

A time to rend, and a time to sew; A time to keep silence, and a time to speak

This morning: A time to rend and a time to sew

Solomon, like all of us, had no doubt experienced every one of these times and seasons in his life. He writes to us as one who had labored and wearied himself to find satisfaction in this life under the sun, but after he had gotten it all, he found that there was no true satisfaction or profit in any of it apart of God. His conclusion: It was all vanity and vexation of spirit.

The only true and real satisfaction of the soul is found in Christ!

All of what Solomon had amassed in his life in possessions & riches didn't merit him a better eternity; and none of it stopped the ever-changing times and seasons of life that he would experience.

Yes, there were happy/prosperous times of birth, life, planting, and building up; times of laughing, dancing; seasons of gathering, embracing; of getting, gaining and keeping; times to speak, times of love & times peace.

But then, there were the difficult times; of death, plucking up that which was planted; of killing and breaking down; times of weeping and mourning; times to cast away, times to refrain from embracing; times to lose, times to rend or tear; times to keep silence, times to hate, & times of war.

Christian, your faith in Christ will be tested in EVERY season of life: In prosperous times, we are very prone to cast our faith aside as unnecessary; but then, when we enter into difficult times, then we will dust off our faith and return to depending on God/trusting God, which is how we should live in EVERY season of life! In the prosperous AND in the difficult times!

Deuteronomy 8:7-14, 1 Peter 1:3-9.

Christian: God is forming and fashioning you for heaven! When your faith in Christ is tried in prosperity OR through trials and afflictions, it will become MORE precious-MORE valuable; and that is because it will DETACH you from this life & this world & it will ATTACH you to heaven & to Christ!

Your faith in Christ is for every season of life!

FIRST: A time to rend and a time to sew:

To rend is to tear apart; to sew together is just what it sounds like; it's sewing a garment or a piece of cloth together which was previously torn.

What does this mean? What is Solomon teaching us in rending, tearing, sewing? And how does this apply to us today in our lives?

First: A Time to Rend:

In Biblical times of both the OT & NT, the scriptures record times in which persons tore their garments; this was typically a time of intense grief, sorrow, and mourning, and an outward sign of that their hearts were torn and broken in grief.

Some would even put on sackcloth and sprinkle ashes on their heads. When you saw someone like this, you knew they were in a

season of mourning.

In Genesis: We see Reuben and Jacob tearing their clothes in grief in regard to what happened to Joseph: Reuben when he saw that Joseph had been taken from the pit, and Jacob, when he saw Joseph's coat of many colors covered in blood, and he thought that Joseph had surely been killed.

Genesis 37:29-35

We read of King David tearing his garments and putting on sackcloth when he found out about the death of Abner, who was maliciously killed by Joab:

2 Samuel 3:28-39

And then, we read of Job tearing his clothes, after he was told that all of what he possessed had been taken; but, I think mainly, when he knew that all (10) of his children had been killed by a great wind that collapsed the house upon them.

Job 1:20-22, 2:7-13.

We also read of Paul and Barnabas tearing their clothes when the people at Lystra worshiped them as gods: Acts 14:8-15

They abhorred the thought of being worshiped by the people as if they were gods. **BUT there is another time to rend;** when we sin, our hearts should be torn in grief and sorrow when we sin against our God! Joel 2:12-13

It should break our hearts when we sin against our God! It should make us mourn and weep. Jeremiah mourned and wept for the sins of Israel:

Jeremiah 13:17: My soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive

And there are other times of rending and tearing, times and seasons of sorrow in this life under the sun when our lives seem torn apart by sin.

But after rending/tearing apart in grief/sorrow for loss or sin; and after times of mourning; there is sewing together; or putting our lives back together.

When we get past times of grief, sorrow, and rending; the time comes when we change our garments or, we sew up that which was torn apart; we put our lives back together and move past our season of grief and sorrow, trusting that the Lord had appointed that time and season for our lives. I take you back to an example of this in King David:

2 Samuel 12:20

And so, we see King David moving past his time of intense grief and mourning for the death of his infant child when it was time to put his life back together & move on. Also, Job 42:10-12

Brethren, there is a time to mourn and to weep and to grieve (a time when our hearts are torn); but then there will be a time to sew together that which was torn in grief.

Interesting reference in regard to God tearing Israel apart as a nation:

1 Kings 11:9-11, 30-31, Ezekiel 37:21-22

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak

When to keep silence & when to speak OUGHT to be of special interest to each of us, and that is because we represent the Lord Jesus and the Kingdom of Christ!

Beloved, know that governing/controlling our tongues is impossible unless our hearts are governed & controlled by the Spirit of God!

What you say and what you don't say are strong indicators of who you are in your heart; but also, who or what is controlling you.

James 1:26-27, 3:1-12, Psalm 39:1, Proverbs 17:27

If you are an introspective Christian; and every one of us should be, you will often go back in your mind and consider what you said and what you didn't say in your conversations and in your relationships. But you won't stop there, you will repent of the sins of your tongue; and you will go to the Word of God, and learn from it of how and when you ought to speak and when you should keep silence.

Your tongue does not act alone, it moves or lays silent, as I said before, according to what is in your heart! Matthew 12:34-37, 15:18-19

A time to keep silence:

The scriptures teach us of specific times when we OUGHT to keep silence:

First: Don't reprove a scorner. A scorner is someone who will hate and attack you for trying to reprove or correct them: And they will use your good words of correction against you and trample you in contempt for correcting them.

Proverbs 9:7-9, 23:9, 26:4-5, Matthew 7:6

Second: We must all learn to NOT speak if it is going to cause us or someone else to sin.

James 1:19: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath
Ecclesiastes 5:1-7, Proverbs 13:3, 21:23

If you have nothing to say, learn to keep silent. If you do have something to say, make sure it will improve the silence and be edifying and profitable to those that will hear it.

Some people are just think talkers; if they're thinking it, they're saying it; don't be a think talker.

Proverbs 10:19, Ecclesiastes 10:12B-14

The tongue can NO MAN tame; ONLY GOD can tame the tongue!

A time to speak; Ecclesiastes 10:12A, 12:11

Christian, as you grow (and mature) in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the BETTER equipped you should be in the use of your tongue.

We must learn to THINK before we SPEAK: Think what? Is what I am about to say honoring to you Lord? Is it edifying to the person that I am speaking to? Is this the right time to say this? Give me wisdom Lord!

Proverbs 15:28: The heart of the righteous studieth to answer; (studies how to answer); but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things

Proverbs 16:32: The heart of the wise teaches his mouth,

and addeth learning to his lips
Colossians 4:5-6, 1 Peter 3:15

There is SO much instruction in the Holy Scriptures on the wisdom of speaking; it stands to reason that we ought to give the more earnest heed to it in our lives. And don't forget, you represent Christ both in keeping silence, and in speaking!

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In closing: If you're not a Christian; if you've never turned from your sins to Christ in repentance and faith; hear the words of the Apostle Paul:

2 Corinthians 6:2:

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation