## **Ecclesiastes 9**

Review...

to

all

It

Obey As

of

all

o Under the Sun...

The **PREACHER** [Solomon] - wrote let us know...

Life is EMPTY [vanity] everything UNDER the sun has NO purpose...

 He tried **EVERYTHING** but found it was grasping for the WIND... seemed like there was something there - but he always walked away EMPTY handed! the King... Solomon continued his QUEST to find MEANING in life...

- He emphasized the importance in life obeying the command of the KING...
- Because the KING had the power to make your life a blessing or a curse...
- But NOT KINGS were GOOD - some were SLOW to

implement JUSTICE...

- As a result this encouraged WICKEDNESS in the land!
- o Still searching...
  - Looking at how UNFAIR this can make life the wicked prospering and the righteous suffering...
  - Solomon gave UNWISE counsel: eat drink and have FUN because life gives NO guarantees...
  - The problem was he was BLINDED by his sin to the answer...
  - He admitted no matter how hard he tried he could NOT find meaning in life!

## • $1^{ST}$ - Everyone dies... 1-6

- o 1st No Guarantee... vs. 1
  - Accepted by God...
    - For I considered all this in my heart so that I could declare it all:
    - That the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God.
    - People know neither love nor hatred by anything they see before them!
    - Solomon had been trying one thing after another he did NOT rest...
    - Because [כֵּי] he had put [perfect] ALL [כַּל] of these things in his HEART [כֵּל]
    - Hoping that he could make CLEAR [בּוֹר] to us the MEANING of life but what he found was:
    - The DEEDS of the [הַ] RIGHTEOUS [צַדִּיק] and the [הַ] WISE [הָכָם] are in the hand of God
    - His assumption being if we are doing GOOD and WISE things God is happy...
    - But [אַרן] NO אין man KNOWS אין whether God will LOVE them or HATE them!
  - No one knows...
    - How much GOOD must we do in order to make God HAPPY [love]
    - And how much BAD is allowed before it makes Him MAD [hate]
    - Solomon said no אָדָם] MAN [אָדָם] knows the answer which is TRUE...
    - But God does know the answer and He told us Matthew 5:48
    - I have been working with Hallel on her MATH...
    - She is quick to become impatient and tries to RUSH the answer...
    - But I tell her MATH is unforgiving all it takes is ONE mistake the answer is WRONG!
    - It does NOT matter how GOOD we are it ONLY take one mistake to FAIL...
    - That is why Jesus came to save us because we could NEVER be good enough!
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> No Difference... vs. 2
  - Death...
    - All things come alike to all: One event happens to the righteous and the wicked.
    - To the good [and bad] the clean and the unclean.
    - To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice.
    - As is the good so is the sinner. He who takes an oath as he who fears an oath!
    - EVERYONE [בֶּל] goes through the same trials in life and in the end EVERYONE [בָּל] DIES...
    - It does NOT matter if they are RIGHTEOUS [צַדִּיק] or WICKED [רַשָּׁע]
    - It makes NO difference if someone is GOOD [σίρ] or BAD [κακός] PURE or UNCLEAN...
    - Whether someone is RELIGIOUS [sacrifices] or has NEVER [אֵין] gone to church...
    - AS [בַ] it happens to the GOOD [קוֹב] man it also happens to the SINNER!
  - Not the end...
    - Keep in mind Solomon was unable to SEE beyond this life...
    - So he saw ALL men as coming to the same END everyone DIES...
    - But DEATH is not the END it is the BEGINNING!
    - When I was in high school one of my classmates called Christianity a DEATH cult...
    - He said this because he noted how Christians seem to focus on DEATH...
    - He was NOT a believer and to him death was the END...

- What he could NOT see is that death is just the doorway to ETERNAL life!
- While it is TRUE that no matter how we live our life we will all DIE...
- What happens after death is VERY different depending on what we do with Jesus...
- To those who are RIGHTEOUS who put their faith in God they will go HEAVEN...
- To those who are WICKED who rejected Jesus they will end up in HELL!
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> No Hope... vs. 3
  - Excuses...
    - This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all.
    - Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil. Madness is in their hearts while they live.
    - And after that they go to the dead!
    - Solomon saw this as UNFAIR [בַּל] that DEATH happens [niphal] to EVERYONE [בַּל]
    - He argued this is what fills the heart of men with EVIL [רַע] and makes them act CRAZY...
    - Because they know that no matter what they do they will DIE!
  - Warning...
    - Imagine if we could eat ANYTHING we wanted without consequences...
    - No worrying about SUGAR or FAT just eat whatever we like...
    - This is how many people DO live but before long they have HEALTH problems...
    - Those PROBLEMS are our bodies way getting our attention before it is TOO late [death]!
    - This is the same truth when it comes to living a RIGHTEOUS life...
    - If someone thinks that DEATH is the end there are no ETERNAL consequences...
    - Then it does tend to make them live an EVIL life gives them license to be CRAZY...
    - But those who live life that way will end up with LOTS of PROBLEMS [sin is destructive]
    - Those PROBLEMS are GODS way of trying to get our attention before it is TOO late [hell]!
- o 4<sup>th</sup> No Time... vs. 4-6
  - Hope... vs. 4
    - But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope.
    - For a living dog is better than a dead lion!
    - [כִּי] FOR it is better to be a living DOG [weak] rather than a dead LION [strong]!
    - [כִּי] BECAUSE whoever [מָי] is still ALIVE has HOPE [בָּטַח]
    - We are SAVED by FAITH [πίστις] Ephesians 2:8
    - Yet the word FAITH is rarely used in the OT [only two times] Habakkuk 2:4
    - HOPE [בְּטֵח] also translated as TRUST is an OT equivalent of FAITH [πίστις]!
    - While ANYONE can chose at ANYTIME to be put their HOPE [faith] in God...
    - We only have until we DIE after that our choice is sealed **Hebrews 9:27**
  - Running out... vs. 5
    - For the living know that they will die but the dead know nothing.
    - And they have no more reward for the memory of them is forgotten!
    - [בִּי] BECAUSE those who are still ALIVE know [יָדַע] that they are DYING [imperfect]
    - [וְ] BUT the DEAD do NOT [יָדַע] know (יָדַע] anything...
    - [i] AND for them there is no longer any CHOICE [reward]
    - [כִּי] BECAUSE they made their DECISION and are FORGOTTEN!
    - We all KNOW we are on a clock every day it counts down to the inevitable...
    - We KNOW that NO one is going to live forever our time is LIMITED...
    - Yet rather than making sure our ETERNITY is secure...
    - Most try and ignore the truth by keeping themselves busy with things that do NOT matter!
  - Not important... vs. 6
    - Also their love their hatred and their envy have now perished.
    - Nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun!

- Also [מַב] the things that people think DEFINE their lives...
- Their LOVE and HATRED their ENVY for things that do NOT last [אַבַר]
- Are ALL [אֵין] gone [אֱין] once they leave this life [under the sun]!
- If you ask a young person what is most important to them...
- They will say their education who they will marry or what they want to buy...
- Yet NONE of those things last they are ALL temporary!
- The ONLY thing that matter in LIFE is making sure we have Jesus...
- Everything else is a distraction that BLINDS us to what is MOST important...
- Because our relationship with Jesus is the ONE thing that we can keep after DEATH!
- 2<sup>ND</sup> ENJOY LIFE... 7-12
  - o 1st Merry heart... vs. 7-10
    - Be Happy... vs. 7
      - Go... with a merry heart. For God has already accepted your works!
      - As Solomon saw it as UNFAIR that both the GOOD and SINNER died...
      - Causing men to do EVIL and be CRAZY because they all had the same END...
      - His command [imperative] was to ENJOY life he assumed this PLEASED [בַצָה] God [בֻצָה]
      - This again is where we need to take the WISDOM of Solomon in context...
      - He was a man BLINDED by sin who could NOT see beyond this life I Kings 11:4
      - He was trying to find MEANING apart from knowing God [אַלהים]
      - Which we see emphasized in how he NEVER uses the name of the LORD [יָהוָה] in this book!
      - What is powerful about the FOUR things that Solomon gave...
      - They are the same FOUR things we see people still look to TODAY...
      - The things people use to try and FILL the God shaped HOLE in their lives...
      - But they can NEVER make us CONTENT we will still be THIRSTY...
      - And they can do NOTHING for us after we die they CANNOT save us!
    - Eating... vs. 7
      - Eat your bread with joy and drink your wine
      - Therefore if DEATH comes to all and we ONLY have this life...
      - FIRST enjoy eating [imperative] and drinking [imperative]!
      - We all LOVE to EAT but some people LIVE to EAT...
      - All they talk about is their favorite RESTAURANT the best FOOD...
      - Others LOVE to DRINK they cannot wait to get DRUNK...
      - For them there is NOTHING better than for ALCOHOL to help them FORGET their problems!
      - While there is NOTHING wrong with enjoying a meal [Jesus loved to eat]
      - No matter how good the FOOD is we will be hungry again **John 6:51**
      - And while it is NOT wrong to have a glass of wine [do NOT get drunk] Ephesians 5:18
      - No one has ever found that answer to life at the bottom of that glass!
    - Clothing... vs. 8
      - Let your garments always be white and let your head lack no oil!
      - SECOND make sure to look GOOD....
      - Keep [imperative] your clothes CLEAN [white] and smell GOOD [anointed head]
      - We live in a world that is OBSESSED with outward appearances...
      - People spend HOURS every week in the GYM just to LOOK good I Timothy 4:8
      - Yet in the end we all still get OLD and WRINKLY and then DIE...
      - People also spend outrageous amounts of money on DESIGNER clothes [purses]
      - Yet NONE of these things last the best clothes still wear out Matthew 6:19
      - That is what we are told to NOT focus on the EXTERNAL!

- **I Peter 3:3-4** "Do not be concerned about the outward beauty... clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within." [NLT]
- Marriage... vs. 9
  - [Look at life] with the wife whom you [loved].
  - All the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun all your days of vanity.
  - For that is your portion in life and in the labor which you perform under the sun!
  - THIRD Look [רָאָה] at life with your wife [not with joy as some translations interpret]
  - We know that women were a PROBLEM for Solomon he had THOUSAND wives...
  - This was his SIN he disobeyed the command of God **Deuteronomy 17:17**
  - As a result we can see the BITTERNESS it brought out of him...
  - Look [imperative] at life with the WIFE that you [past tense] LOVED [perfect]
  - ALL [כָּל] of the days of your EMPTY life [repeated twice for emphasis]
  - [מַלָּק] BECAUSE she is your REWARD [כֵּי] in this life...
  - And is with you in your TROUBLE [עַמֵל] that you SUFFER [עַמֵל] under the SUN!
  - It used to be that the world painted marriage as HAPPILY ever after [Disney]
  - Now they has changed their tune to why bother getting married it will not last!
  - Marriage is a blessing it is part of the perfect plan of God Genesis 2:18
  - But anyone who has been married for more than a few hours knows marriage is HARD...
  - When you put two sinner together it causes a LOT of TROUBLE...
  - Which is why if we think MARRIAGE is the answer we will be DISAPPOINTED!
- Working... vs. 10
  - Whatever your hand finds to do do it with your might.
  - For there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going!
  - FORTH Work hard while you still can...
  - Solomon connects his work to what his WIFE wants...
  - EVERYTHING [כַּל] your WIFE finds [feminine] for your hand to do DO it [imperative]
  - [בִּי] BECAUSE there is NO [אָין] work planning knowledge or wisdom once we are DEAD!
  - I have to say first of all I LOVE that Solomon connects his work to his wife...
  - Anyone who is married knows how important the HONEY do list is!
  - But seeking to find MEANING from WORK [money] is empty...
  - Because all of our efforts ONLY last for this life we CANNOT take anything with us...
  - Therefore all of our WORK is WASTED if we are just trying to get things!
  - Luke 12:15 "Life is not measured by how much you own." [NLT]
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> Not in control... vs. 11-12
- All Chance... vs. 11
  - I returned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift.
  - Nor the battle to the strong. Nor bread to the wise. Nor riches to men of understanding.
  - Nor favor to men of skill but time and chance happen to them all!
  - Something caused Solomon to rethink [שוּב] his conclusion [enjoy life]
  - He realized life is NOT based on MERITOCRACY [how hard we try]
  - The FASTEST runner does NOT always win the race...
  - The STRONGEST soldier does NOT always win the battle...
  - The WISEST man can go hungry the SMARTEST man can be poor...
  - Even those who SEE [יָדַע] that this is true may not find GRACE [תון]
  - [כִּי] BECAUSE TIME and CHANCE are what decide ALL [כָּל] things!
  - LUCKY [chumba] being at the right place at the right time...
  - Life is NOT fair being blessed or cursed seems to just be an ACCIDENT!
  - This is the perspective of someone who does NOT know the Lord...

- Because although it is true that we are NOT in control...
- That does NOT mean life is random NOTHING happens by accident...
- The Lord is the one who is SOVEREIGN over EVERYTHING!
- **Ephesians 1:11** "He makes everything work out according to his plan." [NLT
- No warning... vs. 12
  - For man also does not know his time:
  - Like fish taken in a cruel net. Like birds caught in a snare.
  - So the sons of men are snared in an evil time when it falls suddenly upon them!
  - [נְדַע] FOR man [אָדָם] also [גַם] does NOT see [יָדַע] the time of his death...
  - LIKE [2] a fish or bird that is caught [niphal] by an EVIL net...
  - So also [5] are the sons of men caught [pual] in an evil TIME when they do NOT expect it!
  - Just as LIFE seems to be RANDOM so also does DEATH...
  - Yet among the top TEN most common ways for people to DIE...
  - Heart disease [1] stroke [5] diabetes [8] and cirrhosis [9] are all diet related...
  - Therefore why do we act surprised when people DIE as if it was unexpected!
  - It is true we do NOT know the number of our days...
  - No one knows when they will die though we should NOT live foolishly...
  - But our confidence is the LORD does KNOW the number of our days...
  - And we will NOT die one day sooner than He plans!
  - **Job 14:5 "**You have decided the length of our lives." [NLT]
- 3<sup>RD</sup> WISE MAN... 13-18
  - o 1st Forgotten... vs. 13-16
    - Little city... vs. 13-14
      - This wisdom I have also seen under the sun and it seemed great to me:
      - There was a little city with few men in it and a great king came against it.
      - Besieged it and built great snares around it!
      - Also [נֵב] Solomon wanted to add a story to make his point [random life]
      - A wise EXAMPLE he had seen [רָאָה] that was IMPORTANT [נָדוֹל] to him...
      - There was an SMALL city with only a FEW people living in it...
      - [וֹ] BUT a great [נְּדוֹל] KING came and surrounded the city and built towers to conquer it!
      - Although we do NOT know for sure which TOWN this was...
      - Some suggest it is the city of Abel Beth Maachah II Samuel 20:14
      - After the rebellion and death of Absalom the son of David...
      - A man called Sheba tried to lead Israel against the King...
      - JOAB commanded of the army pursued Sheba and he fled into Abel Beth Maachah!
    - Poor man... vs 15
      - Now there was found in it a poor wise man and he by his wisdom delivered the city.
      - Yet no one remembered that same poor man!
      - The city was SAVED [piel] by the WISDOM of a poor MAN...
      - BUT [1] no one remembered what he had done because he was POOR!
      - A woman called out to JOAB from Abel Beth Maachah what did he want...
      - JOAB only wanted the head of SHEBA so the woman got the people to agree!
      - II Samuel 20:22 "The woman in her wisdom went to all the people. And they cut off the head of Sheba... and threw it out to Joab."
    - Biased... vs. 16
      - Then I said: Wisdom is better than strength.
      - Nevertheless the poor mans wisdom is despised and his words are not heard!
      - AND [יַן] to Solomon this story said WISDOM is better [קוֹב] than STRENGTH...

- BUT [יַן] the problem is that people NEVER [אָין] listen to the words of the POOR!
- This might be a different story a woman saved the city and NOT a man...
- Or it might be exactly what Solomon was talking about...
- The people FORGOT it even was a woman because she was POOR!
- We have a tendency to JUDGE a book by its cover...
- If we want to get advice on being healthy ask someone who is FIT...
- If we want to get counsel on being RICH ask someone who has MONEY...
- We would question the words of a person who was UNHEALTHY and POOR...
- But when it comes to SPIRITUAL things it does NOT matter who gives us the WORD...
- Because that WISDOM is NOT from men it comes from GOD!
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> Wise Words... vs. 17-18
  - Whisper... vs. 17
    - Words of the wise spoken quietly should be heard rather than the shout of a ruler of fools!
    - We are better off listening to a WISPER that is WISE [הָכָם]
    - Rather than [מִ] the SHOUTS of a LEADER who is a FOOL [בְּסִיל]
    - The point is the TRUTH does NOT need to try and get our attention [shouting]
    - It is something we should be seeking to find because it is RIGHT!
    - Walk into a grocery store and look at the ADVERTISING...
    - All of the food that is JUNK has loud colors trying to get our attention...
    - But the food that is HEALTHY sits quietly waiting for us to find it!
    - We will always find that FOOLISH things in life are the LOUDEST...
    - Because that is the only way they can convince us to listen to them...
    - But the TRUTH is much more soft spoken we have to make the time to LISTEN to it!
    - I Kings 19:12 "There was the sound of a gentle whisper." [NLT]
  - The sinner... vs. 18
    - Wisdom is better than weapons of war but one sinner destroys much good!
    - Wisdom is GOOD [מֻוֹב] better than [מֻן the most powerful WEAPON...
    - BUT [ן] it only takes ONE sinner to RUIN a lot [רְבָה] of GOOD [טְוֹב]!
    - Ironic that Solomon realized this WISDOM is waiting for us to find it...
    - But what keeps that WISDOM hidden from us is our SIN!
    - Psalm 119:11 "Your word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against You."