human on earth? (v. 26) Why? (v.27)
  - According to verses 30-31, what does God call people to do now and why?
- Reflect: Both the Teacher in Ecclesiastes and Paul in Acts assert that God, who controls time, desires people to come to know Him, fear Him, and repent. He will judge what has happened in the past and has set a time for this judgment in the future. How should this affect how you "seize the day" today?

*Prayer: As you pray today, praise God for the time and place that He has appointed for you. Pray that you may do good while you live and thank Him for the gift it is to find joy in the everyday moments.*



DAY  
FIVE

### **THE TIME FOR CHRIST**

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 one more time for review. Then read the following passages and consider how God has always known His plan, from beginning to end, even if it is unfathomable to us.

- Romans 5:6-11
- Galatians 4:3-7
- 1 Timothy 6:12-16
- Rev. 22:12-13
- How do these verses challenge and encourage you to live in light of Jesus' second appearing, which will come about at the proper time?

*Pray in adoration, confession, and supplication as we wrap up this week.*