

# Ecclesiastes 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

## Analysis

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This pivotal verse asserts God's aesthetic providence—'He hath made every thing beautiful in his time' (Hebrew 'yapheh,' beautiful/appropriate). Despite life's apparent chaos catalogued in verses 1-8, divine wisdom orders all experiences toward beauty and purpose. Yet God has also 'set the world in their heart' (Hebrew 'ha-olam,' eternity/world)—giving humans awareness of transcendence while withholding complete understanding of His works 'from beginning to end.' This creates human longing for meaning beyond temporal existence. We glimpse eternity but cannot fully comprehend God's comprehensive purposes, producing both humble faith and reverent mystery before divine sovereignty.

## Historical Context

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The Hebrew 'olam' (world/eternity) carries rich theological freight in Jewish thought—it denotes both spatial extent (the world) and temporal duration (eternity/ages). Ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions lacked Israel's concept of a transcendent God who orders time purposefully toward redemptive goals. This verse anticipates the New Testament revelation that God's eternal purposes, hidden for ages, are revealed in Christ (Ephesians 3:9-11). Augustine's 'Confessions' famously explored this verse: humans are restless until they find rest in God because He has placed eternity in their hearts while they exist in time.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does believing that God makes 'everything beautiful in His time' sustain hope when current circumstances seem ugly or meaningless?
2. What evidence of eternity in your heart—longings for transcendence, justice, or permanence—points you toward faith in God's ultimate purposes?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶת H853	הַכֹּל ל H3605	עָשָׂה ה H6213	יָפֵה ה H3303	בְּעֵת ו H6256	גַּם H1571	אֶת H853
		He hath made	every thing beautiful	in his time		
הָעֵלָם H5769	גַּם   H5414	אֲשֶׁר H834	מִבֵּלִי י H1097	לֹא H3808	יִמָּצֵא א H4672	
the world	also he hath set	in their heart	so that		can find out	
הָאָדָם H120	אֶת H853	הַמַּעֲשֵׂה ה H4639	אֲשֶׁר H834	עָשָׂה ה H6213	הָאֱלֹהִים י H430	
no man		the work	He hath made	that God		
מֵרֵאשִׁית H7218	וְעַד H5704	קוֹף: H5490				
from the beginning		to the end				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Romans 11:33** (References God): O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

**Job 11:7** (References God): Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

**Ecclesiastes 8:17** (References God): Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea further; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

**Job 5:9** (Parallel theme): Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

**Genesis 1:31** (Creation): And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

**Mark 7:37** (Parallel theme): And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

**Psalms 104:24** (Creation): O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

**Deuteronomy 32:4** (References God): He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

**Ecclesiastes 7:29** (Creation): Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

**Romans 1:28** (References God): And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;