

**A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes 3:1-11**

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven:

A time for giving birth, a time for dying; a time for planting, a time for uprooting what has been planted.

A time for killing, a time for healing; a time for knocking down, a time for building.

A time for tears, a time for laughter; a time for mourning, a time for dancing.

A time for throwing stones away, a time for gathering them up; a time for embracing, a time to refrain from embracing.

A time for searching, a time for losing; a time for keeping, a time for throwing away.

A time for tearing, a time for sewing; a time for keeping silent, a time for speaking.

A time for loving, a time for hating; a time for war, a time for peace.

What does a man gain for the efforts that he makes? I contemplate the task that God gives mankind to labour at. All that he does is apt for its time; but though he has permitted man to consider time in its wholeness, man cannot comprehend the work of God from beginning to end.

**The word of the Lord.**