

Understanding the times

Ecclesiastes 3

Slides from Josh Monteiro's sermon at the evening service
Sunday 19th April 2026

Ecclesiastes

Qoheleth= Congregation
member, but is also Teacher

Seeking wisdom and meaning
for life “under the sun”

**Wisdom
“under the
sun” is
meaningless**

Jes

**Projects and pleasure
“under the sun” is
meaningless**

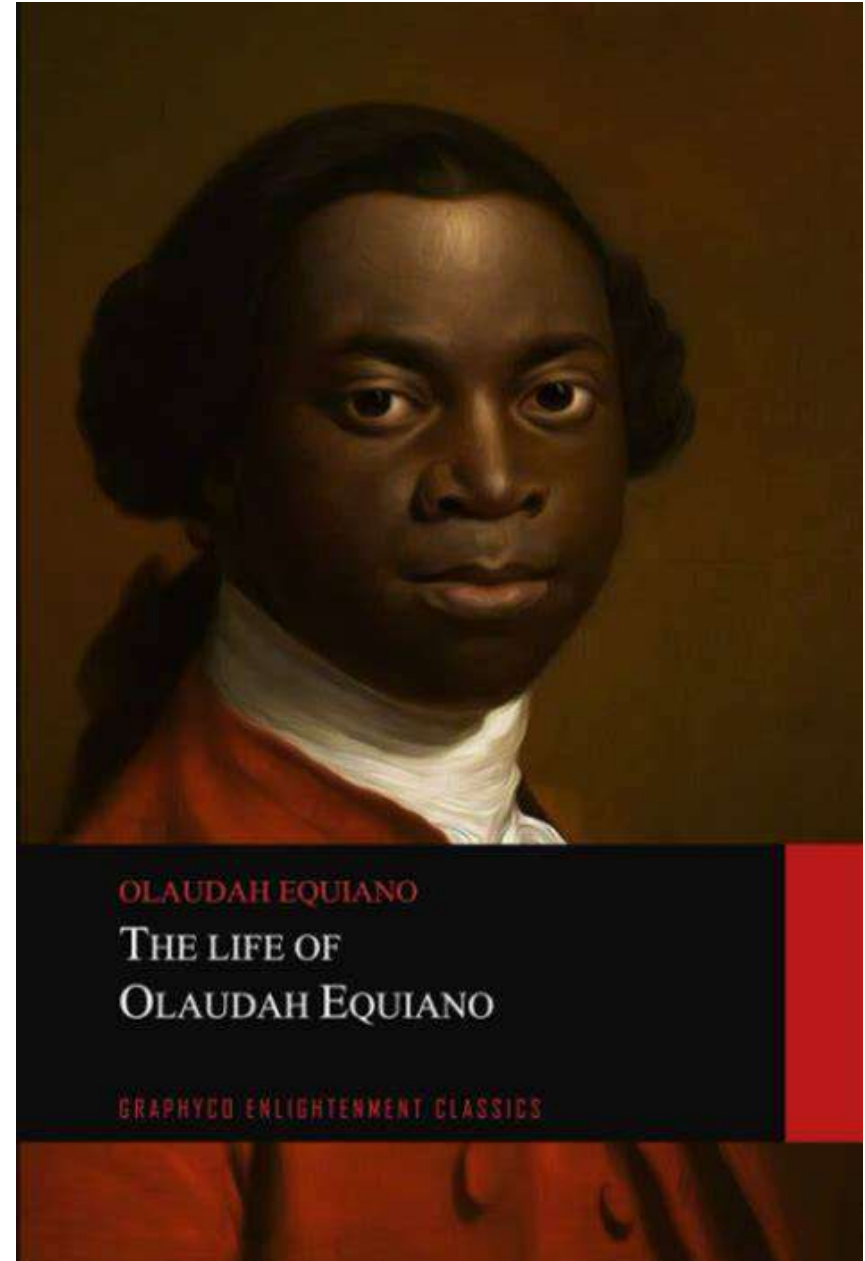
20/04/2026

Seasons of life

Oludah Equiano

20/04/2026

Emmanuel
CHURCH
NORTHSTOWE



Understand the seasons of time

3:1-14

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
² a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
³ a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from
embracing,
⁶ a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
⁸ a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Understand the seasons of time 3:1-14

Earthy wisdom

***Know your seasons to prioritise
rightly***

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
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Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Understand the seasons of time 3:1-14

Earthy wisdom

***Know your seasons to prioritise
rightly***

Understand the season won't last

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Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Understand the seasons of time 3:1-14

Cosmic wisdom

Seek the eternal one as your anchor vv9-14



⁹ What do workers gain from their toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet^[a] no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. ¹³ That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil – this is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything God does will endure for ever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.

Ecclesiastes 3:9-14

Understand the seasons of time 3:1-14

Cosmic wisdom

Seek the eternal one as your anchor vv9-14

It happens that the stage sets collapse. Rising, streetcar, four hours in the office or the factory, meal, streetcar, four hours of work, meal, sleep, and Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday and Saturday according to the same rhythm – this path is easily followed most of the time. But one day the “why” arises and everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement. Camus

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Ecclesiastes 3:9-14

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*And these two certainties--my appetite for the absolute
and for unity and the impossibility of reducing this
world to a rational and reasonable principle--I also
know that I cannot reconcile them.*

Camus

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That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ² The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

1 John 1:1-2

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Ecclesiastes 3:9-14

Take seriously the injustice of this world 3:15-22



¹⁵ Whatever is has already been,
and what will be has been before;
and God will call the past to account.^[b]

¹⁶ And I saw something else under the sun:

in the place of judgment – wickedness was there,
in the place of justice – wickedness was there.

¹⁷ I said to myself,

‘God will bring into judgment
both the righteous and the wicked,
for there will be a time for every activity,
a time to judge every deed.’

Ecclesiastes 3:15-17

Take seriously the injustice of this world 3:15-22

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I am an NHS Whistleblower Speaking Up for Freedom of Speech

Bernie Rochford MBE is a Principle Freedom to Speak Up Guardian supporting those speaking up in the NHS. In this blog, Bernie shares the life-changing experience she had for speaking up / whistleblowing in the NHS and where that's led her.

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I did not know how important Freedom of Speech was until I did not have it. It was 2014, I was an NHS Clinical Commissioner and it was three years on since I first spoke up at work about patient safety and poor practice. The Employment Tribunal to hear my whistleblow case was nearing, tension was mounting and the stakes were high. At a meeting with two managers, I told them I was scared to be in the room alone with them but they carried on regardless. My legs were shaking and at times I was holding my breath in order to hold back tears. Again I told the managers I was scared and needed a



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Ecclesiastes 3:15-17

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Earthy wisdom

Use power for justice

Don't be surprised at injustice

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Cosmic wisdom

Hope for justice if there is judgement beyond this life

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Ecclesiastes 3:15-17

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But no hope for justice if death is the end

¹⁸ I also said to myself, 'As for humans, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. ¹⁹ Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: as one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath^[c]; humans have no advantage over animals. Everything is meaningless. ²⁰ All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. ²¹ Who knows if the human spirit rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?'

²² So I saw that there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy their work, because that is their lot. For who can bring them to see what will happen after them?

Ecclesiastes 3:18-22

Take seriously the injustice of this world 3:15-22

Under the sun, we don't know

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Ecclesiastes 3:18-22

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Cosmic wisdom

Jesus brings confidence of justice and confidence to face judgement

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Ecclesiastes 3:18-22

**Wisdom
“under the
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Desire for
eternity but
stuck in time

Jesus

Projects and pleasure
“under the sun” is
meaningless

**Injustice in the
world
unpunished**

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³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.'

Acts 17:31

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