

ECCLESIASTES 9

- REVIEW...

to

all

- It

- o 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!

● 1st - 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 [כִּי] he had put [perfect] ALL [כָּל] of these things in his HEART [לֵב]
 - Hoping that he could make CLEAR [בּוֹרַר] to us the MEANING of life - but what he found was:
 - The DEEDS of the [הַ] RIGHTEOUS [צַדִּיקִים] and the [הַ] WISE [חֲכָמִים] are in the hand of God [אֱלֹהִים]
 - His assumption being - if we are doing GOOD and WISE things - God is happy...
 - But [גַּם] NO [אִין] man KNOWS [יָדַעַת] 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 [אִין] 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 2nd - 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 [כָּל] goes through the same trials in life - and in the end EVERYONE [כָּל] DIES...
 - It does NOT matter if they are RIGHTEOUS [צַדִּיקִים] or WICKED [רָשָׁעִים]
 - It makes NO difference if someone is GOOD [טוֹב] or BAD [כָּאָכֹס] - PURE or UNCLEAR...
 - Whether someone is RELIGIOUS [sacrifices] - or has NEVER [אִין] gone to church...
 - AS [כִּי] it happens to the GOOD [טוֹב] 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 3rd - 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 [רַע] - that DEATH happens [niph'al] to EVERYONE [כָּל]
 - 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 4th - 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 [מִי] is still ALIVE has HOPE [בְּטָחָה]
 - 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 [בְּטָחָה] – 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!
 - [כִּי] - BECAUSE those who are still ALIVE - know [יָדָעוּ] that they are DYING [imperfect]
 - [וְ] - BUT the DEAD do NOT [יָדְעוּ] know [יָדָעוּ] anything...
 - [וְ] - 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 [דָּבָר] - the things that people think DEFINE their lives...
- Their LOVE - and HATRED - their ENVY for things that do NOT last [אָבֵד]
- Are ALL [כָּל] gone [אֵין] 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!

● 2ND - ENJOY LIFE... 7-12

○ 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 [רָצָה] God [אֱלֹהִים]!
 - 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 [אֱלֹהִים]
 - Which we see emphasized in how he NEVER uses the name of the LORD [יְהוָה] 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 [רָצָה] 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]
 - [כִּי] BECAUSE - she is your REWARD [תְּלָקָה] in this life...
 - And is with you in your TROUBLE [צָרָה] that you SUFFER [עָנִי] 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 [כָּל] your WIFE finds [feminine] for your hand to do - DO it [imperative]
 - [כִּי] BECAUSE there is NO [אֵין] - 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 2nd - 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 [שָׁיב] 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 [רָאָה] that this is true - may not find GRACE [חֵן]
 - [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!
- [כִּי] FOR - man [אָדָם] also [גַּם] does NOT see [יָדַעַ] the time of his death...
- LIKE [כִּי] a fish or bird that is caught [niphal] by an EVIL net...
- So also [כִּי] 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]

● 3RD - 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 [גַּם] - Solomon wanted to add a story to make his point [random life]
- A wise EXAMPLE he had seen [הָרָאָה] that was IMPORTANT [חֲדָוָה] to him...
- There was an SMALL city - with only a FEW people living in it...
- [בִּלְבָד] BUT - a great [מְדִינָה] 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 [וְ] - 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 [וְ] - to Solomon this story said - WISDOM is better [טוֹב] than STRENGTH...

- BUT [וְ] - the problem is that people NEVER [אֵי] 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 2nd - 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 [חָכָם]
 - Rather than [וְ] the SHOUTS of a LEADER who is a FOOL [בְּסוּר]
 - 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 [טוֹב] - better than [וְ] the most powerful WEAPON...
 - BUT [וְ] - it only takes ONE sinner to RUIN a lot [רַבָּה] of GOOD [טוֹב]!
 - Ironical that Solomon realized this - WISDOM is waiting for us to find it...
 - But what keeps that WISDOM hidden from us - is our SIN!
 - **Psalms 119:11** - "Your word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against You."