

Ecclesiastes 9:11-18

The importance of Godward work

Mystery must not prevent appropriate human effort—9:11-11:16

Removing Discouragements to God's Plan—8:16-12:14

- 1) Be faithful in your work, regardless—9:11-12
 - a) The irony of human ability—9:11 ¹¹ *I returned, and saw under the sun that ...*
 - Bible examples suggested by Kaiser
 - i) *the race is **not** to the swift*, (cf. 2nd Samuel 2:22-23)
 - ii) ***nor** the battle to the strong*, (cf. Judges 16:19)
 - iii) ***nor** bread to the wise*, (cf. 1st Kings 11:1-25)
 - iv) ***nor** wealth to the discerning* (cf. 2nd Samuel 16:23; 17:5-14)
 - v) ***nor** favor to the men of skill*, (cf. Exodus 2:11-15; Acts 7:22)
 - vi) Commonalties for all
 - (1) *but time and events happen to all of them.*
 - b) The ignorance of man—9:12
 - i) Stated—¹² *For man does not know his time.*
 - ii) Trouble never comes at a good time—*Like fish that are taken in a treacherous net [matsod] and like birds that are caught in a snare, so are the sons of Adam ensnared at an evil time, when it falls upon them suddenly.*
- 2) The value of wisdom—9:13-18
 - a) Wisdom is illustrated—9:13-15
 - i) No guarantee of personal benefit—¹³ *I also observed this wisdom under the sun, and it is significant to me: ¹⁴ there was a little city with few men in it, and a great king came against it and besieged it and built great siege-works [matsod] against 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 poor man.* (cf. 2:16; 9:5)
 - b) Wisdom is compared—9:16-17
 - i) Wisdom is better than strength—¹⁶ *So I said, “Wisdom is better than strength,*
 - (1) *But wisdom is not always heeded—though the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heeded.”*
 - ii) Wisdom is better than powerful status alone—9:17 ¹⁷ *The words of the wise heard in quietness are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools.*
 - (1) *“Thus, the words of the wise spoken quietly or calmly possess value and ought to be taken seriously.”* (Barrick)
 - c) Wisdom can, at times, be thwarted by sin—9:18 ¹⁸ *Wisdom is better than weapons of war but one sinner can destroy much good.*