

Welcome To Sunday Night Bible Fellowship

Every word inspired.



Every word proclaimed.

“We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ.” Col 1:28

“A Time For Justice”

Eccl. 3:16-22

April 26, 2020

Ecc1 3:9-15

9 What profit is there to the worker from that in which he toils?

10 I have seen the task which God has given the sons of men with which to occupy themselves.

11 He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

12 I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime;

13 moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor — it is the gift of God.

14 I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him.

15 That which is has been already and that which will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.



God is not
Responsible
for Evil

Man's Free Will
Must be Protected

Ecc1 3:16-22

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- 17 I said to myself, "God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man," for a time for every matter and for every deed is there.
- 18 I said to myself concerning the sons of men, "God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts."
- 19 For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast, for all is vanity.
- 20 All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust.
- 21 Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?
- 22 I have seen that nothing is better than that man should be happy in his activities, for that is his lot. For who will bring him to see what will occur after him?

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“furthermore” - עוֹד - owd - to continue, again, furthermore, repeatedly, moreover.

“under the sun” – so we are operating here on the horizontal, from man’s perspective.

Now Solomon presents a problem, that people give, to the sovereignty of God:

If God is sovereign how can He allow evil – how can He allow wickedness, corruption, bribery, in a court of justice and how can He allow wickedness in a place of righteousness where people come for refuge to make things right?

So problems in our judiciary system began long ago.

While it is clear that the world is full of evil, injustice and wickedness, this verse points to an even deeper problem. Wickedness has been found where justice ought to reign.

Isa 5:20

20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness;
Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!
The guilty and innocent are confused. The innocent are
judged guilty and the guilty are judged innocent, and the
responsibility for this system fell to the king.

*****Remember the robe of a judge is not the robe of
righteousness.***

Syllogism – a conclusion reached based on 2 or more propositions. (e.g., *all dogs are animals; all animals have four legs; therefore all dogs have four legs*).

1. God is sovereign.
2. God is all-powerful.
3. God hates evil and wickedness.
4. Evil and wickedness exists in the courts.
5. Conclusion: God is either not sovereign (in control), or He is not all powerful (able to destroy all evil), or He really doesn't hate evil.

2 problems:

1. If man does not have to reckon with eternity; if this life is all there is, then many of the wicked and evil people *win* and many good and righteous people *lose*.
2. If we must live with the reality that the world is evil and unjust and will continue to be so, why should we trust a God who is supposedly sovereign but allows that kind of evil?

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17 I said to myself, "God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man," for a time for every matter and for every deed is there.

- Good to talk to yourself. Shows your thinking it through.

Gary Lupyan and Daniel Swigley, both psychologists did a study on people who talk to themselves. They came to the conclusion that people who talk to themselves are able to process information better and faster and are often those with above average IQs.

Why? 3 reasons:

- 1. It stimulates your memory.**
- 2. It helps stay focused.**
- 3. It helps you clarify your thoughts.**

- The righteous will be judged and rewarded.
- The wicked will be judged and punished.
- Wrong will not go unpunished, and right will not go unrewarded.

- Justice will be carried out in eternity. Remember eternity is in man's heart.
- Sometimes God judges people in this life; sometimes He does not.
- When He does not, we call that delayed judgment.
- In the end, Jesus Christ will judge all people.

Ps 37:12-13

12 The wicked plots against the righteous
And gnashes at him with his teeth.

13 The Lord laughs at him,
For He sees his day is coming.

Acts 17:30-31

30 God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

Ecc1 12:14

14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

- The circumstances God ordered for justice to be carried out are: 1. law and order. 2. a justice system, which flows from His character. 3. to fear Him and therefore judge as if He were their main audience in the court.
- Since God controls all things and everything is in His time, He must also have a time to set right the wrongs, to bring justice where there is injustice. Knowing that God has a time for judging injustice, provides hope for human beings.
- God's patience with sin is an incredible blessing. If God was not so patient all of us would come under His immediate judgment. We would be wiped out in the blink of an eye. Fortunately, God grants us His mercy and grace.

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18 I said to myself concerning the sons of men, "God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts."

- More thinking.
- “**tested**” - בָּרַר - barar - make bright, clarify, expose, to see clearly.
- So God is exposing man in the courts of justice where injustice reigns and shows man for what he is – a beast, an animal.

But how so?

1. Animals have no conscience.
2. Animals don't care if they get it wrong.
3. Animals feel no remorse.
4. Animals don't think about eternity.
5. Animals don't think about judgment.
6. Animals don't care about justice or injustice.
7. Animals prey on the weak, the sick and the young just as judges in the courts may prey on the poor, the downtrodden and the weak. But when they do this it shows them that they are but animals.

“...when man leaves God out of his life, he becomes like an animal.”

- Warren Wiersbe

Ps 49:12

12 But man in his wealth will not endure;
He is like the beasts that perish.

Ps 32:9

9 Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding,

Jude 10

10 But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

So if man, under the sun is nothing more than an animal, then what . . .

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3 things are true if man is no higher than an animal (19-21):

1. Both die. (19)

- No living thing escapes death.
- Men and animals are made from the same physical, earthy materials. Both breathe the same air. Both get old or sick and die.
- When men are unjust they are just like beasts and both men and beasts die.
- And by the way Solomon says, “It’s all vanity, meaningless.”

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2. Both turn to dust.

- If you look at a dead man & a dead animal they look pretty much the same. They both will decay & return to the same dirt from which they were made.
- You and I are simply just biding our time between the dusts: The dust that we were created with and the dust that we're going to return to. And apart from the subsequent revelation of the Word of God, as far as 'life under the sun' is concerned, what happens to you and what happens to the animals is anybody's best guess.
- Man says, "Every life is on the same level." And then they go on to urge us to save the whales, like we were in charge of them. The uniqueness of man can be denied, but cannot be made to disappear.

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3. Both appear to have no afterlife.

- Who knows where the spirit goes when the man and beast die? No one can know from observation because what happens is beyond human observation.
- When people say there is nothing beyond the grave, they are no longer speaking as scientists but as philosophers.
- So “who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?” Who can know the truth about the resurrection? The answer is “No one can!” No one can “under heaven” or “under the sun.” So who knows? GOD KNOWS.
- You may be successful, powerful, wealthy, talented, and personable, and when all is said and done, you’re going to die just like your dogs Fifi or Fido or Gilbert the hamster.

Will our pets be in Heaven?

1. People are made in God's image, and animals aren't.
2. People sinned, animals didn't.
3. Because animals didn't sin, they don't need a redeemer.
4. An animal can't be born again or redeemed.
5. There are horses and creatures in Heaven.
6. Creation now groans and awaits to be set free from corruption.
7. With no direct Scripture, by inference I lean toward no pets in Heaven but I can't be dog-matic.

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- Still operating under the sun, Solomon observes that with no afterlife, man should simply enjoy his lot in life.
- Again . . . "if that's all there is my friend then let's keep dancing, let's break out the booze and have a ball . . . if that's all there is."
- So this section ends with a question of despair.
- Solomon doesn't answer this question here but he will later on in Ecclesiastes.
- Solomon wants the impact of the comparison of man and animal to sink in. Are you nothing more than an animal with no future beyond the grave?

Why does a sovereign God allow evil, as seen in injustice, to exist in our world?

1. The fact that man permits and promotes injustice in the courts reveals him to be no higher than a beast.
2. God's sovereign plan will uncover it by exposing the heart of man by his corrupt judicial decisions.
3. There will be an appropriate time when God will step in and judge the evil. It may be immediate, or it may be delayed but still within time, or it may be delayed into eternity.
4. God has a place for injustice in His plan because He is ultimately glorified for His: 1. Justice. If it were not for injustice, men would not know justice. 2. Righteousness. 3. Patience.