

Doctrine of Time

1. In order to appreciate the concept of time, it is important to understand the Greek view of the same, the Hebrew concept of time and the Christian synthesis that evolved.
2. For the Greeks, time involved two words.
 - *kairos* referring to special events such as birth, marriage, and the hour of death.
 - *chronos*, referring to a sequence of events.
3. For the Greeks there were two other important concepts.
 - Time is a prison that binds man. Timelessness held no meaning.
 - Time is cyclical. It has no goal. There is no movement toward a final moment (*kairos*) of history. Belief in this view can become very pessimistic. The meaning to life is what one gives it.
4. The Hebrews, like the Jews, held to a belief in *kairos* and *chronos* with one important addition. They believed in the eternal God who broke into time through historical actions.
5. The Jews embraced a series of special moments (*kairos*) when God made Himself known.
 - The Exodus.

Deuteronomy 1:9 And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone:

Deuteronomy 1:16 And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him.

Deuteronomy 1:18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

Deuteronomy 2:33 And the Lord our God delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. 34 And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain:

Deuteronomy 3:3 So the Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. 4 And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

Deuteronomy 4:4 But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day.

- The reign of David.

1 Chronicles 21:28 At that time when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there. 29 For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon.

- The building of Solomon's temple.

2 Chronicles 7:8 Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.

6. The belief that God did act led to a firm conviction that God would act. Prophecy became increasingly significant.
7. Special future events in time (*kairos*) included the restoration of Israel to her land, the reign of the Messiah, a final judgment and a new age.
8. The practical beliefs of the Hebrews concept of time include the concepts that
 - Time is part of God's reality and therefore has meaning. Divine benevolence, not fate or chance, directs the events of life.
 - In time, man can worship God. And the Hebrew people in specific moments (*kairos*) manifested their faith in the festivals of
 - ❖ Passover
 - ❖ Feast of Weeks
 - ❖ Feast of Tabernacles
 - ❖ and the Sabbath.
9. In the New Testament we find the Christian community embracing both the Greek view of *kairos* and *charos* along with the Hebrew contribution that God breaks into time.
10. To all of this the Christian community declared that the major moment (*kairos*) through which all other conceptions of time find fulfillment is in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. The incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ demands a focus of time.
11. In the book of Colossians the apostle develops this concept of centering time when he speaks of Christ:
 - as the Creator. *Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*
 - as the Sustainer. *Colossians 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

- as the One through whom all things are reconciled. *Colossians 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

Everything finds fulfillment in Christ.

12. In Christ there is

- Fulfilled time. All the Old Testament messianic promises culminate in Christ.
- Time of salvation. Because of the death of Christ individuals can be reconciled to God.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Matthew 26:18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples.

Colossians 2:15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

2 Chronicles 6:2 But I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.

- Hope. Based on the resurrection, Christians look forward to the time of our glorified bodies.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Revelation 11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

- Urgency. Paul instructed us to redeem the time for the days are evil. Solomon advised, "Whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might."

13. The whole concept of time is important to the Christian community, not only for the future, but as an aid in worship.