TIME AND PURPOSE – REND

“...a time to rend,” (Eccl. 3:7 ASV) The ESV renders “rend” as “tear” and this would probably fit better in our day. Generally speaking this would apply to a garment or cloth but it can apply to almost anything. It could mean the tearing of one’s garment when in anguish. (Joel 2:13)

It can also mean the “rending” or “tearing” of relationships. Remember Jesus saying “And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death.” (Matt. 10:21) While it might be inconceivable to us in our day, there was a distinct possibility the truth would come between members of families.

The apostle Paul, when addressing the elders of the Ephesus church when meeting them Miletus, said, “I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” (Acts 20:29-30)

While truth can and does unite people, it can also tear them apart. We are cautious about error entering the church from the outside, while most of it comes from within. People get strange ideas about the truth and think their take on it is better than everyone else. With that mindset, they determine to “force” their ideas on the church and many times the church is torn asunder.

“...mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, ... and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent.” (Rom. 16:17-18)