

# Ecclesiastes 3:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever:  
nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God  
doeth it, that men should fear before him.

## Analysis

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After describing times and seasons (3:1-8), the Preacher affirms divine sovereignty: 'I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.' The phrase 'whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever' (kol-asher ya'aseh ha'Elohim hu yihyeh le'olam, כָּל-אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא יִהְיֶה לְעוֹלָם) affirms God's works are eternal, permanent, unchangeable. The parallel phrases 'nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it' emphasize God's work cannot be improved or diminished. The purpose: 'that men should fear before him'—recognizing God's sovereignty should produce reverent awe. This verse provides theological grounding for the book: though human works are temporary, God's works endure. Believers find security in God's unchanging purposes, not shifting circumstances.

## Historical Context

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This verse echoes covenant theology throughout Scripture. God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15:18), His promises to David (2 Samuel 7:12-16), and the new covenant in Christ (Hebrews 13:20) are all eternal, unchangeable. Human kingdoms rise and fall; God's kingdom endures. The phrase 'that men should fear before him' recalls wisdom literature's central theme: 'the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom' (Proverbs 9:10). Early church fathers emphasized God's immutability—He does not change (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17). The Reformers

taught that God's eternal decree ensures the perseverance of the saints—what God begins, He completes (Philippians 1:6). Modern readers find comfort that God's purposes cannot be thwarted by human failure or worldly opposition.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does believing that 'whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever' provide stability amid life's changing circumstances?
2. What does it mean to 'fear before God'—and how does recognizing His sovereign, unchangeable purposes produce this reverence?

## Interlinear Text

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יָדַעְתִּי	כִּי	כָּל	אֲשֶׁר	רַעַשׁ	הַ	וְהָאֱלֹהִים	וּמֵהַ	הַ	וְהָאֱלֹהִים
<b>I know</b>				<b>doeth</b>		<b>from it and God</b>			
H3045	H3588	H3605	H834	H6213		H430		H1931	H1961

לְעוֹלָם	וְיִמְּךָ	נִוּן	לְהוֹסִיף	אֵין	אֵין
<b>it shall be for ever</b>			<b>can be put</b>	<b>nothing</b>	<b>nothing</b>
H5769	H5921		H3254	H369	H369

לֹא	לִגְרֹעַ	וְהָאֱלֹהִים	רַעַשׁ	וְהָאֱלֹהִים	שֹׂא	מִלִּפְנֵי
<b>to it nor any thing taken</b>		<b>from it and God</b>	<b>doeth</b>		<b>it that men should fear</b>	<b>before</b>
H1639		H430	H6213		H3372	H6440

## Additional Cross-References

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**James 1:17** (Parallel theme): Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

**Psalms 33:11** (Parallel theme): The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

**Acts 5:39** (References God): But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

**Romans 11:36** (Parallel theme): For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

**Proverbs 30:6** (Parallel theme): Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

**Proverbs 21:30** (Parallel theme): There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

**Titus 1:2** (References God): In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;