

Meat In Due Season

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Ecc. 3:1 To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

Mat. 24:44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Mat. 24:45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

The purposes of the Lord for this earth are tied to time. It is natural and proper that it be this way, because man is a creature of earth and time, in his trip through mortal life. Solomon presented this thought in our text from Ecclesiastes in the simple statement "...a time to every purpose under heaven." But, Solomon tells us more than that in his plain statement. He also tells us that God has a time in which every purpose of His will have unfolding events that lead to a conclusion He has in mind. There is specific purpose in the events that take place in time. There is a God-controlled, God-centered goal as the final product, and the Lord directs each element of the actions that occur on earth toward that final product.

This non-random order of things in the universe is orchestrated by the Lord down to the smallest possible jot or tittle. However, when we as humans look at these unfolding things they look like they are not only random, but almost accidental...that is they just seem to happen without any order, purpose, or fixed pattern. On the other hand, if we as true believers are tempted to be seeing things that way, we may need to rethink how we are looking at events, and from where we are starting with our assumptions. So, let's examine this.

I. In trying to understand what goes on around us, in our lives, and in current events in the world, let's start by using the **right premise**. That premise is this, "Everything is controlled by Almighty God, and the orchestration of those things is by His omnipotent design." Starting here, we can lay to rest a lot of searching around for answers. We still may not be clear about the immediate "why?" of something that God has done or allowed, but when we rest in the fact that it is something to do with His purpose, and something He is including in His orchestration of unfolding events in the universe, we will have a much clearer head to look for divine answers for the "why?"

Some professing believers use the fact of God being in control as an excuse to live their lives without looking into His unfolding purposes at all. That is, they say, "I just trust God to take care of things, so I don't worry." Not worrying is great! But while we are not worrying, have we used our claim of trust in the Lord as an excuse for not being ready? We can almost give ourselves a test when we look at what Jesus explains as the mind set and life-habits of those who will be caught unawares. So, let's see what He says.

II. Now, I've said all that to set the stage for what is to be our **primary subject**; that is, the words of Christ in the second part of our text. Jesus' words are a warning to both believers in general and administrators...described in His statements as "servants."

- ❖ **Verse 24** is an obvious message to all believers: Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.
- ❖ **Verse 25** is to the servants of the Lord that I would call distributors, or even administrators. These distributors are obviously any **servants** of the Lord **that occupy a place of dispensing food**. It is

plain here that this is not about food for the flesh, by the way. Jesus is talking about spiritual food, and those servants of His who are charged with dispensing it. But, this is not a message to just preachers, because they are not the only distributors of spiritual food. So are Sunday School teachers, parents of children, and any church member to whom the Lord has given a gift of using the Word of God to teach, exhort, encourage, build up.

- Now, note that He makes it incumbent on these distributors of spiritual food that it be done in due season. So, what is “due season?” Based on the context of the previous teaching of Christ regarding the unfolding of history, and the His final appearing to gather his elect, and judge mankind, I believe He intends for us to think in terms of:
- not only **timeliness** as to opportunity afforded by an occasion, or by the **receptiveness** of an audience,
- but also, and more to the point of the context, we are to think in terms of the **current events of mankind**.
 - So, He calls us to look around, judge what era, what moment we are in, and make sure we are providing spiritual food fitting to the occasion in which mankind finds Himself in this inevitable appointment with the Judge of all the earth.
 - His subject here is about His coming; about gathering His people and judging the world. He seems to be saying, “who is that wise servant who will be giving his charges the kind of spiritual nourishment that prepares them for the spiritual health to be prepared and alert for My return.”

III. So, let’s see **what kind of meat, or food**, we may be needing to dispense, given where we are in time and events on this sin cursed earth. For sake of time, we are going to look at only two of Christ’s indicators which He warned about before He admonished His servants about providing food in due season. These come from our text chapter in vv. 37-38.

- ❖ These warnings of Christ in verse 38 are about worldly pursuits.
 - He is not teaching that marrying and giving in marriage, or eating and drinking are wicked; He is teaching that in the days of Noah, this was the priority pursuit of mankind. The human race was caught up in the things of the flesh and had **lost the spiritual essence of the purposes of God**.
 - I believe the servants of the Lord who administer spiritual food (remember who these persons are) should be warning their households (remember what a household means here) about getting **immersed** in worldly pursuits.
 - This is meat in due season, because there has never been a time since the days of Noah when there is so much obsessing about possessing, so much tunnel vision about fleshly relationships and so much merchandising of food and drink.
 - The very entitlement mentality which has poisoned the politics and financial status of our nation is born of this very obsession.
 - The government driven, government funded (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) purchase of homes, (without home buyers having the money to pay mortgage payments) was the fruit of not only citizen’s obsessions with reaching the American Dream, but of government’s promotion of this humanistic, secular, materialistic obsession (governments now have obsession with being nanny states whose business it is to coddle its people like babies in a play pen).
- ❖ So, this is where we are today. Isn’t the burden upon us as administrators of the food of God to be spending a lot of time warning our household about this trap?
 - Well, someone may say, “this statement of Jesus is about how the world will be near the time of His coming. The people of God surely aren’t implicated here.” Let’s read two verses of scripture that say otherwise (they come from words spoken by Christ which were captured by Luke concerning the very same teaching we are looking at here in Matthew):
 - Luke 21:34-35 “And take heed to **yourselves**, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with

surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares. 35
For as a snare shall it come on **all them** that dwell on the face of the whole earth.”

- ❖ There is more that faithful servants need to be on guard about; and because of it, to be busy providing spiritual meat in due season to their households. That something more is this: The face of these human obsessions with carnal pursuits is changing...drastically. Let’s stick to the two Jesus uses as examples:
 - Eating and Drinking:
 - By the time children are 5 years old in the U.S., they have seen an average of more than 4,000 television commercials for food annually. Kids average seeing 20,000 commercials per year on TV and 10,000 of these are about food. Most about fast food or junk food (95%), the favorite of kids.
 - About 16 percent of 2- to 5-year-olds are overweight (up from 7 percent in 1980); an estimated 19 percent of children ages 6 to 11 are overweight, and 17 percent in the 12-to-19 bracket are overweight.
 - More than 1 billion people across the earth are overweight. “Eating and drinking?”
 - Marrying and giving in marriage:
 - In 2009 in the U.S.: Number of marriages: 2,077,000; (of about 195 million adults in the U.S.)
 - Average cost of wedding in U.S.: \$19,581; with more than 2 million marriages/year in the U.S., that is more than \$39 billion (\$39,162,000,000) spent on marriages in the U.S. in 2009.
 - Let’s put this in perspective: the entire missions budget for the Southern Baptist Convention during 2008 was just under \$300 million. So, Americans spent 130 times more money for marriage events than was spent by the SBC on missions.
 - Almost half of marriages will end in divorce.
 - We have become so immersed as gullible believers in this trend that many of us teach our charges, our friends, our relatives, our neighbors that if one marriage fails, go out and get another spouse. This is all part of the trend of the obsession with the carnal side of marrying and giving in marriage; of being consumed by the carnal, the fleshly, the social aspects of marriage.
 - Another factor that is changing dramatically is now part of the marrying and giving in marriage scene: Civil unions, civil partnerships, or same-sex marriages (death by a different name is still death) are inundating the world (remember, it is only an indicator of the level of homosexuality in the world)
 - Countries and States where civil unions, same-sex marriages are the norm: Canada, Mexico, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and selected States in the United States (California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Maine, Massachusetts, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin,
 - In California 18,000 gay marriages are recognized (those who got married before the rule was struck down), while the will of the people in Proposition 8 said marriage was between one man and one woman
 - All this obsession in the world with same-sex marriage has just been forced on the cultures of the world since the turn of the century.
 - There are 919 official national level GLBT activist organizations worldwide (this does include the provincial, regional, state, or local chapters of these organizations)
 - Internet search for words “gay” and “marriage” together: 1,770,000 hits
 - Internet search for words “same-sex” and “marriage” together: 5,780,000
 - “marrying and giving in marriage”
- ❖ One last thing related to this and related to distributing spiritual food in due season: **Luke 17:28**

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

▪ **Jude v.7** Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The citizens of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were doing things in their community just like people with conventional life-styles were doing in other cities...their life style had been accepted in these cities as the norm...but the same day Lot went out of Sodom, they were destroyed with fire and brimstone.

❖ It is humanity's obsession with the fleshly trappings and conventions of marriage that have brought us to the place that cultures think it is alright to pervert the institution of God into something that is not only all humanistic, but is totally without God. This is where marriage is going. The obsession with the trappings of this institution will not stop...the cheapening of the institution that God ordained will not stop...but the focus is changing...rapidly...right now...this is spiritual meat in due season...this is the season. Our households should be instructed and guided concerning this.

➤ This trend is going to impact your daughter's and your son's, your granddaughter's and your grandson's marriage. It will bring laws from an intrusive dictatorial government that will result in grief to future young people who plan to marry according to God's ordained method and doctrine.

❖ The citizens of the earth today: "...eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" and the life-focus is on these things to the exclusion of the greater spiritual goals of God; to the exclusion of awareness of the purposes of God and preparation to meet God.

IV. Why All This Gloom and Doom?

❖ These are the things that Christ set forth as indicators. These things have been going on since He went back to heaven. They are common day-to-day pursuits of people. So, why would He use such common human pursuits to focus us on His return?

❖ Because He knew these would be the things that capture the minds of people

❖ He knew that, as the sweetest and most abundant nectar attracts the most bees, so the things that occupy humans the most intensely would draw the people of God away from looking toward heaven.

❖ And, the real challenge is for the servant who is feeding his/her household to be able to provide the right food at the right time. Spiritual food that fits with the unfolding purposes of God.

❖ The Lord is taking this earth somewhere; things are happening that the people of God need to be alert about. We are in the 11th hour watch, brothers and sisters.

❖ I want to close by quoting Christ as He completes this teaching and as is recorded by **Mark 13:37**, "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."