

Audio Transcript of Sermon
January 8, 2022
Seasons

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. In preparing this sermon and looking at the weather forecast for my hometown of El Paso for the next few days, I pay attention to the overnight freezing temperatures that are forecast. It's during the winter months that I make sure pipes don't freeze, and even though the overnight temperature won't likely cause much of a problem for me, it is because I will respond by making sure my outside faucets are protected from freezing temperatures. During the summer months, I do not worry about freezing temperatures in El Paso, and if freezing temperatures were ever forecast for El Paso in the month of July I would probably be in disbelief.

Wherever you may live, the seasons of the year are part of your life. Beyond spring, summer, autumn, and winter, other seasons of the year that may be important to where you live are rainy and dry season, tourist season, and tax season. There are probably many other different seasons as well throughout the world. Each of these are called seasons because they happen with regular predictability. Seasons were promised to us by God when after the flood God determined that mankind would have planting and harvest seasons, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night. Let's read Genesis eight verse twenty.

Genesis 8:20-22

20. And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

22. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

There is a time and place for everything, and sometimes when something is done out of season, it can be very uncomfortable. The Book of Ecclesiastes talks about the different seasons of the year and then gives us a conclusion that is important

to remember. There is a time to be born and die to plant and to harvest, and there are times for so many different parts of what we call life. Let's read Ecclesiastes three verse one.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-22

- 1. To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:**
- 2. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;**
- 3. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;**
- 4. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;**
- 5. A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;**
- 6. A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;**
- 7. A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;**
- 8. A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.**

Everything is beautiful when it is in season. A perfectly ripe fruit is beautiful to the eye and delicious to the taste, and when the same fruit is out of season, our perception is different. It might look ugly and withered and the taste may be off. During the many seasons of our life, whatever we find ourselves doing, we should find a way to be happy, to rejoice before God, and to reflect on what we have through not only the blessing of God but our efforts. Verse nine.

- 9. What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?**
- 10. I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.**
- 11. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.**
- 12. I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.**
- 13. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.**

14. I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

15. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

Throughout our life we must remember wickedness is a part of the world we live in, and living our life and rejoicing before God enjoying what we have accomplished, we need to remember that God is judging the righteous and wicked, knowing that like animals, we too will one day die our physical death. Knowing that our time on earth as a mortal person is short, we should be happy in our lives, the happiness that comes through living righteously through following God's way of life, enjoying what we have accomplished, because once we are physically dead, we won't be around to enjoy the physical life that we know. Verse sixteen.

16. And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

17. I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

18. I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

19. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

20. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22. Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

If our life is not a life of happiness that's an indication something needs to change in our life, and we can take that need to change to God as we do what we can to accomplish that change. Some seasons of our life and some seasons of change involve change brought about by God that we cannot change. When God decides to do something, we are not going to be able to withstand God. Daniel wrote of

God who knows times and seasons who removes and installs kings, who also gives wisdom and knowledge of the deep secret things. It is also God who can bring and remove people from our lives for whatever reason that is important to God. If God can remove and install kings, God can remove and install your boss at work, for whatever purpose that is important to God. If there is any person with whom we are having difficulty we can use this principle to give us guidance on how to improve the relationship, or to know when it is time to walk away. Daniel two verse nineteen.

Daniel 2:19-23

19. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

21. And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

22. He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

23. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

Paul used the concept of seasons in writing to the Galatians, showing that the result of our actions are not always immediate. In modern life, if you have determined to save money for a down payment for a house and need several thousands of dollars or tens of thousands of dollars, you most likely will not immediately have the money for the down payment. It will take time. If you have used credit and loans irresponsibly and have resolved to clean up your credit score, that is also a process that takes time. Paul does tell us whatever we sow we will reap, and Paul encourages the Galatians to seek those things which are spiritual, and to never grow tired of doing good, doing good to all people especially those who are of the household of faith. Galatians six verse seven.

Galatians 6:7-10

7. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

To the Thessalonians Paul also used the theme of seasons in describing the day of the Lord, the return of Jesus Christ, and encouraged them to be sober in their faith putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and using the hope of salvation as a helmet, knowing that for us God intends for us to be saved, to have eternal life. For us it is always a season to have faith, love, and hope, to comfort each other, and to build up each other. First Thessalonians five verse one.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

1. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Paul used seasons in writing to Timothy explaining to him that it is always time to preach the word of God. There is never a time to not preach the word of God because some will not endure sound doctrine and instead listen to fables. What we believe cannot be based on tradition but on the word of God, the Bible. For us there is never a time to ignore the message of God. Second Timothy four verse one.

2 Timothy 4:1-5

- 1. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;**
- 2. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.**
- 3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;**
- 4. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.**
- 5. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.**

To the Corinthians, Paul explained that we are living in a season of salvation, that now is the day of salvation for those who are called of God. Second Corinthians six verse one.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

- 1. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.**
- 2. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**

Seasons are used to explain prophecies, and even Jesus used seasons while giving what today is known as the Olivet Prophecy. Jesus gave a long list of what to look for, with increasing levels of severity. Let's read Matthew twenty-four verse one.

Matthew 24:1-35

- 1. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.**

- 2. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**
- 3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?**
- 4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.**
- 5. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.**
- 6. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.**
- 7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.**
- 8. All these are the beginning of sorrows.**
- 9. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.**
- 10. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.**
- 11. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.**
- 12. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.**
- 13. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**

We know from this prophecy that the gospel of the Kingdom of God will be preached throughout the world before the end comes and that the end is really close when we see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet. A great tribulation is described along with false claims of the return of Jesus. Jesus then goes on to explain that when He returns, it will be as easy to see as a sunrise, and as easy to feel as the heat of the sun on our body. The return of Jesus Christ will not be some hidden or secretive act known only but to a few. Verse fourteen.

- 14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**
- 15. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth, let him understand.**
- 16. Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:**
- 17. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:**

18. Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.
19. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:
21. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.
22. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.
23. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.
24. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.
25. Behold, I have told you before.
26. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.
27. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
28. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.
29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:
30. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
31. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Jesus then used an example of seasons to help us better understand the immediacy of the events. When in the spring we see trees budding and the first few leaves of spring we know summer is on the way. When those first few leaves of spring appear, summer is not yet here, but will be here soon. Similarly, when we see the events of Matthew twenty-four, it does not mean that Jesus will appear right away, but that we are really close to the season of His return. Verse thirty-two.

32. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

34. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

To the disciples gathered after His resurrection, Jesus explained to them that it is not for us to know the seasons or times when God will return Jesus to this planet to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, but that while we are here on earth we are to be witnesses of Jesus Christ, we are to provide a testimony of the power of Jesus Christ in our life. Right now, this is the season we are in. Acts one verse one.

Acts 1:1-11

1. The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3. To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4. And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Isaiah shares with us that God thinks differently than man, that our ways are much different than the ways of God. Isaiah also used seasons to explain that for God there is a time to sow the seed for the word of God, and there is a time to harvest, and whatever God will do will have success. Isaiah fifty-five verse eight.

Isaiah 55:8-11

8. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord .

9. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Ezekiel writes of a covenant of peace that brings a blessing to Israel, and part of that covenant is rain during the right season. If there is too much rain anytime from planting to harvesting that can harm the crops to be harvested. The rains in due season, the showers of blessing that Ezekiel writes of are the rains which bring the optimal amount of growth. God will bring these showers of blessing to Israel at God's appointed time, and for those of us who are called, we should be seeking these showers of blessing in our life. If our spiritual life is stagnant, if we are not growing spiritually, it is because these showers of blessing are missing in our life, and that is something we can take to God in prayer, who wants to bless us. Ezekiel thirty-four verse twenty-five.

Ezekiel 34:25-31

25. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

26. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

27. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.

28. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.

29. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

30. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God.

31. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.

Jeremiah writes of the rain that God gives in due season reserving us for His harvest, and yet Jeremiah also writes how our sins keep us from having these good things given to us. If we feel we are not yet reserved for the harvest there are yet changes we need to make in our lives. Jeremiah five verse twenty.

Jeremiah 5:20-25

20. Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,

21. Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:

22. Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

23. But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

24. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

25. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.

The Book of Psalms uses the imagery of seasons in many psalms. In the very first psalm, we are told that the person who delights in the law of God and meditates on it, considers how the law of God applies in his or her life, and will be like a tree that brings forth fruit in due season. The ungodly will not grow spiritually. Psalm one verse one.

Psalm 1:1-6

1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

3. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

In another psalm explaining the great workings of God, we are clearly told that it was God who made day and night, and summer and winter. Psalm seventy-four verse twelve.

Psalm 74:12-17

12. For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

14. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

15. Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers.

16. The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

17. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

Returning to the writings of Paul, Paul shows that what we see in the earth around us, including the seasons of the year, are not something to be worshipped, but to help us understand the power of God and the existence of God. Paul also explains that because we have ignored God preferring the creation over the creator, and making God in the image of what has been created, God has allowed mankind to change the truth of God into a lie, to hate God and to have sexual practices that God never intended. Romans one verse fifteen.

Romans 1:15-32

15. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23. And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

24. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:
27. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
28. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
29. Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
30. Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
31. Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
32. Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

But it was also to the Romans that Paul also wrote that all things work together for good to them that love God who are called according to His purpose. Other passages from the Bible will show that loving God is more than a use of words or warm fuzzy feelings when we think about God. The Bible shows that if we love God, we keep his commands. John fourteen verse fifteen and First John five verse three explain this. From Romans we know that all things work together for good to those that keep God's commandments, who love God, who are called according to his purpose. Romans eight verse twenty-six.

Romans 8:26-28

26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
27. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.
28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

For those of us who are called according to the purpose of God who keep God's commandments, it makes no difference to us where we are in the season of the year or the season of our lives. Now is the day of salvation, now is the season of

our salvation. We will live a life of faith, love, and hope. We will live our life being happy and edifying others, building up each other knowing that God has complete control over all things that are part of our lives.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.