

REDEEMING THE TIME

“Numbering Our Days”

Introduction

Thus far, we have looked from the beginning of time as we know it to the eternal reality of our redemption. We have gone backward to our future while looking at the impact the past will have on our generations to come. We plan to take an extensive look at life in the hereafter. But what about now, you may ask. Glad you aske!.

Psalms 90:10-12

10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.
12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. KJV¹

Now is very fleeting, but our predisposition and experience teaches us that life is full of bountiful nows to be expended as we see fit. Moses saw the dilemma of this and prayed that the Lord would teach him to know the fleetingness of his present life.

I. The Eternal Irony

What is the eternal irony? It is that we were meant to live forever, but die anyway.

1. The Day You Eat Thereof

Genesis 2:15-17

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.
16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:
17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The Lord warned Adam that the day that he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he would die. This assertion of God's was directly contradicted by the serpent.

Genesis 3:4 “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:”

The lie of the devil is that the wages of sin isn't death, but increased wisdom and spiritual status! “In the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods.” Their eyes were certainly opened; opened to see their nakedness and know evil experientially. But they did not become as gods – they died instead.

Genesis 5:5

And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

¹ All references are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

When we look at the man before the fall and the man after the fall, there is no doubt that he had become spiritually dead. The sanctuary of his heart had become darkened by sin. But his body died in the day as well.

2 Peter 3:8

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

From God's perspective, Adam didn't live out the day.

2. Lest He Put forth His Hand...and Live Forever

Genesis 3:22-24

22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

God had to cast man out of the garden to be true to His word. Note that the tree of life could have preserved the man and the woman physically alive, yet in a sinful state. Thus, His casting them out of the garden to allow them to die was also merciful. The point is, that if the food is correct (tree of life) the body could have been preserved.

Revelation 22:1-3

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

The tree of life still exists. Many take it to be a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ. I wouldn't argue against that. Lambs are a symbol of the Lord as well, but they are actual animals as well. In similar fashion, I believe the tree of life to be a literal tree that the Lord separated to Himself by placing cherubims to guard access to it. In the new heavens and earth, its monthly fruit will feed nations and its leaves will heal them.

3. Eternity in Their Hearts

Eccl 3:11

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. NKJV

Now, here's the rub. Our bodies decay and should the Lord tarry, we shall all see death. But our hearts cry out for eternity. By our physical nature, we have a limited time. But in our inward nature, we are wired into eternity.

In other words, the heart of man was created to exist forever. Your salvation (or lack thereof) determines the state of that existence, whether it will be life eternal or everlasting punishment (Matt 26:46).

Isaiah 57:15

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Eternity inhabits our hearts, but He inhabits eternity. This is an entirely different thing altogether. We are limited in the time we can occupy at once. No space or time can confine Him. He inhabits all of time at once.

Isaiah 46:9-10

9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

We have a sense and longing for that which is beyond the temporal world. But we are limited. We cannot apprehend God's work from beginning to end. He, on the other hand, knows the end from the beginning.

Psalms 39:4-5

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.

5 Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

Our days are nothing when compared to eternity. But how we spend our limited time impacts all of eternity. That makes all of our waking moments precious. Their very scarcity makes them valuable.

II. Earth Time by God's Measure

Much of the business of our times is driven by our hyper-accurate clocks. To successfully navigate through time, we must not only be aware of the pressures of our society, but be sensitive to God's design of time as well. It is His sense of time we must follow. In doing so, we will guard our lives from being overrun by the society.

1. Evening and Morning the First Day

Genesis 1:3-5

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.
5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

The day is the primary division of time. We will deal with it in detail toward the end of this teaching.

2. For Signs and for Season

Genesis 1:14-19

14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:
15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.
16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.
17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,
18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.
19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

The day was set by God's light and His driving out the darkness thereby. The physical universe was then set in order to give us natural (and prophetic) divisions of time.

A. The Week

Genesis 2:1-3

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.
2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.
3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

The Sabbath day is a celebration of God as Creator. We rest because He rested (just as we love because He first loved us).

Exodus 20:8-11

8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Thus, the fourth commandment as stated in Exodus commemorates the Sabbath day in light of its significance in the redemption of the Creation.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

12 Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee.

13 Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:

14 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

15 And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

Deuteronomy reveals the Sabbath day as a commemoration of being set free from bondage in Egypt. We cannot serve both God and mammon. Keeping the Sabbath day of rest keeps us from being swallowed whole by the world mercantile system.

B. Months and Seasons

Psalms 81:3-10

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

4 For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not.

6 I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.

7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah.

8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

The new moon set the calendar throughout the year. It was a time of renewal and refreshing, a time of deliverance.

Ezekiel 46:1

Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

This prophetic picture shows the special grace and access to the Lord in the time of the new moon.

Galatians 6:9

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

If we are mindful of seasons, we will patiently reap.

C. Years

We call the new year January 1. This is relatively recent in our history. As late as the 1700's, Scotland still began its new year in late March. In God's calendar, the civil year began in fall (the "early rain") and the religious or ceremonial calendar began in the spring (the "later rain"). We need to align ourselves to God's timing and not allow the world's timing to depress us!

3. A Shadow of Things to Come

Colossians 2:16-17

16 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:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

All these divisions of time are shadows of things to come and tell us of God's eternal plan of redemption. In walking out the practical, we cannot forget the prophetic import of God established divisions of time.

Conclusion

We need to understand where the Holy Spirit is in the flow of our day, in the flow of the week, the flow of the month, the flow of the season, and the flow of the year that we might apply our hearts unto wisdom and be blessed as we get in step with God's time table.