

## Ecclesiastes 9:1-12

Our study in the book of Ecclesiastes has taken us through eight chapters now, and we're getting ready to go into Chapter 9 today. Some people look at the book of Ecclesiastes as a book of doom and gloom, and I know we've discussed this. We've talked about life and death, and it's prevalent throughout this book, but what God is trying to tell us is this... that, for those of us who know Jesus as Savior, death holds no terror for us. In fact, in John 3:36, it says, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*"

When I look at the book of Ecclesiastes, I look at it as a book of hope, a book of promise, that one day I'm going to see my Savior. I'm going to see the One who died for me and gave His life, and He rose from the grave that I could have eternal life. So, therefore, as a Christian, I'm happy today knowing that, although this life could end at any moment... I'm talking about this life right now... this human life that I'm living, it could end at any moment. That's what the book of Ecclesiastes is trying to tell us, that we need to be prepared. As a Christian, we are prepared to meet our Lord. This life, when it's over, we're going to be in the presence of our Lord. So, it is a book of hope.

As we look at this today, I want us to go into Chapter 9. As we study this chapter, I want you to understand that we're still going to be talking about life and death. There are contrasts here. Life, you're alive. Death, it's over with.

The objectives in this Chapter 9, I believe, are to reflect upon the inevitability of death and the uncertainty of life and to consider how time and opportunity are offered to everyone. It's also to appreciate the importance of a

joyful diligent life in heeding the words of the wise.

First, I see in verses 1-10 enduring the certainty of death. We have to endure that. I'm not saying that Christians don't dread seeing a loved one pass away. That's part of our life, that it happens in our families, and there has to be mourning. There has to be something. We miss each other when death takes place, but thank God, we're comforted in knowing that person has trusted Jesus as Savior, as we have, and one day we're going to see that person once again.

Notice in verses 1-6 that death happens to all. It happens to everybody. In verses 1-3 it happens to both the righteous and the wicked, that is, death. In particular, we see now in verses 1-2 that the righteous are in God's hands. It says there, *<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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.*

While the righteous are in God's hands, the sons of men... these are all humans... are morally wicked, according to the Word of God. Morally wicked, that's evil. And this is according to verse 3. It says: *<sup>3</sup>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.*

The sons of man... this is all human beings... are morally wicked. Romans 3:12 says, *They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* As we read on in Romans 3:23, it says, *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* And then in Hebrews 9:27: *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*

You see, the Bible is teaching here that there is hope. In verse 4, it tells us that while we live, there is hope; there is an opportunity. It says in Ecclesiastes 9:4: *For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope...* That means while you're alive, while you're walking with other living people, other people who are alive. It goes on to say, *for a living dog is better than a dead lion.* Now, it's for certain that a lion, when it is alive and that a dog when it is alive, the lion is master over that dog. The lion is more powerful, but when that lion is dead, he has no power whatsoever. The live dog then becomes the master. He has power over that dead lion. But when we die, we know nothing of what goes on here on Earth. After death, life on Earth is over, according to verse 5.

As we go back and we think about this hope, we as Christians, we are comforted in the fact that this word "hope" means an assurance. It's not, "I sure hope so," standing around, wringing your hands. No. The Bible teaches us that the righteous, those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, we are going to be with our Savior. And this life may end in death, but the life that we really have is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And as we go into verse 5, it says, *For the living know that they shall die...* you must understand that there will be death... *but the dead know not any thing...* it's over with... *neither have they any more a reward...* it's over with; there's nothing else that can be

done, because the life is gone; it's finished; and we read in that verse 5 that others' memory of us soon fades because it says, *for the memory of them is forgotten.* That's the people who die.

I've found in my life as I look around and I listen that, when someone is considered to be a great person, they've done great things, and they are lifted up and people extol them, in death I find that a lot of times that a lot of the good that they've done is forgotten and people look at the bad. And then as time goes on, they're forgotten completely and that's what this verse 5 is teaching.

Psalm 31:12 says, *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.* Did you ever hear that saying, "Out of sight, out of mind"? Well, that's the way it is when a person dies. You're gone, and it's sad, but we are soon forgotten.

Notice something else now in verse 6, that the dead no longer have human emotions. In verse 6 it says, *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.* The emotions are gone. There's nothing left. You don't have an emotion after you're dead. The dead can no longer have anything that's in this life or have a part in the affairs happening on the Earth, according to the last part of verse 6 there.

Now, let's look at verses 7-10 and see what it says there. <sup>7</sup>*Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.* <sup>8</sup>*Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.* <sup>9</sup>*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.* <sup>10</sup>*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.*

Once again, when life is over, it's finished. That's it. And when we leave, everything that we've accomplished, everything that we've gained... earthly, worldly, everything that we've gained we leave behind, but we're to enjoy it while we're here, and that's what Solomon through the Word of God, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is trying to let us understand. We're to enjoy the things that God has given us while we're here. Enjoy life, according to verses 7-10.

And as we look at verse 7, we see that while death is inevitable we should still enjoy life. And verse 8 tells us that we're to live righteously. Then as we look at verse 9, it says live joyfully with the wife God has given you. Then work diligently while you are here. You won't be able to work, in other words, to achieve or to learn anymore or gain wisdom when your body is dead, according to verse 10. It's over with. So, now, we need to do what we should be doing, and once again, that is living for the Lord. Those of us who are saved, I want to give you heart today that you will be with the Lord someday when this life is over.

In verses 11-18, we see enduring the uncertainty of life. In verses 11-12, it tells us to expect the uncertain. It says, *<sup>11</sup>I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.* *<sup>12</sup>For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.*

Time and opportunity, and that's what that word "chance" means, is opportunity... well, time and opportunity happen to all. Everybody has opportunities. Everybody has the opportunity to do what they need to be doing. Some have more and some have less, but we all have opportunities. Being fast and physically powerful, according to these verses, does not always mean you will always win. Being wise and having knowledge, understanding, and having special abilities, and that's being skillful, does not always ensure food, riches, or favor. We need to understand that as human beings.

But notice something else here now. Sometimes death will come unexpectedly, like animals caught in a trap, according to verse 12. And I'm reminded of the section of Scripture in Luke 12:18-20 about the parable of the rich man. It says there: *<sup>18</sup>And he... that's the rich man... said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.* *<sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* *<sup>20</sup>But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?*

If you know Jesus Christ, you will be with Him one day. If you do not know Jesus Christ, this may be the day that you leave this world and you need to make sure right now that one day you will meet Jesus Christ. And how do you do that? By asking Him to come into your heart and save you right now. Let's pray.

Father, thank You for this privilege of presenting Your Word. I pray for that person who needs salvation today. May they be saved right now. May they call upon You. That person who is saved, may they live every

waking moment for You, serving You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

---

You've been listening to It's a Good Life Radio. To request a free transcript of this program, you can write to Dr. Woodard at 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. Visit our Websites, [www.LRWM.org](http://www.LRWM.org) or [www.ItsAGoodLifeRadio.com](http://www.ItsAGoodLifeRadio.com). We know you will be blessed.

This program is listener-supported. Support your local church first. Any gifts to support this ministry can be sent to:

LRWM  
497 Judith Avenue  
Fruitland Park, FL 34731

Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.