

GOD'S TIMES AND SEASONS

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Time is a very prominent and important theme in the Bible

1. We have just celebrated the beginning of a New Year on January 1, 2025.
2. We often talk about God's *appointed time*, the *right time*, *end times*, *lifetime*, etc.
3. Time defined (Webster's dictionary): "the measured or measurable period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues: duration."
4. Days, seasons, and years are mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis beginning in the fifth verse, and Creation itself takes place in one 7-day week.

B. The measurement of time

1. The **day** is determined by the 24-hour rotation of the earth that consists of alternating periods of darkness and light. (Note: God's day begins with evening and ends in morning!)
2. The **month** (from "moonth" in old English) is based on the 27.3 days it takes for Earth's moon to complete one full revolution around the earth
3. Our modern **year** equals 365.25 days, the time it takes for the earth to complete one full revolution around the sun; but the biblical year was based on the Passover:

Ex. 12:2: *This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year.*

- a) Our "new year" begins with the redemption that our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, brought to us through His shed blood on the Cross:
- b) **1 Cor. 5:7-8:** ⁷*Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.*
⁸*Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.*

4. The day, month, seasons, and years are all marked out by the movements of the sun, moon, and Earth according to Scripture:

Gen. 1:14: *And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to **mark seasons and days and years.**"*

5. So where did the 7-day **week** come from? It is not defined by any celestial movement like the other units of time. The only explanation is found in the Fourth Commandment:

Ex. 20:8-11: ⁸***Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.*** ⁹*Six days you shall labor and do all your work,* ¹⁰*but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.* ¹¹***For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.***

- C. Solomon understood that God has distinct times and seasons for different purposes:

Eccl. 3:1-8, 11, 14: ¹***There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:*** ²*a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,* ³*a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,* ⁴*a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,* ⁵*a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain,* ⁶*a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,* ⁷*a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace...*

¹¹***He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men;*** yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end... ¹⁴*I know that **everything God does will endure forever;** nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere Him.*

II. SEVEN IMPORTANT LESSONS FOR US

A. #1 God is eternal—He was before time—but He created time:

1. God is from everlasting to everlasting!

Ps. 90:2-4: ²*Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the earth and the world, **from everlasting to everlasting You are God.*** ³*You turn men back to dust, saying, “Return to dust, O sons of men.”* ⁴*For **a thousand years in Your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.***

Daniel saw God, the Ancient of Days, seated on His throne of flaming fire!

2. God does not live in time; He lives in eternity:

Isa. 57:15 (NKJV): *For thus says the High and Lofty One **Who inhabits eternity**, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

3. **2 Tim. 1:9:** [God] *who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus **before the beginning of time.***

B. #2 God has appointed times and seasons set by His own authority:

1. **Acts 1:6-7:** ⁶*So when they met together, they asked Him, “Lord, are You **at this time** going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”* ⁷*He said to them: “It is not for you to know the **times or dates the Father has set by His own authority.**”*
2. **Jer. 8:7:** *Even the stork in the sky knows her **appointed seasons**, and the dove, the swift and the thrush observe the **time of their migration.** But My people do not know the requirements of the LORD.*
3. Abraham and Sarah had to wait 25 years for “the appointed time” for Isaac to be born; Israel had to stay in Egypt 430 years until God’s appointed time for their deliverance; Israel had to spend 70 years (not 69 or 71!) in Babylon before returning to their homeland.

4. Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and resurrection were all perfectly timed by the Father:
 - a) **Gal. 4:4** (NKJV): *But when the **fullness of the time** ["the right time" NLT] had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.*
 - b) **Rom. 5:6**: *You see, **at just the right time**, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*
 - c) **Mat. 12:40**: *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.***

5. There are different times and seasons in our lives—we must ask God for discernment to understand the times we are in right now:
 - a) **1 Chron. 12:32**: *Men of Issachar, who **understood the times and knew what Israel should do.***
 - b) **Mat. 16:3**: [Jesus to the Pharisees] *You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but **you cannot interpret the signs of the times.***
 - c) Jesus was sensitive to the timing of events in His life:
 - (1) **John 2:4**: *"Dear woman, why do you involve Me?" Jesus replied. "**My time has not yet come.**"*
 - (2) **John 7:6-8, 30**: ⁶*Therefore Jesus told them, "**The right time for Me has not yet come**; for you any time is right. ⁷The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify that what it does is evil. ⁸You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast, **because for Me the right time has not yet come.**"* ³⁰*At this they tried to seize Him, but no one laid a hand on Him, **because His time had not yet come.***
 - (3) **John 13:1**: *It was just before the Passover Feast. **Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father.***
 - d) **Rom. 13:11-12**: ¹¹*And do this, **understanding the present time.** The **hour** has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹²**The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.** So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.*

6. End times are under God's control

The Church will be raptured in a moment, followed by a 7-year Tribulation and 1,000-year Millennium!

- a) **Acts 3:21:** *He must remain in heaven **until the time comes for God to restore everything**, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets.*
- b) **1 Tim. 6:14-15:** *¹⁴Keep this command without spot or blame until **the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ**, ¹⁵**which God will bring about in His own time**—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords.*
- c) **Rev. 22:10:** *Then he told me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because **the time is near.**”*

C. **#3 We must learn to wait for God's time**—sometimes He seems slow, but He is never late—He makes everything beautiful in HIS TIME!

- 1. Precious and beautiful things take time (diamonds, expensive wines; Mt. Rushmore took 14 years)!
- 2. The song, “I Can Only Imagine” is the most-played song in the history of Christian radio as well as the best-selling Christian song of all time. Bart Millard (MercyMe) told Amy Grant in an interview that he wrote the song in 10 minutes, but she told him that he didn't write it in 10 minutes—it took him a lifetime!
- 3. Sally Pratt orchid (1999 to 2012 to flower!)
- 4. Sometimes, from our perspective, God seems slow; but consider the following:
 - a) God created light that travels 186,000 miles per second—that is FAST!
 - b) **2 Pet. 3:8-10:** *⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹**The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise**, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰**But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.** The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.*

c) **Luke 18:1-8:** ¹Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ²He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. ³And there was a widow in that town who **kept coming** to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴“**For some time he refused. But finally,** he said to himself, ‘Even though I don't fear God or care about men, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!’” ⁶And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who **cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off?** ⁸I tell you, **He will see that they get justice, and quickly.** However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

5. Don't try to rush things

- a) Samuel lost the kingdom because he didn't wait the full 7 days for Samuel to come
- b) If you try to speed up the development a moth in its cocoon, it will die!

6. **Heb. 6:12-15:** ¹²We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through **faith and patience** inherit what has been promised. ¹³When God made His promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for Him to swear by, He swore by Himself, ¹⁴saying, “I will **surely** bless you and give you many descendants.” ¹⁵And so **after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.**

D. **#4 We must seize opportunities** when God opens doors:

1. There are no coincidences or happenstances in the life of a believer—there is DESTINY!
2. **Eph. 5:16: Making the most of every opportunity** [“redeem the time, buying up every opportunity”; lit. “season”], *because the days are evil.*
3. **Rev. 3:7-8:** ⁷To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open. ⁸I know your

*deeds. See, I have placed before you **an open door that no one can shut**. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept My word and have not denied My name.*

4. When God opens a door, we must seize the opportunity immediately:

Acts 16:6-10: ⁶Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been **kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching** the word in the province of Asia. ⁷When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the **Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to**. ⁸So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹During the night **Paul had a vision** of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰After Paul had seen the vision, **we got ready at once** to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

5. **Esther 4:13-14:** ¹³Mordecai sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. ¹⁴For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that **you have come to royal position for such a time as this?**”

E. #5 Days are more important than months or years

1. **Ps. 90:10, 12:** ¹⁰The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away... **Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.**
2. **Lam. 3:22-23:** ²²Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for **His compassions never fail**. ²³**They are new every morning**; great is Your faithfulness. [NOTE: Thank God we don’t have to wait until January 1, 2026 for God’s mercy—there is fresh mercy and grace each day!]
3. **Mat. 6:11, 34:** ¹¹Give us **today our daily bread**... ³⁴Therefore **do not worry about tomorrow**, for tomorrow will worry about itself. **Each day has enough trouble of its own.**

4. **Heb. 3:7-8, 12-13:** ⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says: “**Today**, if you hear His voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert...
¹²See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.
¹³But **encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today**, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.
5. **2 Cor. 4:16:** *Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.*

F. #6 God has set eternity in our hearts

1. Let’s keep our focus on eternity:
2. **2 Cor. 4:17-18, 5:1:** ¹⁷For our light and **momentary troubles** are achieving for us an **eternal glory** that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So, we **fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen**. For what is seen is temporary, but **what is unseen is eternal**... ^{5:1}Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, **an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands**.
3. Note: There may be time in eternity: days and months are mentioned in Rev. 21 & 22

G. #7 Trust God with our times

1. **Ps. 31:14-15:** ¹⁴But I trust in You, O LORD; I say, “You are my God.” ¹⁵**My times are in Your hands**...
2. **Rom. 8:28** (NKJV): *And we know that **all things work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*
3. Don’t be in a hurry—learn to wait on the Lord—He makes everything beautiful IN HIS TIME and it lasts forever!

III. SUMMARY

- A. Time is very important—God must help us understand what time it is right now in our lives.
- B. We must learn to wait for God’s time.

- C. Redeem the time—don't waste time—seize every opportunity God gives us.
- D. Focus on each *day*, not weeks, months, or years.
- E. We must surrender our times to God so He can make everything beautiful in His time.
- F. Let's make eternity our priority—this present age will soon end and we will dwell forever in God's eternal Kingdom!