



**TIME AND CHANCE**

**OR**

**GOD**



**■ THE WORLD “UNDER THE SUN” ... A WORLD OF TIME AND CHANCE ... A WORLD WITHOUT GOD AND WITHOUT HOPE ...**

**1. Life under the sun is a world of time and chance in spite of resources and preparation, 9:11.**

- (Ecclesiastes 9:11 ESV) Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to those with knowledge, **but time and chance happen to them all.**

A common “under the sun” belief is that the key to success and winning at life is found in cause and effect—be prepared, fast, strong, brilliant—and achieve your desired result. But the Preacher gives us inside information—that everything under the sun is given to time and chance—right place, right time ... or wrong place, wrong time.

Winning the race is not determined by who is fastest. Victory in battle is not determined by who is strongest. Wise people may go hungry. Brilliant people may not be rich. Well-educated people may not be successful.

Cause and effect fall victim to time and chance in the world under the sun.

**2. In a world of time and chance the circumstances of life catch humans as fish in a net or birds in a snare, 9:12.**

- (Ecclesiastes 9:12 ESV) **For man does not know his time.** Like fish that are taken in an evil net, and like birds that are caught in a snare, so the children of man are snared at an evil time, **when it suddenly falls upon them.**

- A. We do not know what will happen.
- B. For those who have a view of life beyond the sun our option when we “fall into” the evil net is to trust in the Lord and rejoice.
  - (James 1:2 NKJV) My brethren, **count it all joy when you fall into various trials.**
  - (1 Peter 1:6–7 ESV) **In this you rejoice,** though now for a little while, if necessary, **you have been grieved by various trials,** 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—**may be found to result in praise and glory**

**and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

- (1 Peter 4:12–13 ESV) Beloved, **do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you,** as though something strange were happening to you. 13 **But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.**

**C. We do not know when it will happen.**

- (James 4:13–16 NIV) Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” 14 **Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow.** What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” 16 **As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes.** All such boasting is evil.
- (Proverbs 27:1 NET) **Do not boast about tomorrow; for you do not know what a day may bring forth.**
- (Psalm 39:6 ESV) Surely a man goes about as a shadow! **Surely for nothing they are in turmoil;** man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!
- (Psalm 144:3–4 NLT) O LORD, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals that you should think about them? 4 **For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow.**
- (Isaiah 2:22 NLT) **Don’t put your trust in mere humans. They are as frail as breath. What good are they?**

**3. In a world of time and chance wisdom is better than might but the end result is still meaninglessness, 9:13-16.**

- (Ecclesiastes 9:13–16 ESV) **I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me.** 14 There was a little city with few men in it, and a great king came against it and besieged it, building great siegeworks against it. 15 But there was found in it a poor, wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. 16 **But I say that wisdom is better than might, though the poor man’s wisdom is despised and his words are not heard.**



**TRANSITION: WE MUST BE RESCUED FROM THE WORLD WITHOUT GOD AND WITHOUT HOPE AND TRANSFERRED TO THE KINGDOM OF HIS BELOVED SON.**

- (Ephesians 2:12–13 NLT) **In those days you were living apart from Christ.** You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. **You lived in this world without God and without hope.** 13 But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. **Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.**
- (Colossians 1:13–14 ESV) He has **delivered us** from the domain of darkness and **transferred us** to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 **in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**



**■ THE WORLD OF GOD ... THE WORLD UNDER AND BEYOND THE SUN THAT IS RULED BY THE SOVEREIGN LORD OF CREATION ...**

**1. We know the world of God—the world under and beyond the sun—by the word of God.**

**SCAN:** A HELPFUL, TIMELY DIGRESSION. God's word is sufficient, clear, authoritative and necessary.

**SUFFICIENCY:** God, in his word, makes known to us absolutely everything we need to know.

- (Psalm 18:30 ESV) This God—his way is perfect; **the word of the LORD proves true;** he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.
- (Psalm 19:7–9 ESV) **The law of the LORD is perfect,** reviving the soul; **the testimony of the LORD is sure,** making wise the simple; 8 **the precepts of the LORD are right,** rejoicing the heart; **the commandment of the LORD is pure,** enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; **the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.**

**CLARITY:** God, in his word, speaks clearly so that we may understand the things we need to know.

- (Psalm 119:105 ESV) Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- (Psalm 119:130 ESV) **The unfolding of your words gives light;** it imparts understanding to the simple.

**AUTHORITY:** God, in his word, speaks to us as our sole authority for life and salvation.

- (2 Timothy 3:16–17 ESV) **All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- (2 Timothy 4:2 ESV) **Preach the word;** be ready in season and out of season; **reprove, rebuke, and exhort,** with complete patience and teaching.

**NECESSITY:** God, in his word, tells us what we need for salvation and the glory of God.

- (2 Peter 1:19 ESV) And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, **to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place,** until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.
- (Romans 15:4 ESV) **For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction,** that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
- (Hebrews 4:12–13 ESV) **For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword,** piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 **And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.**

*THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE WORD OF GOD REFLECT THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD. SO WE THEN SEE THAT THE TRUTH AND SOUNDNESS OF SCRIPTURE RESTS ON WHO GOD IS.*

**2. The word of God reflects and rests on the character of God and tells us how to live in our world.**



- (Genesis 16:13–14 ESV) **So she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her,** “You are a God of seeing,” for she said, “Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.”
- (Psalm 9:10 ESV) **And those who know your name put their trust in you,** for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.
- (Psalm 20:7–8 ESV) Some trust in chariots and some in horses, **but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.** 8 They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.
- (Proverbs 18:10 ESV) **The name of the LORD is**

**a strong tower**; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.

- (Psalm 40:4 ESV) **Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust**, who does not turn to the proud, to **those who go astray after a lie!**
- (Psalm 71:5 ESV) For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth.
- (Isaiah 26:4 ESV) Trust in the LORD forever, **for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock.**
- (Proverbs 3:5 ESV) **Trust in the LORD with all your heart**, and do not lean on your own understanding.

### 3. The world of God is ruled by the Sovereign Lord of creation in every aspect of life now and forever.

- (1 Samuel 2:6–9 ESV) **The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.** 7 The LORD **makes poor** and **makes rich**; he brings low and he exalts. 8 He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. **For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world.** 9 He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, **for not by might shall a man prevail.**
- (Psalm 115:1–3 ESV) Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! 2 Why should the nations say, “Where is their God?” 3 **Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.**
- (Isaiah 45:5–7 ESV) I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, 6 that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. 7 **I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things.**
- (Jeremiah 32:17 ESV) Ah, Lord GOD! **It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm!** Nothing is too hard for you.
- (Daniel 4:1–3 ESV) King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied

to you! 2 It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. 3 How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! **His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation.**

- (Daniel 4:17 ESV) The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, **to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.**
- (Daniel 4:25 ESV) ... you [Nebuchadnezzar] shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, **till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.**
- (Daniel 4:34–35 ESV) At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, **for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;** 35 all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does **according to his will** among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”

• (Acts 17:24–26 NLT) **He is the God who made the world and everything in it.** Since **he is Lord of heaven and earth**, he doesn't live in man-made temples, 25 and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. 26 **From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.**

- (Ephesians 1:11 ESV) In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined **according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.**