

W430_Time.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book, and it is number 35 of the series entitled The Form of Sound Words. Most of you who are listening to this recording will know that we have picked out from the Scriptures in alphabetical order. From the letter a onwards, some of the essential words that we should have knowledge of that are especially associated with the Ministry of the Apostle Paul. He enjoined upon Timothy and passes it on to us that we should have a form of sound words so that we may have the ABC, as it were, of the truth without confusion. Today we are dealing with the letter T and the subject is time. Now, before this recording took place, we read a part of the Book of Ecclesiastes, chapter three. So if you will turn to that chapter, there's 1 or 2 little notes I would like to pass on as a preface to this study of the word time. Ecclesiastes follows Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon and just in that part of the Old Testament. And it begins with a well known introduction to every thing. There is a season and a time to every person under heaven. We shall see. Presently, that time sometimes means time as we go by the clock and sometimes means season as we go with the time of year. Unfortunately, in this climate, the end of May seems a little bit like winter, but of course that's because we had an odd sort of people and we live right on the edge of Europe, but we'll come back to that presently.

[00:01:57] This many things here that we admit must be so. A time to be born. A time to die. A time to gather, a time to cast away and so on. But there's 1 or 2 points that perhaps may be wise to just. Pick out. He says. Verse ten. I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time. Now, this doesn't refer only to the present creation. It refers, rather, that he has made everything beautiful when the right time comes. When the right time comes. There will be a perfect fitness with all that will be then obtaining. And also he hath set the world in their heart. Now, the word world there is the Old Testament word for the age. As strictly speaking, the word world is not a bad translation of the word age. But we're not all etymologists and we don't always know why a word is spelled as it is. The word world is made up of two parts in English ver virile. And it's the word that means a man and eld eld elder means time or age. So the word world means the time or age of men. But as there's a word cosmos which has to be used for the word world as well, meaning creation and the visible things around us, it's wise to keep the word loan in a Greek olam in the Hebrew for age and cosmos for the word world.

[00:03:52] That's only just in passing. Also, he hath set the age. In their heart so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. The age is a part of time, but there is a beginning about which we know practically very, very little. And as an end which is foreshadowed. But we have to wait because the Scripture says that eye hath not seen nor ear heard. Neither hath it enter the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But He has shown it by His spirit and has given us anticipations. And so here it is. And then further down, he says. Verse 14. I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. Here we have again this word that means the ages. The ages are the periods of time in which God's purpose is unfolded. And this is about it. God as sovereign control of the outworking of the purpose of the ages. Nothing can be put to it. Of course, men try to put things to it. And we're all tempted to try to make a scheme so that we've got a perfect pattern and a picture of the outworking of the ages.

[00:05:18] But ultimately, God's work, God's purpose will be achieved as He intended. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it. That's a good thing to know. And God does it that men should fear before him. And then he gives a very striking summary. That which hath been is now. And that which used to be. Had already been. That is a suggestion that the Scriptures fold themselves back, as it were. It starts with in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. It ends with I saw a new heavens and a new earth. That which hath been is that which shall be only, of course. One was without redemptive love, the other with and God requireth that which is past. Now that verse has been lifted out and used to print on texts to sort of frighten people. God requiring a thought of threat. But it isn't. All this is summed up all this purpose of the ages, all the unfolding of time for God is seeking. That which is past. In the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth. And then comes disaster. Comes darkness comes death. Comes the need of redemption. And the whole purpose of the ages is to finish the circle right back again. Only this time. And new heavens. And a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. In the beginning. Genesis one. Then cometh the end. One Corinthians 15. There's a beginning and there's an end.

[00:07:07] And the end doesn't mean where you cut it off. And that's a finish. It means a goal, a purpose ultimately achieved. And this strange passage and the whole of Ecclesiastes is to face the fact that there's a tremendous amount that's going on in the

outworking of this purpose of the ages that God has not described or explained. But he leaves it for the faith that is given us to believe and to hold in spite of all apparent circumstances. I don't think I need ask you to ponder further this book of Ecclesiastes because of the subject demanding a little bit more wider scope. But we'll now turn to the New Testament and you will see on the chart that you have in front of you. There are two words with which we must become associated. One is Cronos. Cronos. The other is Kairos. Kairos. Now, if you look at Galatians Chapter four. You read? Chapter four, verse four. But when the fulness of the time was come. You see, this is dealing in the context with a father. Having appointed his son to be heir. But while he's a minor, he's under tutors and governors. Verse one until the time appointed of the father. Verse two. So now he says, When the fullness of the time was come. Now God alone knows why. What we call ad one was the fullness of time. But he says so. And if the first week of creation, Genesis one foreshadows the days of the ages, that is to say, six days or 6000 years, and the seventh thousand, the millennial kingdom.

[00:09:25] Then it was in the middle, the very middle of that week of God's work that Christ was born. So that may give us some idea that there was a reason and a purpose that was fulfilled. He didn't come in the days of Moses. He didn't come in the days of Abraham. He came at the fullness of time and we are warned in the scriptures not to, as it were, to take the attitude of agitating and praying and arguing with God as to the time. Habakkuk, another rather difficult book to understand. Nevertheless, his up to date in this the book of Habakkuk. He said he saw violence and there was no interposition. He prayed and he got no answer. This book of Ecclesiastes is the time to be silent as well as the time to speak, he said. I will stand upon my watch and wait until I know what he's going to say to me. And then he spoke. God spoke, and what he said was this. The vision is yet for an appointed time, though it tarry. Wait for it. Now that's the human side though it carry. But it says it will not tarry. But what does it mean, though? It tarry and it will not tarry? Well, from our point of view, it seems a long time to wait, doesn't it? From God's point of view, thousand years in his sight is.

[00:10:56] But yesterday. We are little children. And if you've ever had little children of your own and some are about the month of February, you dropped a hint that you were going to the seaside in July. Oh, don't you wish you'd never said it? Because are we going tomorrow? Well, we are like that. We've got a hint in the Bible that there is a blessed day coming and we're all of a worry because time seems to be going on and

there seems to be no intervention. So we have prayer meetings at last all night as well as all day thinking we can worry God to change his program, but he won't do it. He'll change us rather to fit in with it. So let's remember. Uh, this this passage. Now, here we have in this fourth verse. But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. So although there was a long wait in God's estimate, time had now come. You must remember that no event that any one of us can appreciate or enter. Can possibly take place without the adherence of time and place. Shakespeare's use of words is very wonderful, Although he wasn't inspired and I don't know whether he was a Christian, but he said he connection with one event time nor place did then adhere to adhere time and place must adhere.

[00:12:37] No event can never be experienced by you and me. That doesn't take place some time somewhere. For the very first verse of the Bible says sometime in somewhere in the beginning is time. The heavens and the earth is where. So the Bible immediately limits, in spite of the fact that it ranges so far, it limits us to a period when there was a beginning. It goes on to when there shall come an end and the sphere or the place is heaven and earth. Well, that's big enough, I think, in all conscience, until we know, as we are known and we're ready for whatever further revelation God may give. Well, now, if you would turn the page, you come to Ephesians and Ephesians 110 says. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him. And you may think, well, here again is this same expression, the fulness of time. You do notice that it's put in the plural, the fulness of times. So now we've got to differentiate between Chronos. We see Chronos is what my watch is indicating. Chronos time. But if I look in the calendar, I find that it is.

[00:14:06] Is it summer yet? I don't quite know, but I think it might be. I think summer is started. If it isn't, it's supposed to be. See Kairos. The other word doesn't mean time 24 hours a day. It means season C time or harvest time is kairos. Now this word kairos has to do with convenience opportunity. Something that's fitting. So in the one case, time went on until the time appointed by the father that his beloved son should come into the world. As a man. And then he goes on to say that in the dispensation of the fulness of the seasons. Now, in other contexts, this would be spoken of as the harvest. That's the season. That's not a time. That's a season. Because if you live in this latitude, the

harvest would be anywhere from July, August, September. If you lived in Palestine, well, right back at the Passover in what we call April. They gathered the first fruits of the barley harvest. So time is one feature and season is another. So there are seasons as well as times. Ecclesiastes says so. So now all I can do is to drop the hint that sometimes it will be time and sometimes it will be season. The Thickness. Let's now look at a few passages, shall we? Let's look at two. Timothy one nine. Two. Timothy one nine. Yeah. The Apostle is writing about the commission that he received and he says.

[00:16:04] Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Well, now there is no word for our word world there. There is no word for began there. That's a very free and easy translation. It's before times of ages. Complicated way of saying it, but the ages span the whole of time. They begin. They end and before age times. Now this is expression another way in Ephesians one. Before the foundation or overthrow of the world. So that from Genesis one, verse two, you start the ages. You start time and it goes on until the sun delivers a perfect universe to the Father that God may be all in all. That makes me think of an expression that needs care. In the book of the revelation, where the angel said, Time shall be no more. Well, so far as you and I are concerned, at the present moment, we cannot conceive of Are we going to say a time when there is no time, we can't conceive of it? And that word doesn't mean time on the clock. It means opportunity. And it is translated in the same book of the revelation space. Now, space doesn't mean time, but space to repent. Means opportunity to repent. And at last, the angel says the opportunity to repent is over.

[00:17:53] And judgment is about to fall. So that we've now got these two time and space. They are the absolute minimum for all events. And if you want to work out a definition of time, all philosophers have tried it. I'm only expressing very, very limited understanding. But time, among other things, is the measurement of movement. If you were in a court of law and you stood up as a witness and you said that a motor car was travelling at 50 miles, that wouldn't be witness at all. The magistrate or the judge would say 50 miles. What? Oh, an hour. Because it was 50 miles a minute or 50 miles a day. Don't you see? So time is the measure of movement, but it's much more than that. As you will discover when you look in different parts of scripture. Will you turn back to one

Timothy two six? One. Timothy two six. He says in verse five, There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. Now that's due time. That's fitting. Time. That's opportune time. That's Kairos. Not needed at time of the clock, but the time had come when it was the right moment for this great truth to be pronounced not merely to Israel, but extended to the Gentiles. Who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in its own peculiar seasons.

[00:19:45] Belongs to that peculiar witness that was entrusted to Paul, whereof I am ordained a preacher and an apostle. I speak the truth in Christ and lie not. A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and Verity. So there was a fitting time when this emphasis upon the one mediator should go out to the world through the Ministry of Paul, the Minister to the Gentiles. And then while we have this group of epistles turn to Titus, chapter one, verse three. Titus Chapter one, verse three. It says in verse two, In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. But in due times manifested his word through the preaching. So again, we have got this expression before the world began. Before the age times. And then it is due times when the moment came. God broke the silence. We'll add to that just one other reference. Romans The fifth chapter, verse six. And you will find that it's a profitable study to make sure of the use of these different words before you build too great an edifice. Because if you're building on time, which is Kronos and teaching time, which is Kairos, well then don't always be in harmony. It says here Romans five for when we were yet without strength. In due time. Christ died for the ungodly in due time. A world in sin. A world crying out for a savior. No answer.

[00:21:39] The first thousand years go by. No answer. Only type and shadow and prophecy. But no hesitation, no holding back on the part of God when it reaches his point in the program. So you see, what we've got to be so careful about is not to seek to hurry God and not to get into a panic if we have to wait until it. So he says there's no tally. The vision is for an appointed time, though we carry wait for it. The strictly speaking, there is no tarrying with God. And meanwhile, while you're waiting, remember the just shall live by his faith. That's worth justification by faith comes in to the Bible in the Old Testament. It's a searching moment when you are wondering if God has forgotten to be gracious and your prayer seems to be unanswered. Just like yourself. There is no tarrying with God. And it would be impossible, even for Almighty God, to

answer contradictory prayers in the rabbinical writings that set forth for the Jew. When one son came to the mother because he was an agriculturalist and asked his mother to pray. That the rage had come. And the other son, who was a potter. He asked his mother to pray that the rain should be held off. And she said, My son, God will do whatever pleases him. Sometimes it's wise not to pray at all. If you're going to badger God to meet your circumstance and forget the other person.

[00:23:17] So we've got this stress up on time. Well, now we move on to another. And that is the word day. Of course, the word day means as it means, in our case, 24 hours. It sometimes means 12 hours according to the context, day and night. Well, that makes up 24 hours. So one half of it is 12 and the other half is 12. But the same time we call it Monday or Tuesday, the whole 24 hours. But it has other meanings beside that. It means a characteristic. Now I'd like to show you that by referring to one Corinthians, chapter three and four, one Corinthians chapter four. First of all. Here. We read in the fourth chapter. I think we'll read the first few verses. Chapter four of one Corinthians. Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. Now, the Apostle Paul was under great criticism, a good deal of opposition, and this was his attitude. But with me, it's a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment. Who. Yes. That's mighty dependent, isn't it? Policies. I don't judge myself. Sir. I haven't sufficient data. I don't know even to pass an opinion on my own actions. For. I know nothing ever changes. I know nothing by myself, which is a little bit misleading today.

[00:25:07] What he really said. I know nothing against myself, but because I don't see that I'm at fault, it doesn't follow that that's what I'm like in the sight of God. I don't know. But he said, Yet am I not hereby justified? Because I don't know. I'm wrong. He that judges me is the Lord, not you. He the judge of me is the Lord. Therefore, judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of hearts. And then shall every man have praise of God? Now you say, Where is this word day coming in? This? Oh, I forgot. We must go back to verse three. Start with me. It's a very small thing that I should be judged of. You or of Men's Day. There were judgment. Is the word day. Man's day. That is not a bad judge. Not a bad translation when you know the subject. Because this is in contrast with the Lord's Day and the the way in which it's constructed is very much like we have in the book of the revelation. We turn to that in a moment. One Corinthians 313 says

this or go back. Verse 11 other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. That's the foundation. Now, our foundation is something upon which you build. If you never build upon it, it's a great heap of stuff that gets in your way.

[00:26:47] But if it's to be built upon, then it's good. Now, if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble. Every man's work shall be made manifest for the day. Shall declare it. The day shall declare it the day when every man's work shall be assessed. And so if you will notice, Philippians one six. Philippians one six, where we have this word day coming in connection with the assessment of service. He says, verse three, I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. Now that's ordinary time. Being confident of this very thing that he, which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Now, that's not merely ordinary time. That's the time when our Savior shall sit upon the judgment seat. And you will not be judged according to your sins or for your salvation or the gift of life. But your service will be assessed whether you have built upon that one foundation gold, silver, costly stones which stand the test of fire, or whether your service would all go up in smoke. You yourself shall be saved, says one Corinthians. You yourself. But you may suffer loss, but you'll never be lost.

[00:28:28] Do differentiate between the two. So here we have the Day of Christ. Well, that leads us to a passage which sometimes has been so misunderstood that I think it's worth including Revelation chapter one. We had at our meeting yesterday at the end, two very enthusiastic Seventh Day Adventists who were buttonholing everybody they could and telling us how wrong we were not to keep the Sabbath day. Well, now, in this revelation 110, we we have the word Lord's Day, which is taken by a society to tell us how wrong we are not to keep the first day of the week. So between the Seventh Day Adventist and the Lord's Day Observance Society, what do we do about it? The general way in which this verse ten is translated. It sounds a little bit idiotic to read it like this. I was in the spirit one Sunday. Does it mean that? Did it mean on the first day of the week, some time back? John was in the spirit. Well, I hope you say to me it all depends upon what you mean by in the spirit. Friends, it does. If we only say to ourselves before ever I build a teaching on this verse, I'll look and see whether in the spirit occurs anywhere else in this book. And if it does, it may help me. So shall we look at Revelation? Chapter four. After this, I looked and behold a door was opened in heaven.

[00:30:11] And the first voice, which I heard was, as it were, a trumpet talking with me and said, Come up hither. I will show thee things which shall be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit. Try the expression. He was taken to where the throne of God was set up and it was hereafter. If you will now come to Revelation 20. I think I'll soon find out. A 21. Verse nine. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. Now, nobody, as far as I know, believes that the heavenly Jerusalem has already descended from God to the Earth. And yet this Marine spirit saw it. So when we go back to the first chapter, he says, I was in the spirit in the day of the Lord. But you might say to me, Oh, no, as the Lord's day I see we are living with this chapel is surrounded by insurance companies, and I wish those who would make that distinction would go into one of these insurance companies and say, I want to take out a policy to insure against fire, a wooden house.

[00:31:49] So it's all drawn up. And he goes out and then he comes back and says, Well, excuse me for coming back again. Is there any difference in the policy if instead of calling it a wooden house, I call it a house of wood. Look at him, wouldn't they? What's the difference between a wooden house and a house of wood? Only a grammatical distance difference. What's the difference between the Lord's Day and the day of the Lord? In the Old Testament, you must say the day of the Lord. You can't say Lord's Day. The Hebrew won't allow it. But in the Greek you can put it either way, as you can in English. So you put it back because the Red Book of the Revelation has particularly to do with the future prophetic day of the Lord. And John says, I was taken in the spirit to a yet future day. It hasn't come yet. And John saw it, saw what was happening, wrote it down in the book according to his instructions. Now our time. Time is running out. I want to give you just two more or three references and then we must finish. Two Timothy three One is a prophecy which impinges upon our own calling. And it's a warning written by the Apostle Paul, which tells us that in the last days, perilous times shall come. And if you read that chapter down, you'll see what the pedal is loving self more than loving God, so on.

[00:33:22] And then we have in Ephesians 316, Ephesians 316, that expression redeeming the time redeeming is the word ex agoso. The agora is the marketplace. And this means to go into the marketplace and snap up a bargain, for Christ's sake. When I've sometimes seen the photographs in the newspaper of people sitting on little stools, huddled up in overcoats, drinking cups of cocoa all night so that they can get into a sales where the door opens. I think to myself, wouldn't it be fine if we sat up all night and huddled there to redeem and snatch a bargain, for Christ's sake? That's the meaning of the word. And finally, two Corinthians six two. And I think that as far as time will permit. You see, we are not masters of time. Yet the clock ticks on. The lamp shows me my time is running out so far as this meeting is concerned. Two Corinthians six two. For he has said, I have heard thee in a time accepted and in the day of salvation have I succored thee? Behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. Well, that's been an attempt to lift out from the Scriptures the use of this particular expression. Time. Time. Which means the tick of the clock time. Which means the recurring seasons. Time. Which means a period of character or judgment and time that has to be used and redeemed, for Christ's sake.