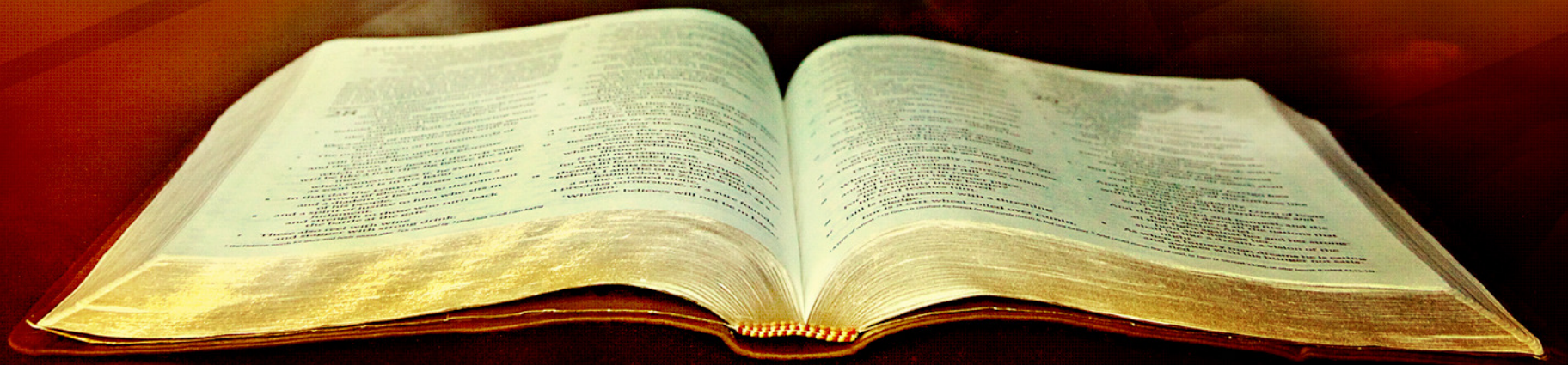


ECCLESIASTES

Eccl. 9:1-10



Eccl. 9:1 For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred *by all that is* before them.

2 *All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.*

3 *This is an evil among all things that are done **under the sun**, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.*

4 For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done **under the sun**.

7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

9 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee **under the sun**, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

This evening, we continue on a wonderful, spiritual journey through the Book of Ecclesiastes, known also as “The Preacher.”

I. THE PREACHER’S SUBJECT, 1:1-11

- A. The Preacher, 1:1
- B. The Problem, 1:2-3
- C. The Process, 1:4-11

II. THE PREACHER’S SERMON, 1:12-10:20

- A. Things He Had Sought, 1:12—2:26
- B. Things He Had Seen, 3:1—6:12
- C. Things He Had Studied, 7:1-10:20
 - 1. Life’s Frustrations, 7:1-29
 - 2. Life’s Fallacies, 8:1-17
 - a. The Fiction About Being Great, 8:1-9
 - b. The Folly About Being Godless, 8:10-13
 - (1) The Fate of the Wicked Man, 8:10
 - (a) His Funeral: The Burial of the Man, 8:10a
 - (b) His Fame: The Burial of His Memory, 8:10b
 - (2) The Foolishness of the Wicked Man, 8:11
 - (a) The Reason for His Folly, 8:11a
 - (b) The Result of His Folly, 8:11b

(3) The Future of the Wicked Man, 8:12-13

(a) His Continual Wickedness, 8:12a

(b) His Constant Warning, 8:12b-13

i. The Shallowness of His Life Revealed, 8:12b

ii. The Shortness of His Life Revealed, 8:13

c. The Fantasy About Being Good, 8:14-15

(1) The Good Man Gets a Guilty Man's Reward, 8:14a

(2) The Guilty Man Gets a Good Man's Reward, 8:14b

(3) The Worldly Man's Materialism, 8:15a

(4) The Worldly Man's Memory, 8:15b

d. The Fault About Being Gifted, 8:16-17

(1) The Weary Man Misses the Mark, 8:16a

(2) The Working Man Misses the Mark, 8:16b

(3) The Wise Man Misses the Mark, 8:17

3. Life's Finalities, 9:1-10

a. A Common Destination, 9:1-3

(1) The Omnipotence of God, 9:1

(a) His Power, 9:1a “For all this **I considered in my heart** even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, **are in the hand of God...**”

- Solomon, perhaps reluctantly, concludes that the sovereignty of God must be a consideration for all mankind.
- In refutation to all man-made religions, the Creator interacts with His creation, impacting and influencing the lives of mankind.

(b) His Presence, 9:1b “...**no man knoweth** either love or hatred by all that is before them.”

- Solomon’s lamentation of despair is exhibited by his lack of discernment.
- When troublesome times afflict our souls, is it chastising correction from a loving heavenly Father, or judgment for bad decisions, hating the sin and generating suffering.

Ezek. 21:3 And say to the land of Israel, **Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I am against thee**, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, **and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.**

(2) The Impotence of Man, 9:2-3

(a) The Inevitability of Death, 9:2a “All things come alike to all...”

- Solomon dwells upon the impotence of man and the finality and frailty of life – the inevitability of death to all and nothing can stop it.

(b) The Injustice of Death, 9:2b

i. The Righteous Man and the Lawless Man, 9:2b
“...*there is* one event to the righteous, and to the wicked...”

- Solomon considers it unfair that death is no respecter of persons.
- Solomon is not considering that death is the doorway to eternity (like Paul in Phil. 1:21.)
 - ii. The Respectable Man and the Licentious Man, 9:2c “...to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean...”

- Solomon laments that death, again, is not respecter of persons – for the clean and unclean according to religious standards.
 - iii. The Religious Man and the Lost Man, 9:2d “...to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not...”
- Solomon laments that death, again, is not respecter of persons – for those who sacrifice and those who do not sacrifice, those who do much for God and those who do nothing.
 - iv. The Resolute Man and the Lackadaisical Man, 9:2e “...as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; *and* he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath.”
- Solomon sees no difference the good man nor the sinner.

(3) The Inescapability of Death, 9:3

(a) The Ghost That Haunts Us All, 9:3a “This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done **under the sun**, that *there is* one event unto all...”

- Solomon is haunted by the dark cloud of death hovering over the end of his life.

(b) The Grave That Hunts Us All, 9:3b-c

i. The Follies of Life, 9:3b “...yea, also **the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live...**”

When speaking of the mainline news media, Peter Ruckman stated, “Every one of these degenerates believes, from the bottom of his soul, that the surest sign of progress is toleration of *sin* and *moral filth*.”

Peter S. Ruckman, “*The Book of Ecclesiastes*,” p. 232.

- Solomon laments the evil heart of mankind and the consequences of it.

Jer. 17:9 **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:** who can know it?

ii. The Finality of Death, 9:3c “...and after that *they go to the dead.*”

- Solomon could not see anything positive that death could provide.
- Compare and contrast how the Apostle Paul views death:

1 Cor. 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.**

55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

57 But **thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

b. A Callous Declaration, 9:4-6

(1) A Fatalistic Statement, 9:4-5a

(a) A Cynical Comparison, 9:4

Eccl. 9:4 For to him that is joined to all the living **there is hope**: for **a living dog is better than a dead lion**.

- Solomon express some hope to those living – “...to all the living **there is hope**...”
- In the ancient Near East, people despised wild dogs and they honored lions. Solomon’s point was that it is better to be alive and have no honor, than dead and receive honor, because the living also has consciousness and hope.

Consider the contrast

- Small facilities that are used are better than large ones that remain idle.
- Small opportunities in the present are better than large ones that are past.
- Small talents, used faithfully, will accomplish more than huge talents used carelessly.

(b) A Cynical Comment, 9:5a “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing...”

- Solomon’s “hopefulness” is smothered by the perspective of death’s inevitability.

(2) A False Statement, 9:5b “...neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.”

- The dead have no memory and are oblivious to the present.

(3) A Factual Statement, 9:6

(a) Their Passions Have Faded Away, 9:6a “Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished...”

- The dead have no passions, good or bad, as all has perished.

(b) The Persons Have Faded Away, 9:6b “...neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done **under the sun.**”

- From the earthly perspective “**under the sun,**” the dead have no “portion” in life.

c. A Carnal Decision, 9:7-10

(1) Enjoy Your Wine While You Can, 9:7

Eccl. 9:7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

- Solomon's perspective, "under the sun," is to focus upon the enjoyment of life's simple and available pleasures:
 - "Go thy way" = do your own thing;
 - "eat thy bread with joy" = enjoy feasting and good health;
 - "and drink thy wine with a merry heart" = celebrate self;
 - "for God now accepteth thy works." = God has allowed you your life up to this point.

(2) Enjoy Your Wealth While You Can, 9:8

Eccl. 9:8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

- Solomon acknowledges the importance of cleanliness, style, and advantages of personal care.

(3) Enjoy Your Wife While You Can, 9:9

Eccl. 9:9 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee **under the sun**, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest **under the sun**.

- One of life's greatest achievements of blessings is within the realm of marital companionship.

(4) Enjoy Your Work While You Can, 9:10

Eccl. 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, **do it with thy might**; for *there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*

- If death is inevitable, then knock yourself out to do something, and do it with intensity!

Jn. 9:4 **I must work the works of him that sent me**, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

The Example of the Lord Jesus Christ:

1. Have a sense of urgency – “I **MUST** work...”
2. Focus upon the “main thing” – “I must work **the works...**”
3. Be submissive to the Lord – “...**him** that sent me...”
4. Redeem the time – “...while it **is day...**”
5. Remember the inevitable destiny – “...the night cometh, **when no man can work.**”

Conclusion

Prov. 10:4 He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but **the hand of the diligent maketh rich.**

1 Cor. 14:12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, **seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.**

Heb. 6:9 But, **beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation**, though we thus speak.

10 For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your **work and labour of love**, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye **be not slothful**, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.