

# That's Life

(Ecclesiastes 9)

# Solomon once hated life (2:17)

- Variety of reasons . . .
  1. Hopes frustrated. Success did not make him happy.
  2. Helpers forsook. Jeroboam...
  3. Health failing. (12:1-8)

# I. Matter of Life and Death, 9:1-10

# 1: it's in God's hands

- Not fate or chance. 2:4
- No guarantee that righteous and wise will prosper in this world. Ps.73. 2 Co.12
- No one knows love or hatred?

No one can judge whether God approves or disapproves of him *by his circumstances.*

## 2: all things to all people

- One event to all: righteous and wicked...
  - Sickness comes to all...
  - Earthquakes do not discriminate...
  - Death is the great leveler
  - Prosperity comes to evil, poverty to good
    - 2:14-16. Lk.16. Jn.9:1-3. Job
- God's people can love this life if they recognize God's gifts. Mt.5:45; Ja.1:17

## 3: one thing we know...

- One thing happens to all. 8:11
- No lightning strikes the wicked...no miracle shields the good.
  - Hearts are full of evil, madness...blind to critical issues of life.
  - Death follows life.

## 4: living dog . . . dead lion

- Wild dog: disdained, 1 Sm.17:43.
- Lion: noble...
  - Vilest animal better off alive than noblest animal that is dead.
  - Death separates us from hope and pleasure.
  - Atheist deludes himself (“death ends it all”). Lk.16

## *5a: living know they will die*

- Motivation to prepare.

## *5b: dead know nothing*

- Context is king: this is not soul sleep.
  - 2 Sm.15:11. Job 8:9. Jn.11:49.
- Even memory is forgotten.
  - 5c: no more reward ? ! ? !
  - 6a: their love, hatred, envy perish...  
2 Co.5:10
  - 6b: no more share . . . “under the sun”



## 7: bright side

- God cares, God approves. 2:24
  - 1 Co.3:21-23
  - Eat, drink [wine: Pr.20:1; 23:31]

## 8: God's blessings

- Joy, 5:18, 20
- God's people should be filled with joy.
  - White garments: festivals; cool
  - Oil: refreshing ointment

## 9: joy of marriage (God's creation)

- Gn.2
- Ep.5
- “Vain life” – vapor, breath, fleeting.

## 10: joy of work now, rest later

- Jn.9:4

I. Matter of Life and Death, 9:1-10

II. Time and Chance Happen To All,  
9:11-12

11: no matter how well blessed we are  
... things often go wrong

- Time and chance affect outcomes.

*“The best laid plans of mice and men oft  
go awry, And leave us nothing but grief  
and pain, For promised joy!”* – Robert Burns

11: no matter how well blessed we are  
... things often go wrong

- Fastest runner... 2 Sm.2
- Strongest warrior... Pr.21:30-31. 2 Chr.  
14:9... 2 Chr.20:15
- Wise sometimes go hungry... Ch.2
- Skillful are not always successful.  
2 Sm. 17. Ja.4:13-17
- Educated don't always enjoy successful  
lives.

11: no matter how well blessed we are  
. . . things often go wrong

- Time and chance happen. 1 K.5:4
  - By skill we calculate rising / setting of sun.
  - Sudden catastrophe may overwhelm the highest, cast him to the ground.
- To all. 2:14-15

# 12: like fish / birds, we are not masters of our own fate

- Must look to God
- Wrong time and place

I. Matter of Life and Death, 9:1-10

II. Time/Chance Happen to All, 9:11f.

III. *A Word to the Wise*, 9:13-18



## 13: wisdom is great, but often unappreciated

- 14-15a: wise man delivered a city.  
– 2 Sm.20:...16-22
- 15b: no one remembers.  
– Ignorance and ingratitude never end.
- 16: poor man's wisdom is a treasure, but unappreciated. Jeremiah. Mk.6:2-3.
- 17: should be heard. 1 Sm.13 / 15 / 28
- 18a: pen is mightier than sword.
- 18b: even when wisdom reigns, one sinner can destroy much good. 1 K.12

# Lessons

- We are going to die. Hb.9:27.
- We will leave earthly possessions, 5.
- People of God can be filled with joy, 7-9.
- We cannot depend on worldly success, 11-15.
- Suffering has purposes –
  - Educates. Ps.119:67
  - Glorifies. Jn.9:1-3
  - Tests. Habakkuk
  - Reveals. Hosea