



Life Ahead in the Hand of God

Ecclesiastes 9:1-18

In the Hand of God (v 1)

- 9:1 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.
 - Put his heart into explaining meaning of life
 - Even the righteous & wise are in hand of God
 - We cannot see what lies ahead (love or hatred)

Same Conditions for All (v 2)

- 9:2 One event *happens* to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, 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.
 - Righteous or wicked – each is part of human condition
 - Every individual will someday experience death

The Sudden Reality of Death (v 3-4)

- 9:3-6 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. ⁴ But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion..
 - Death is an unavoidable evil that awaits everyone
 - Men's hearts pursue madness all lifetime, then suddenly die
 - While alive there is always hope to be prepared

Death ends our share in life (v 5-6)

- 9:5-6 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. ⁶ Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun.
 - The dead are quickly forgotten (life goes on)
 - Our time to participate in God's gifts is now (this lifetime)

The Urgency of Living (v 7-9)

- 9:7-9 Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted your works. ⁸ Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil.
 - Enjoy things God approves (food, work, clothing, oil, marriage)
- ⁹ Live joyfully with the wife whom you love 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.
 - Marriage is a gift of God.. Live joyfully with companion

The Dignity of Work (v 10)

- 9:10 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.
 - Work is part of the joy to experience in life
 - The grave (Sheol) has no opportunity for activity
 - Enjoy God's gifts here..

Untimely Events of life (v 11-12)

- 9:11-12 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. 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.
 - No guarantee the swiftest runner will win the race
 - Time and chance happen to all (timely events, misfortune)
 - People can be trapped by circumstances

Superiority of Wisdom (v 13-15)

- 9:13-15 This wisdom I have also seen under the sun, and it *seemed* great to me: ¹⁴ *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. 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.
 - Besieged city was delivered by a wise man
 - Yet the wise man was not remembered

Wisdom is often wasted (v 16-18)

- 9:16-18 Then I said: “Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised, And his words are not heard.
¹⁷ Words of the wise, *spoken* quietly, *should be* heard rather than the shout of a ruler of fools. ¹⁸ Wisdom is better than weapons of war; But one sinner destroys much good.”
 - Wisdom proves superior, yet people do not always respect it
 - Forceful people win out over the quiet voice of wisdom
 - One foolish act can destroy the good results of wisdom



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