



It's About Time

February 29. It comes around only every four years. Which is why it would be a bummer to be born on February 29, as many are. This being a leap year with a February 29, it seems a good opportunity to reflect on the subject of time and a few things said about it in God's Word.

Think about this: The marking of time was created on Day Four in Genesis 1. While Days 1-3 are still labelled as "days" and evening and morning are mentioned, it wasn't until Day 4 when God placed the heavenly bodies that demarcate time. The marking of time—revolving of the earth around the sun—is part of our unique experience in this world, so it makes sense that Scripture would touch on it a good bit.

Digging In

Imagine for a moment that you are stepping into watching the creation of time, because, as we step into this passage, well, you are watching the creation of time. Linger on the passage below and reflect on every reference to any kind of time. If it's convenient, print the passage out, grab a pen, and do these suggestions that will help you ingest the detail.

- **Draw the face of a clock over every reference to time**
- **Consider using different colors to delineate each type of time reference (seasons vs. days)**

Genesis 1:14-19 (NIV)

And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years,"¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so.¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.¹⁷ God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth,¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

What strikes you about one of creation's days being dedicated to creating time ("the lights to mark sacred times")? Any thoughts about the fact that several things were created on Days 1-3 before the marking of time? You may even want to read Genesis 1:1-13 to see what was created before the marking of time.

In Psalm 90 the psalmist is captivated by time and introduces us to the discipline of being grateful for time, specifically, the amount of time that each of us is allotted. On the next page you'll see the last few verses of Psalm 90. As you experience these verses, use these prompts to help experience the passage. If it's convenient to print the passage, you may want to use the suggestions for marking to help notice detail.

- Look for references to time (draw a clock face over these)
- Make note of any requests that are made (underline these)

Psalm 90:14-17 (NIV)

¹² Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. ¹³ Relent, Lord! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. ¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. ¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble. ¹⁶ May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. ¹⁷ May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands.

What does the psalmist teach us about time? How does the psalmist feel about time?

Did you happen to notice two requests that are also attached to a promise? If not, that's okay. We've noted them below. Take a couple of minutes to re-write these phrases in your own words. Think about what these phrases are saying. Write down any "wow!" thoughts about the relationship between the request and the promise attached to it.

REQUEST: *Teach us to number our days ...*

PROMISE: *... that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

REQUEST: *Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love ...*

PROMISE: *... that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.*

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Reflect for a few minutes on these promises and requests. Let your heart be wowed by the humility of each request and the fulfilling life you'd lead if you enjoyed these promises. If you're doing this devotional before February 29, use that special day to pray these requests to God and count on these promises.