

Hoeh_900127_There.Is.A.Time

Good afternoon to all of you. That was an unusually beautiful, quiet composition, as distinct from some of those that are rousing. I would like to mention we have a visitor in Southern California from the Syrian Arab Republic whom I picked up at the airport yesterday afternoon. You get acquainted with people. He's been here twice before. Mr. Marwan Dabag is the architectural engineer who's responsible for the maintenance of matters along the Syrian-Turkish border in the area where the Ambassador Foundation works with numerous other institutions in terms of personnel and their part. The Foundation fundamentally contributes financial and moral support, and we must not underestimate the moral support that goes along with it, and Ambassador College's student opportunities to learn and understand this professional area of archaeology under the primary supervision of George O and Marilyn Kelly. Mr. Marwan Dabag is here, staying at a place that we arrange for him, my wife and I, in the area of Sunland, to hunger. Strangely, I meet somebody from the Middle East, I meet somebody else from the Middle East, and I mention where I've been, and this is where they come from, where the excavation is, and we have a number of Middle Eastern friends in the area, and they all know Marwan. I went there this morning to his hotel room and I became reacquainted with others of his friends, one large family living in San Fernando Valley, and I think she's a cousin and was already there visiting with him. His purpose here is to acquire farm machinery, primarily combines for harvesting wheat. One doesn't realize to what extent this remarkable area of northern Mesopotamia, northeast of the Euphrates River, reminds one of Kansas. If you've ever been in that area of Syria, which most have not, you would not know that this area outside of the Promised Land, on the other side of the Euphrates, is a remarkably beautiful land from which Abraham's ancestors came. Remember, God said, I want you to leave this beautiful land and I want to show you something else. What he took him from was an area like Kansas, and he brought him down to the Negev. But things can change. In Abraham, I guess, took it in stride, but it is a delightful area.

Some two years ago, I believe, they had a harvest at the time that we had some very, very serious production problems in this country, but not affecting wheat, but the other crops.

They had a harvest of wheat such that there was nothing like it in the living memory of anybody in northern Mesopotamia. It was beyond the wildest dreams, beyond the wildest dreams in terms of productivity. Marwan Dabag then asked, or in advance of that crop, if I could arrange the location of combines, and I want to say the ministry did find certain combines in different areas. We announced this in the Bulletin. He's a wheat farmer as well, and he has other wheat farmer friends. But the interesting thing was the production came online in such quantity that he didn't even have time to come over here, and he spent much of his time simply helping in the repair of farm equipment, and they worked up to 18 hours a day in order to harvest this immense crop some two years ago. The next one was an ordinary crop, and this year is a good crop, good rains. It's interesting to talk to a man whose English is very limited. I would say his English is as small as his heart is large. He's the kind of person when he comes over here with a little problem getting through customs. We had to offer an explanation. He comes only with so much money, but when he arrives here, there's more money waiting for him because we made arrangements that he deposit that money in our account from Lebanon, and then when it arrives here this next week, he will take that out in order to buy the farm equipment because he can't otherwise come into this country with the amount of money that would be required as a private citizen.

He did need to have a little help, and they called for me. I thought it was interesting because he came on Lufthansa, the normal flight from Damascus, Frankfurt, Los Angeles, as Lufthansa, and the German lady didn't understand Arabic, and English was her second language, and they called for Victor Hermann. Now, of course, I would be known to Marwan as Dr. Hermann.

They used the first name, and she heard that as Victor, and then she heard it that I was from Pasadena College, the college in Pasadena. He didn't necessarily know other than those two words, so I guessed who Victor Hermann was. After you wait that long, there really wouldn't be anybody else calling because it was an hour and a half after the arrival of the Lufthansa flight, and we had a very nice discussion in the car. I thought it's interesting to sense personality. We discussed the problems, and we can communicate reasonably well. I do not know Arabic. I know words, but that would be useless, although I recognize some words in our vocabulary, but we discussed the problem of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, Armenia, because you can name geographic areas or people, and we discussed the problem. His response, of course, is in very simple English, the problems in the Caucasus, no good, no good. That means very bad, and he wanted to know what the price of fuel was here, and I explained to him it's roughly a dollar a gallon because we really have the three grades, and then he named the three grades.

There's good, and very good, and very, very good. Those are the three grades of petroleum or gasoline for your cars, so he immediately recognizes how to analyze a matter. The reason he has come here is that the Buchalates encouraged him, and of course he has some friends, interestingly, in the very area that my wife and I live, and we've been in the home of some of the others, and it is amazing how many of these people, the bulk of whom are not Muslim, some of them are Assyrian Christians, and some of them are Arab Christians. You know in the Middle East, of course, you have the ancient remnants of the cities of the Assyrian Empire, and the most of those people are Christian by tradition, because the region of the Assyrian Empire in the north and further south, they are called Caldean Christians, merely because the Caldean Empire was in the south, but both of them, both peoples, essentially they're one, and they speak Aramaic. The Aramaic people in the Middle East still are known as the Christian communities and maintain their own home language.

Nevertheless, to have a chance to get acquainted with these people is interesting, and they go out of their way. Marwan Dabag is an architectural engineer responsible for the building of bridges, public buildings, roads, and in this part of the world one would have to realize tremendous, tremendous strides have taken place. I was in this part of Syria for the first time, let's say along the Euphrates in 1978, and in northern Syria in 1983, and I have not been back to Syria since. I suppose, in fact, that I ought to, apart from any question when our students are there. Because of friendships, and I think it does mean something, these people are getting to know about us. They have looked at our literature, that's all that I will say, because in English, and they do not read English as a whole, except those who live here, but these individuals go out of their way and do things that are quite unexpected. It's not like saying, I work for the government, therefore why should I do something for you. They will actually assist in helping, helping the development of an area according to the needs, and the excavation, of course, was on a high tell at the town of Amouda, as a village, and to get there, normally you wouldn't need a road, so he helped create a roadway, and he made contacts with any number of other individuals, so that we could build the buildings that go along with any excavation in which work is done. He received nothing, this was simply matters that he did, correctly using the funds that the government made available, helping people do things voluntarily, and we felt it was appropriate for him to be able to come over here the first time, and he has enjoyed coming over here since, and we're going to make arrangements Monday or Tuesday to have him contact some outlets for the purchase and shipping of combines to Syria. Many people in Syria, a

country with a population no larger than essentially the greater Los Angeles Basin, these people get to know one another, and I think this is important to realize to what extent in knowing one another our reputation as an institution becomes known in an area where we do not broadcast.

We are known at different levels of government, we are known among those who are responsible in the Department of Antiquities, we have other friends from Syria here who visited the campus, who come from the Damascus area, and after all Syria is the country that stands occupying the largest part of the promised land. If you think what the Israelis have and what the Palestinians want, you need to look at a map and realize that the greatest percent of the land that will belong ultimately to the children of Israel is presently not in the possession, certainly of Jordan, not in the possession of Israel as a state, nor is it in the possession of the Palestinians, even in terms of the land they live on, though there is no Palestinian state, not in the possession of Lebanon, it is Syria. And so we do owe it in some way since the friendship does exist to keep those doors open. He is very candid and not everything is good in Syria.

He is not a chauvinist. He is a realist. His wife, who is a very beautiful woman, is of Turkish ancestry and she visited here. My wife and I arranged for her to get a pair of glasses.

They even made her more beautiful because she chose them and she have taste.

She knew what to do and they were not expensive. She just knew she has a sense of what is beautiful and what is proper. These are interesting people to meet and to talk with, to understand the state of mind in a country. We might think that anybody who lives in Syria has the same view as anybody else and that's of course not at all true.

There are many people with different ideologies in the country.

So let's now take a look at a topic that in some way is related to these comments.

I thought I would present an approach that you can take out of the Bible to help understand where we are today. I might call it, there is a time to, and we'll fill in the rest of the poetry. You remember Ecclesiastes chapter three.

You might like to turn to that. It's based on the principle that is laid out there by Solomon.

I happen to have the authorized version. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven. And then two B, the second part of the second verse, a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted. And three B, a time to break down and a time to build up.

Or six, a time to get and a time to lose. A time to keep and a time to cast away.

Or eight B, looking at the world scene, a time of war and a time of peace.

In this world decisions have to be made. There is a time to be born and a time to die, the beginning and the end of life. That's just the way everything is. Not everything is necessarily something you plan for. But since circumstances come and Solomon pointed up that we cannot always determine these circumstances, we have to prepare for different things and sometimes do the opposite.

We're in a period of transition in Eastern Europe.

This is quite a different time than what recently was there when Mr. Armstrong was still living.

When we were waiting to see how it would all break down.

Because the Iron Curtain had stood a long, long time, in fact, in principle for 40 years.

But I'd like to go all the way back and look at these opposites and take note of the fact that sometimes we must do this, and sometimes we must do that, and we also need to know when and why. The Church, in a sense, begins with the family of Abraham, so we will not address matters from Adam to Noah or prior to Abraham. Since the principles are laid out, Solomon didn't mention all the contrasts. I will introduce a few others. In the case of Abraham, there was a time to remain home and a time to wander. It was interesting that when he left or the Caldees, he came to the region where his ancestors had lived, and he came to an area with his father that is named after his ancestors in the region along the Habur River in northern Mesopotamia, that is modern Syria. This is a land that when I first saw it, you would go over rough roads, and I remember seeing a problem ahead, and Giorgio Buccellotti, who was quite near sighted, didn't see it, and I had already bent way over. He didn't know that I had already bent over, and of course I hit the top of the cabin which we were riding, and he thought that he might have injured me, which he didn't, because I am not far sighted, but nevertheless my vision is not near sighted. I don't need glasses to read, but the country was very, very poorly developed in 1983.

To get to this area, one would have to fly in order to get there in time, or it would be a lengthy, lengthy ride. Now one can take it by limousine. You can actually drive roadways in the desert that are just same as our super highways here in southern California. All of this has happened in approximately the last half decade as a result in part of oil having been found, and of course some very remarkable crops in the country. If I cite some of these examples, there are things that you can study and think about. Abraham had to decide whether he should stay in the region of Oral of the Calvities, or whether he should go on, as God said, and he decided, of course, to obey. And his father aged at that point at which he arrived in northern Mesopotamia, that he stayed there until his death. And when terror was dead, Abraham then decided to go on in obedience to God's calling. It is interesting that coming into the land of promise, which is a word we commonly use for ancient Canaan, he discovered that he was not to inherit any of it in that age. And when he arrived in it, he was looking for a city, as the scripture says. That was, of course, symbolized by Jerusalem that was built by Melchizedek. That's the statement out of Josephus. But Abraham did not come to live there. He had to make a decision. This was not the time to live in a town as he had in Oral of the Calvities, or to live in Heran. It was a time to wander. And he wandered from north to south. He wandered into Egypt briefly. He wandered into the region of the Philistines. He wandered to Hebron. He wandered to Bersheva. Everywhere you discover that Abraham simply moves from here to there. There is a time to do that. And in fact, Abraham spent the last 100 years of his life wandering a man who otherwise was a learned dweller in cities. Now, we might, of course, analyze what kind of people he would have met doing so. And indeed, he met people in a region that would border ultimately the land in which the children of Israel would be wandering. And to this day, of course, there is something remarkable about the Bedouin who live in the Negev, bordering on where Abraham lived. The Israelis to this day have a very fine relationship with the bulk of these people who live in the northern Sinai.

And of course, Moses much later became acquainted with the people who lived in the Sinai Desert, some of whom were later Abraham's own children. But in wandering here, Abraham may not have known why it was a time to do that. Lot decided it was a time to dwell in Sodom and Gomorrah.

To dwell in Sodom and Gomorrah was not, of course, the place to be, nor was it the time to be there.

So the contrast between uncle and nephew is a very important thing to look at.

Look at the family. While they were wandering, the Gentiles would have heard that Abraham was promised all this land. And of course, he had quite a retinue of men working with him, women and

children. But Abraham had no heir that came from his wife until a little later. And that, of course, did not work out. And then he had one son by his wife, Sarah, when he was approximately 100 years old.

And that son married at 40. And he did not have another son until Isaac was 60, when Jacob and Esau were born. So in a sense, Abraham was 160 years old when his grandson was born. And all during this time, it is interesting to see that God decided this was not the time that the family should multiply. It was not a time to multiply. It was a time to have only a few children.

You might wonder why Isaac had a certain son he preferred, Rebecca preferred another. And that led to a conflict. And so we had the flight of Jacob when Jacob was 57 and Jacob was yet unmarried.

Now, Isaac saw that his son, Esau, had married. So from Esau's point of view, it was a time to marry. From Jacob's point of view, it was not. And Jacob fled 17 years after Esau had married.

It is interesting to note that some men and or women, of course, in the story, made mistakes. They made a decision that this was the time to do this, when in fact it was the time to do something else. So you have a situation. Abraham is 160. He dies at 175. Isaac is now 75. Jacob is 15. And another 42 years, Isaac will not have married. In fact, he I'm sorry, Jacob will not have married. In fact, he leaves the country. Now here was a man who was already dead.

And here is Isaac and Isaac at 117. And the son who was to be the heir is gone.

What a strange phenomenon, people who to whom God said, I will give you this land.

And now the grandson leaves to whom the inheritance should pass.

Jacob, of course, married two wives, you know that story, and came back at the end of 40 years when he was 97. Some people think he was only 20 years in Mesopotamia. He was 40 years, seven years for one wife, seven years for another. And having the dear loving uncle that he did, he worked 20 years for nothing. And then six years for wages during which they were changed 10 times. If that is a statement of fact or otherwise, and if it's only proverbial, he probably changed it more. But 10 is enough. We know that he was there for 40 years because we know he came back when he was approximately 97. We deal with this in the story of the fact that Joseph was born, and then suddenly the six years come after that Joseph was born when he was 91, because Joseph was 39 when his father, Jacob, was 130. And yet we note that when the children of Israel later came into Egypt, not only do you have Judah, Judah's son, but the two other sons that were born and a grandson later, so that that was an impossibility unless Jacob had in fact been 40 years in Mesopotamia, and Judah was born early enough. The line of Judah clearly could not have had all those descents if Jacob were only 20 years in Mesopotamia. That's the sidelight, but sometimes it's good to know why we use the explanation we do. You look at the genealogy of Judah and you will have the answer. In any case, Jacob came back with some daughters. We don't know the total number, but we know there was more than one, one of whom is named. And then he had the 12 sons. Now they began to have other sons, but this is a long time after Abraham had come into the land. And then there was a problem, and there was famine. And once more, the man to whom the promise ultimately came to Jacob leaves, and he goes down to Egypt and he disappears.

Some might have said this was not a time to go to Egypt. This was a time to stay. But Jacob was brought down there through the wisdom of his son Joseph, and they came down into Egypt and they dwelt there as shepherds, though Jacob was more than a shepherd. They dwelt there as shepherds and were given therefore the best of the land, and now it was time for the nation to multiply.

You can understand how different it would be if this multiplication had taken place in what we call the land of Canaan. That would have been an impossibility. So God brought them into a country that didn't want to be shepherds, but didn't mind having shepherds taking care of flocks in what we call the Nile Delta or the eastern part in this case. And there the children of Israel after Jacob came down stayed for 239 years and multiplied and multiplied until they were 600 men who could bear arms, 600,000, excuse me, obviously approximately 600,000 women, and we might estimate under normal circumstances the equivalent of that many children on the basis of the population of the children of Israel at the end of 40 years, which represents those children now who are mature. So you'd have roughly two to two and a half million of the children of Israel beside a mixed multitude. So there was a time to have few children and a time to have many children. The Hebrew says they multiplied like fish in Egypt. This was the land of fish and onions and garlic, a remarkable land, not a land of milk and honey. So there was a time to multiply and they became a great nation. Then God called them out and said, now we're going to head to the Promised Land, but God of course had certain things in mind. Moses, interestingly, thought that within a year they'd be in the Promised Land and in fact they were there at the border just a little over a year. Then something strange happened and Moses discovered the children of Israel had reached a time when they were once more to wander and they were to wander for 40 years and not settle down in the land of promise. Now you can analyze the why in many cases.

The time had come in certain instances. God said that the iniquity would be full. In this case, we perceive that it was not. Then in the days of Joshua, the time had come to settle down.

And so we have, of course, the period of conquest, beginning with the area east of Jordan before crossing the Jordan from late 1404 B.C. crossing the Jordan in 1403 all the way to approximately 1397, essentially seven years of occupying the land east and west militarily speaking of the River Jordan. And then they developed the land in terms of dividing it for inheritance and dwelt on it peaceably for 40 years till the tragic invasion out of Mesopotamia.

So there is a time to wander and a time to settle down. And we can drop to a period where we might say there was a time to have judges and then a time to have kings. God made the decision. Samuel thought it was a time always to have judges. God said, now look, I know, Samuel, how you feel. You are a defender of the faith. I know, Samuel, how you feel that you know that I am king. I think, Samuel, that you think they're rejecting you. And so you want to stand up for what's the truth.

But Samuel, they like you. It's me. They don't like. I'm the king. You're not to remember. I'm the king. And they want someone to replace me. And so God said, let them have a king. There comes a time when we could reason and say, if there were judges, then kings would be out. It would always be wrong to have a king because if it were right, then why should we have had judges before? You can reason that way and you would have reasoned an error. There was a time to have judges and there was a time to have kings. Now, what God had in mind, of course, is that when he will ultimately reign Yahweh, he will be king. And he intended to be born in a kingly family, not in a family of judges. And so he, in a sense, turned round the attitude of the children of Israel in their hostility, perhaps unknown, but nevertheless hostility toward God. And he turned that around by ultimately giving to the children of Israel a man like David and then Yahweh, God of the Old Testament, if we use that term here by way of explanation. He came to be born into that very family as the son of Mary and, of course, we might say a stepson of Joseph, the house of David.

It's time, therefore, to analyze whether changes when they come aren't necessarily changes that are always wrong or that may sometimes be right and necessary. And God knew that the time had come to establish a kingship. Now, he let the children of Israel prove where their heart was, and it wasn't

right, both in the case of Abimelech and tragically in the case of Saul. But nevertheless, God established the throne and it was David's as the promise was through Judah. Bear in mind, there are those who think that the Jews are conspiring to control the world. Let me say the remarkably interesting thing is that the one nation that didn't conspire to put a king on the throne was Judah. The Jews let that happen as God's will. You can say what you will. There is no indication that the house of Judah ever conspired to put David on the throne. Now, we had the time in the days of David and Solomon, we might call it, a time to unify the nation. And then there was a time to divide the nation. The story is that of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Now, you could have reasoned that it was a time always to keep the nation in unity, and you would have been wrong. God said, in fact, this division of the nation is of me, because I foresee that if the house of Israel stays with Judah, that the Jews will be overwhelmed and I cannot use them to preserve scripture, because I can guarantee you that the house of Israel hates the law, and they will ultimately stamp it out if they're the majority in this nation, which they would have been. I want to separate Judah, Levi, and a part of Benjamin, because I can use them to preserve the law. Now, he didn't word it that way, but that's the outcome of it. God can foresee way into the future. So, God said, it was a time to divide the nation, because he had plans for the nation as a whole and other plans for the division of that nation that kept to the throne of David. Now, you may not ever have looked at the Bible in this way, but there are many people, of course, who have come and gone from the church, because they've always decided differently that there wasn't the time to do things when God had decided there was a time to do things. Then in the days of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 27-11 mentions, and we'll turn to that. I think it's an interesting point here.

It's a lesson. The nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the King of Babylon and serve him, those will let remain still in their own land, says the Lord. They shall till it and dwell therein. Now, the meaning of that scripture is quite clear in the background. Earlier in that century, in fact, at the end of the previous one, as we measure centuries in Roman dating, God had said to Hezekiah who had showed the wealth that God had blessed the nation, with which he had blessed the nation. He showed this wealth to the King of Babylon.

It was a time when the Assyrians were struggling for control, and the Babylonians wanted to shake off the yoke of Assyria, and the Assyrians ultimately imposed it on the Babylonians.

But at that point, there was a certain period of independence under Meredith Baladan, in the essentially from 720 to 710, that broad period of time.

And the King had come to see Hezekiah, and God had told Hezekiah, look, the time is coming when your descendants and the children of Judah are going to be carried captive. Because of the sins of the nation, they will be carried into Babylon and will serve the princes and the kings of Babylon.

It was later, interestingly, in the days of Josiah, that the children of Israel, in the 18th year of the King, in the year 623 to 622, at the time of the Passover, renewed the covenant. Now, Jeremiah had begun to preach just a few years earlier. If you look at the very first verses of the book of Jeremiah, you will see that though the covenant was renewed and the great Passover was kept in the 18th year, in the book of Jeremiah, you discover that he began to speak in the 13th year of his reign. So essentially, it was for a five-year period before that Jeremiah began to speak, and this is the time when Josiah was listening. There is a reform in the nation, and suddenly the nation decides something that the House of Israel never, never did.

The nation of Judah decided that they would renew the covenant. If there is anything that the House of Israel would do, they would say the covenant is Jewish. And you have the children of Israel, if you

know where to look for the ten tribes today and the ministry among them, almost universally will speak of the law as Jewish, because they didn't want to have anything to do with it. But the Jews were willing to renew the covenant that God had made with the nation. And so it was that Jeremiah then came with a message in the 27th chapter, as it is now divided in verse 11, that if you put your neck to the yoke of the king of Babylon, you don't have to go into captivity, you can stay in the land. That is, God said, look, if the nation is going to repent, then I'm not going to require this. But of course, if you read the book of Ezekiel, you will find that Judah was given 40 years in which to repent, or to stay rather, in a state of repentance, which ultimately they did not. So step by step, they were carried into captivity all the way down to the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar, as you read in the last chapter of the book of Jeremiah, which was 52, and that was exactly the 40 years after the renewal of the covenant.

So there was a time to remain in the land, and then a time to go into exile. And we have to recognize that sometimes mistakes are made. Sometimes a nation can make mistakes. The nation Israel as a church or as a state had made mistakes, and so there was a time to have kings.

So there was a time now to go into exile. They were given the opportunity to stay in the land, and those who were most rebellious, they wanted to stay in the land, and those in the meantime, who submitted to exile, God had chosen to bless.

So indeed, there is a time to make a covenant, a time to renew a covenant, a time to build the temple, a time to rebuild it, and ultimately a time to return to the land and not to remain in exile.

All these you have scattered through the story, and you have to know, you have to understand when it's time to do certain things. Just because we did something a certain way for the last 10, 20, 30, 40 years, doesn't mean it should be done that way at all times.

And that's what the story of the Old Testament is telling us in ways that perhaps we have never thought. Let's go down the story. You have, of course, the coming of the Messiah.

There was a time for Messiah to be born and a time to die, and now I'm opening up the story of the New Testament. There are many other things you could pick up in the Old Testament.

Jesus gave an interesting message in the year 30, that is the year before, the Roman year before, within the calendar year before he died in AD 31. He said to the nation, if you look carefully, and I am indebted to Victor Couture, a member in Ohio, I have mentioned this I think in one Bible study, for the observation that Jesus said, there's no sign that will be given you except the sign of Jonah. He said this for the first time in the record in AD 30, not 29, 28, 27, or 31. No sign will be given you but the sign of the prophet Jonah. And indeed, we have noted, of course, that one of the signs, note carefully, my plural use of the term, one of the signs was that, as Jonah was three days and three nights, so Jesus would be three days and three nights in the belly of this great fish. Now I said signs because Jesus never told the rest of the story.

Yet the remarkable thing is that Jonah had said also to the children of Nineveh, that if you repent, no, he didn't say that. He said, 40 days and your city is through.

He wasn't about to give them options. He came with a message that 40 days and they would have had it.

And he sat and waited after he announced this and lo and behold, they repented.

Now, you know, of course, that in some prophecies there is a day for a year.

And if you look at this in terms of Judah, God through Christ was giving the Jews 40 years to think over what they were going to do with the message of Christ from that point on.

And if they had been converted, they would never have left the city of Jerusalem.

But as it was from AD 30 to AD 70, there were exactly 40 years. Just as God had given Nineveh 40 days, he gave the Jews at Jerusalem 40 years. That's the other sign of Jonah that we never thought about. So there was a time for the nation to repent and a time for the nation to go into exile. And the church had the wisdom to see in AD 66 that the time had come, that the nation had gotten into such troubles with Rome that inevitably there was going to be a penalty on Jerusalem, a very serious penalty. And if it meant anything like what would have happened to Nineveh, indeed, it would mean that the city would be destroyed and they left. And within four years, a fraction less by AD 70, the city was taken. There was a personality by the name of Saul who was a zealot. He was also a person who constantly attracted attention to himself.

He became known as Paul. He knew a lot about the Pharisees because he had studied at the feet of Gamaliel. So he knew what they were like and he was zealous. He was constantly in the ring, always doing something. There was no, as we say, idle bone in his body.

And the more he spoke, the more he got into trouble. And he went from place to place and finally God called him along with Barnabas for a certain task. And of course, remarkably, he even had difficulty with Barnabas. This was a part of his personality. But he went around from one place to another to another in Greece and Asia Minor. And then he went into the European area proper in the region of Greece. He had also been in the Mediterranean Isles and then he was going to go to Rome. So he went from one area to another to another. He labored more abundantly than all of them. And God said, there is time now not to travel, not to journey, Paul. There is a time to go to prison and to take it easy, if that's what he could do, and to sit down and to write some things and to care for the churches because you're going from place to place to place to place. And you need some time to rethink what needs to be done for the care of the churches.

And Paul later mentions even what a burden and a responsibility that was.

So it's interesting to see how God uses individuals at different times in history. There was a time for Paul to be in prison and a time to be released, after which, if we use the Spanish tradition, he went briefly through Spain for two years and then arrived in Britain in AD 64. His release, or let's go back and say that he got into trouble in Jerusalem in 56 and then he was in prison between 56 and 62. He was, of course, two years imprisoned in the region that we would call Greater Syria, 56 to 58. And then, of course, that shipwreck that led him to be a prisoner without a prison. And he got to Italy in 59 I should say, this is incorrect, I should start in 57. Please correct your note, not 56. In 57 he came to the area of Jerusalem in 59. He then was released from the prison to go on board ship.

And then it was 60 that he finally got to Rome as a result of that winter in without a prison. You remember when the ship was wrecked and he was two years in prison.

The Jews no longer brought accusation. So that brings us to 62 and 62 to 64. He went through Spain and by 64 he arrived in Britain. How long he stayed there, we do not know, but the implication is he was clearly back in 67 in Asia Minor at which point he was seized and then he was executed by Nero upon the return of Nero out of Greece into Italy in AD 68 and within days after the execution of Paul, Nero committed suicide. So God had a reason why Paul should journey, why Paul should be in prison, why Paul should not have gotten to Britain earlier, why he should therefore be released. We might wonder why some of these things occur, but God has his reasons and you can analyze some of them

in terms of what the limitations can be when it occurs that way. Now as we look at the story, the church was born in the region of Judea, Jerusalem in particular, and there was ultimately a time to flee the area. So the church migrates and what we have for many centuries is a time in which the church dwells in the Roman Empire and then formally has to flee to the border confines of the realm as a result fundamentally of the Council of Nicaea in 325 when the pagan Pontifex Maximus or chief priest Constantine not yet a Christian called the Christians together and told them to settle all their differences and in so doing he also told them that anybody who doesn't agree has to get out.

We're going to have one universal church of God, the Catholic Church of God, and that's that and the rest must leave and the church had to learn to flee and so the church fled ultimately out of the region of Asia Minor where the largest group was settled into the western Asia Minor into the east central area of Armenia and from their centuries later they learned to leave and to migrate somewhere else in the Balkans through to the Alpine region, they had to learn that they could live in the Alpine region for a while and then there was a time again to move and they moved to Britain and then God brought to the attention of the church in the middle of the 17th century that there was a time to come to the New World because colonies were being established in the New World in the British or English speaking areas. I happily had the privilege for the first time only months ago, this was an archaeological convention in Boston and I took the privilege the day before the primary sessions to have the opportunity to visit Rhode Island and to visit Newport and the other communities to see the graves of the early Sabbath keeping ministers and the buildings in which the membership Christians who were called Sabaterians met. This is the group that gradually came to represent the focus of the church in the New World and it was indeed a remarkable experience but many of these people learned later there was a time not to stay in Rhode Island but a time to move and they moved into West Virginia and other areas across the country. We know the bulk of those people as Seventh Day Baptist to this day, that is what they became by 1802. Then in 1831 we had quite a different situation. If we go back to the 1600s and the late 1500s we could say it was a time to announce the Sabbath to a world that as a whole had forgotten it but in 1831 there was a time to announce the second advent. They used the word advent from second coming so we'll use the term that was then extant, the time to announce the return of Christ that he was going to come back and he was going to judge the world. William Miller was the man who was used to announce that beginning in 1831. Now what was remarkable of course is that the churches of Christ, sometimes called the churches of God, mostly the churches of Christ who were Sabbatarians who had come over in the middle of the 17th century were now essentially no longer doing the work of God and God had to call somebody who had no immediate background with those people who was William Miller and he called many out of the denominations that were extant then in New England and elsewhere. It was 18 centuries after the crucifixion to AD 31 so it was a time to announce the second advent and then it was a time for those people to learn about the Sabbath which they did in 1846 and then it was a time to examine whether there were visions of God or visions that were not of God that were coming to a woman L and G white and it was a time for some the majority to stay with those who followed the visions and a time for the minority to leave and that minority came to be the background of the church of God's seventh day.

There came a time in the 20th century that God sent an advertising man to come among them whose name was Herbert Armstrong and he came with ideas that he had never learned in the church. He learned this in the advertising field and he brought it to the church and people began to listen to him in the Oregon conference area the Willamette Valley. There was a time to ordain him.

There was a time when he was asked to write for the Bible Advocate and a time when he was not.

There was a time when we might say of the churches of God in the 1930s a time to open the doors that no man can shut and a time to shut the doors that no man could open and they're both there and we haven't seen them both and so for those who chose not to continue to be the live branches of the churches of God the door was shut and after now more than a hundred years of publishing the Bible Advocate they only have thousands on their mailing list but for the Oregon conference the time had come of the church of God to open the doors that no man could shut and of that conference there were one half who were wise and one half who were foolish. Don't assume that the wise and the foolish virgins occurs only at one time in history. If you've ever read Mr. Armstrong's co-worker letters you know he applied them in more than one way. That was the time when five were wise and five were foolish and five stayed with those whose doors were shut and five stayed with the congregation and supported the congregations around Eugene and elsewhere that Mr. Armstrong was used to found and to them the door was opened and the work began to spread and for 12 years Mr. Armstrong raised up churches and they disappeared raised up Bible studies and they disappeared and some congregations of course that he could directly minister to didn't disappear and that told him something very important it was a time to move and to establish a college to train the ministry because he found that if whenever he was there the congregation remained solid and firm and whenever he was gone and turned the responsibility over to someone who he had not trained and remember unlike the Jews who were trained in the synagogue for generations many of these people had no real background in the church of God for generations and they left the flock disappear and so in 1946 Mr. Armstrong came to Southern California to examine and by that time of course I had heard the program in 1944 so all that I have told you is history the rest is now in part experience I read the first coworker letter Mr. Armstrong issued in 1946 in which he said there are two pieces of property one is nearby and the other is a place that I have never found he never described it further yes there was the time to make choice and he made choice of something here in the area of Orange Grove to establish a college and to move the headquarters there were those who said he should not move there were those who said fine let's do it there were those who said we don't need a college we don't need nothing like that the doors are shut and some of those people of course long since have disappeared from memory so the college was founded in 1947 and the doors were opened now it's remarkable what has happened of course after 1950-51 one could say that in a certain sense ambassador college was the focus of the work in this sense that the bulk of the effort that was being carried out was not expressed through publishing it was of course heard often in repeat broadcasts on radio but it was in fact the effort of the students who had been trained by Mr. Armstrong and whom he delegated responsibility to during the summer and the baptizing tours and finally to administer bible studies and local congregations and Mr. Armstrong was the fundamental teacher so very often in a sense the college was seen as the focal point and many many people contributed money to the college whether or not they were members because they saw that the college was accomplishing something this was a very remarkably creative move to have a college for the training of young men and women perhaps in my judgment Mr. Armstrong's greatest single contribution intellectually and in terms of foresight that has been made without the college this church would not be where it is it's not the reverse it's not the reverse many people contributed who were not members in those days in passage of time we come to a realization that when a man is in his 90s in a sense there is a time to live and a time to die and so essentially four years and 10 days ago in the roman calendar Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong passed from the scene a time for the administration of the work of the church of god to take new focus Mr. Armstrong's primary work was to construct and you will pardon the parallel but now there is the time for perestroika to reconstruct that is when things are 40 30 or 20 years old and remember the college was open 43 years ago you would be surprised that the minority of people who are in this room were born after the college was opened the majority were born after the minority were born before half of the people in this country

are under 30 years of age half of the people in Peru are under 15 that's just because of the population variation but nevertheless we have to realize after 40 or 30 or 20 years and some of our main buildings are now 20 years old we have to reconsider this is what Mr. Tkach has called the infrastructure we have to reconsider now our priorities so there was a time to construct a time to build and now we have a time in a sense to reconstruct the campus in big sandy to reconstruct what it is we should be doing here in southern California yes there was a time to stay in Eugene and a time to move from Eugene a time to move to Pasadena and a time for part of the work to move from Pasadena we have to be realistic if you would say we shouldn't ever do anything like this we would still be in Jerusalem if you want to argue about Jerusalem you should say we still ought to be at K-barnea you see there is a time to change now we have to know what to move and when to move and why to move Solomon only told you that there was a time he did not say how you were to judge but he did say you ought to be wise and have insight and not to put all your efforts in one basket you never of course want to carry as they say for those who are chicken farmers you don't carry all your eggs in one bucket if you stumble they can be broken your principle is clear there was in fact in the last 40 years a time to enter the gun lap and a time not to enter the gun lap want to address this question you see Mr. Armstrong often thought in terms of his own lifespan and the shorter his life got very often he thought that it was indeed a gun lap and you know what he said was a gun lap was a gun lap for Herbert W. Armstrong but he told the church and he wanted the church's support when you hear Mr. Armstrong writing thinking that we must do this we must do that we must be zealous we must open the doors here and there we must walk through Mr. Armstrong was talking to himself he had to know how to push himself he was a man who needed a prod not everybody needs a prod just because you must put a prod on yourself says the seven laws of success it doesn't mean that every man has to reach out for a prod and prod himself some people are self-starters Mr. Armstrong was not he had to prod himself I remember before we ever left Belknap Springs in Oregon at the Feast of Tabernacles Mr. Armstrong said we're in the gun lap because for him if he weren't in it he wouldn't be running as fast as he needed to that was the part of his nature Mr. Tkach doesn't need that kind of prod I know him he doesn't have to say it of himself he is not asking himself to run in the gun lap now is the time to restructure because there is work ahead and we have to now structure what we're doing in terms of seeing the nature of the work ahead this is now a time in economic stress when we don't ask the brethren to give their last monies this is a time also to restructure the brethren's lives so they will be prepared both economically and spiritually and morally to run the course of the decade we are entering the 1990s and if we do analyze ourselves spiritually as the co-worker letters I received mine today perhaps you did as well if you do what you need to do spiritually you do what you need to do morally and we'll focus on that in addition because it's all part of the spiritual and carefully analyze what you need to do economically we will be prepared then to take the creative steps that inevitably will come our way when areas of the world now in chaos in Eastern Europe become restructured in such a way that we can effectively enter the area and do the work that needs to be done there is a time to be a superpower and a time not to be a superpower we did not know how it would happen but now we have the picture before us two superpowers arose after world war two one an economic and military superpower another a military superpower whose weakness had always been the economic that was as we saw and there was as we saw an Achilles heel the question is what arrow would strike the Achilles heel of the Soviet Union that would bring this military superpower down economically and it turned out to be their own judgment their own covetousness in the form of the occupation of Afghanistan that for 10 years drained them and morally ruined the country and has introduced drugs and prostitution and every other evil that 25 years ago was not in the Soviet Union anywhere near the extent that we see these today there is a time for the United States to be a superpower and a time for us not to be an economic superpower notice my change of phrase we are still a military superpower so is the Soviet

Union the Soviet Union is now simply a third world country we are not a third world country but we are no country but we are no longer an economic superpower in fact we have two nations that are economic superpowers but neither of them are military superpowers one is Japan and one is the federal republic of Germany today we are in quite an unusual world in which we have become the greatest detonation in the history of the world Mr. Tkach is thinking realistically not to over extend ourselves to know what to do with monies at the time while we are still the greatest detonation and living on other people's money before the rug is pulled out from under us because of our own mistakes and not others wickedness the Soviet Union made their own mistakes we are going to make our own as a nation because we are not coming to grips with what our friends or critics are telling us correctly we want the Japanese to change we are not willing to listen to the Japanese telling us what we need to do to help us change that is not at least at the highest levels of government though some private businesses are this decade is a decade in which the United States is going to realize it is no longer an economic superpower and sooner or later probably later in this decade we're going to realize what happens and what you have seen in Eastern Europe in terms of the collapse of the economic capacity of the Soviet Union to support its military power we're going to see the effects of that great debt that we have built up in the late 1980s and it is going to so transform the economic status of this country that we have to be prepared for the consequences in the work Australia is a very small regional superpower in Australasia and Australia is in a terrible shape just as this country is economically but we do have men who are trying to steer the country through the economic shoals and the chance of maneuvering is getting more and more limited these men in charge of the economic aspects of our lands and of Canada and of Britain and the great nations speaking English are in the most difficult position outside of third world and second world countries the Soviet Union is traditionally the second world you've heard of the third world communist countries were the second world that is of the Soviet Union but there is no second world there it's vanished vanished it's a third world country and we are headed for an economic third world condition in terms of our standard of living as distinct from our infrastructure because we are a technically advanced industrial country but this country clearly is headed for but not this year or necessarily the next or the next we are headed for a third world economic standard of living you cannot avoid it when we are the greatest debtor nation in the world it cannot be avoided but it will not happen there is a time for that and the time has not come because we have not done all that is necessary to get our house yet economically in order and God looks at the big picture and he is able to postpone able to have men make decisions that keep the inevitable from happening no the debt collapse has not yet occurred no it isn't going to happen immediately but there will come an avalanche you're not surprised are you've seen an avalanche in 1988 sorry 1989 Eastern Europe collapsed like a bank you know along the coast here the mud banks finally it's so soaked with water that it just slides down the Soviet Union was soaked with propaganda and debt and a decay in morality that they couldn't support what was behind the iron curtain west of the Soviet Union and now even inside that same thing is going to happen to this country there is no way to forestall it but it isn't going to happen immediately I would suspect it's going to happen in the last half of this present decade I won't predict anymore you have your part in this work to watch how God reveals himself to the leadership and through circumstances to know when it is the time to do what the church is asked to do and not to make the mistake and say it isn't time I want nothing to do with it those who decided not to enter the promised land are never part of those to whom the promises pertain