

For Everything There Is a Season, Part 10
Time to Scatter Stones & Time to Gather Stones
October 23, 2016

I **SLIDE** Ecclesiastes 3:5

A) **Ecclesiastes 3:1, 5 (NIV)** ¹ There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: ⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them....

B) Scatter

- 1) To throw or cast
- 2) To cast away in the sense of getting rid of something hinders (such as sin)
- 3) Also used to describe God's rejection of someone

C) Most common interpretation

- 1) Revolves around stoning people for their sins
- 2) We gather stones in order to scatter or cast stones at the sinner
- 3) However, this act did not require a season as the sins were to be punished

D) **SLIDE** Another interpretation looks at a progression

- 1) During war or to thwart an enemy, one would scatter stones in the fields so the enemy could not use the land
- 2) **2 Kings 3:19 (NIV)** ¹⁹ You will overthrow every fortified city and every major town. You will cut down every good tree, stop up all the springs, and ruin every good field with stones."
- 3) When an enemy was defeated, it was time to gather the stones so that a good crop could be planted
- 4) **Isaiah 5:2 (NIV)** ² He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

E) **SLIDE** Which leads to...

- 1) Stones can also represent sin or evil

- 2) Therefore, there is a season when our enemy will scatter sin in our land
- 3) There is a season where we will join with that enemy so that we, too, will scatter the stones of sin
- 4) **Ezekiel 18:31 (NIV)** ³¹ Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel?

F) **SLIDE** Which leads to....

- 1) God's rejecting us for allowing the stones in our land
- 2) **2 Kings 17:20 (NIV)** ²⁰ Therefore the LORD rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence.
- 3) **2 Kings 24:20 (NIV)** ²⁰ It was because of the LORD's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence....

II **SLIDE** Is this our season?

A) United States

- 1) For decades, the enemy has been scattering stones among us
- 2) We have learned to live in their midst
- 3) What are some of these stones?
 - a) Disregard of authority
 - b) Misusing the LORD's name
 - c) Not honoring our parents
 - d) Rampant sexuality
 - e) Parade our sins in the streets, on television, and protect them with laws
 - f) Abuse of power
 - g) Good has become evil
 - h) Evil has become good
 - i) Abortion continues to grow because it is now called a woman's health issue

- i) Hilary Clinton - supports late term abortions because she is for women's health
- ii) Let's look at the facts
- iii) 700,000 in the US in 2012
- iv) 882,000 this year
- v) Abortions due to health issues, incest, or rape - 3 to 12%
- vi) Taking an average, 71,000 for health reasons
- vii) 811,000 for personal choices
- viii) Since 1973, 59.5 million abortions in U.S.
- ix) Thus, 4,760,000 for health issues; 54,700,000 for convenience
- j) We have redefined marriage by refusing to define it
- k) We have removed God, Jesus, prayer, the Bible from our midst
- l) Obeying God's word is now racist, sexist, homophobic, discriminatory, and punishable by law
- m) We have seen the rise of the idea of institutional racism such that a teacher at Norman High School stated that all white people are racist
- n) Our justice system is a mess
- o) We are revising history to remove references to God, Jesus, faith, and the Bible
- p) We attack people to prove that lives matter
- q) Our nation is \$19 trillion in debt, and it continues to rise
- r) Government controls our rights and no longer protects them
- s) Our flag is now a symbol of racism and disrespect
- t) More people are on government assistance than work full-time
- u) We are no longer the United States of America but the divided states of America
- 4) With all of these stones scattered around our nation, the church has struggled to plant good seed
- 5) Plus, during this time, the church has been throwing stones at itself

B) This brings us to a word from Ben Husted

1) He gave the best word about these elections that I have read

2) Plus, it fits with this season of scattering stones and God's rejection

3) **SLIDE** Ben wrote: I'm rethinking my position on this presidential election, asking, "What is God doing here?" First, I believe he is bringing judgment on America; not in the future, but now. Second, I believe he has given us a choice of our punishment, as he gave King David a choice after he took a census of Israel. Which punishment will America choose: Hillary or Donald? Both are terrible, but our choice is, "Which punishment do we want?" It is like asking, "Do you want life in prison or the death penalty?" Neither is a good choice and either will be very painful! Thirdly, though both are fools, in the biblical sense, they are different kinds of fools. **SLIDE** In the Old Testament, three words are most frequently translated as "fool," and Donald fits the description of one and Hillary of another. Donald is "Nabal," the rich, loud, proud, uncouth bully. Hillary is "Cesil," (These are both transliterations of Hebrew words, and are approximations of their sounds.) the elite, intellectual, arrogant, deceitful, heartless bureaucrat. This is not, then, an election choosing a leader, but an election choosing our punishment by God. Finally, I am leaning toward voting for Donald; we don't know what he will do, but we do know what Hillary will do, and that is worse than chilling. **SLIDE** Right now, I'm still saying, "I will not vote for either." God gave David three options, and he chose to appeal to the mercy of God. Perhaps voting for no one or for a third party candidate . . . and throwing ourselves on the mercy of God is the best way.

C) Several points

1) Judgment

a) I have been saying for some time that we are on the brink of judgment

- b) Several weeks ago, Brian stated that he believed that judgment had already started
 - c) I agree with Brian and with Ben
 - d) God is giving us what we want
 - e) In our judgment, maybe we will begin to gather those stones
- 2) King David
- a) God specifically told David not to count his men
 - b) Doing so would lead to pride and would be disobedient to God
 - c) David disobeyed and did it anyway
 - d) God allowed David to choose the punishment: 7 years of famine; 3 months running from his enemies; 3 days of the LORD's pestilence
 - e) No matter what, David could not escape the judgment
- 3) Trump or Clinton or 3rd Party Candidate
- a) Neither Trump or Clinton embody Christian ideals
 - b) Neither is worthy to lead this nation, but one will
 - c) Each will bring a different type of judgment
 - d) So, we are choosing our judgment
 - e) Which "fool" do we want to lead us?
- 4) **SLIDE** The choice
- a) As Ben said, "This is not, then, an election choosing a leader, but an election choosing our punishment by God. Finally, I am leaning toward voting for Donald; we don't know what he will do, but we do know what Hillary will do, and that is worse than chilling."
 - b) **SLIDE** Dutch Sheets also states, "However, for me, this election is not nearly as much about who I am for, as it is who and what I am against; and frankly, even with my initial concerns, the decision has never been easier.... The damage has been so great that America is now one president away from a complete transformation to secularism, a loss of our Judeo-Christian foundation, the loss of our position as the stabilizing force for good in the earth, and the leading voice of the gospel

to all the world. If elected, Hillary Clinton will be the president who finishes the job.

D) Personally,

- 1) I can no longer remain politically correct
- 2) I have been saying for some time, I do not know for sure what Trump will do as President, but I do know what Clinton will do by looking at what she has done and is doing
- 3) I am not telling you how to vote
- 4) I am not against anyone because of his or her vote
- 5) I am with anyone who is with Jesus
- 6) I pray that the season has come for us to gather the stones that have been causing us to stumble
- 7) It is time for us to seek God while He may be found
- 8) We must not allow this election to divide us
- 9) For the next two Wednesday nights, we will gather to pray for this nation and this election
- 10) No matter the outcome, we remain the Body of Christ and are to be one with each other just as Jesus is one with God

E) **SLIDE** Hope

- 1) We must never lose our hope
- 2) May God's praises be ever on our lips
- 3) May we not become of this world but continue to renew our minds through the Word
- 4) May we not give up

F) Baptism

- 1) Herein lies our hope
- 2) Cody and Chloe

STOP

G) 1 Samuel 17:40 (NIV)

⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

H)

I) Psalm 127:1 (NIV) ¹ Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.

1) Poor couple - have never lived in a nice home

2) Evangelist

a) Opens their eyes to the truth that they deserve more

b) Gives them the plans to a brand new house

c) Gives them all the materials to build that house

d) Then moves on to the next person

e) Without proper instruction, they may grow frustrated and quit

3) Apostle

a) Shows them where to build

b) Connects them with others who are building

c) Strengthens and encourages the couple

4) Teacher

a) Teaches not only how to put the house together but also the purpose of each part

b) Answers questions about the why and how

c) Helps them own the house and understand how each part fits together

5) Pastor

- a) Encourages the couple
- b) Helps them furnish the house so it is comfortable and livable
- c) Helps them keep the house clean and free of bugs
- d) Listens to their concerns and apprehensions and assures them that they are on the right track

6) Evangelist

- a) Gives them words about the future of their home
- b) Gives them a vision of what their home is to be so they can make plans now
- c) He encourages them to look forward and not backward
- d) He corrects and strengthens them for the long term

7) If we stop there, the couple will have a proper home that is solidly built

8) However, they also need someone to teach them how to cook, clean, plan their day, study, entertain, bring the light into their home

9) It takes all of us to help someone build their spiritual house

10) Too many times people are saved and walk away with the plans to a spiritual house but don't have a clue what to do next

J) Communion

- 1) **1 Corinthians 11:23-25 (NIV)** ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took

the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Message on youth - article in Founder's Bible - God gave Samuel, a 12-year-old boy, a message for Eli - how would we receive such a message from Cadyn, Sadie, or Reese