

Turning a Corner?

Ecclesiastes 9:1-10

vs. 1a For I considered all this in my heart, so
that I could declare it all

So far, what all has he considered in his heart?

Familiar Philosophies of Life that Won't Work:

1. Materialism

Living for possessions, collections, and cash

“He who dies with the most toys wins!”



2. Epicureanism

“Life is a ball, enjoy yourself!”

“If it feels good, do it!”

“Be free, unaccountable and not responsible”

“Live hard, die young, and leave a good-looking corpse!”



3. Humanism

We possess great and grand potential.

We can do everything on our own.

Who needs God, not us!

4. Fatalism

What's the use?

Ziggy – It's you and me against the world,
kid”

Squidward – “Let me explain again how it
works”

Solomon has looked at all four and concluded that they're all failures.....they're all vanity....they're all chasing after the wind.

So if everything he's tried up to now hasn't really worked, what's he got left?

vs. 1b - that the righteous and the wise and
their works are in the hand of God.

Whewwww!!!

BUT

vs. 1c – Man does not know whether it will be love or hatred; anything awaits him.

2 All things come alike to all: 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.

3a This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all.

vs. 3b 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.

vs. 5 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.

Isn't that negative?

paraphrase: While we're alive we know that we'll die, so we live accordingly (with an eye to our eternal reward and our legacy; but the dead know nothing of what's happening on earth and they no longer have an awareness of death; there is no more reward to be earned, for we will eventually be forgotten.

vs. 6 Also their love, their hatred, and their
envy have now perished; Nevermore will
they have a share In anything done under
the sun.

vs. 7 – GO or GO THEN or GO THY WAY

in Hebrew the word is “yaw-lek”

in German the word is “So gehe hin”

in French the word is “Va”

in Spanish the word is “Anda”

all of them are imperative commands that
roughly translated mean:

“DON’T STAY”

Don't Stay Where?

In the first 8 chapters of this glum book?
If somebody tells us to go, then it must mean
that we're with them.

So we're dismissed from his lessons in life
(of course he's not done with us)

vs. 7 eat your bread with joy
and
drink your wine with a merry heart
For
God has already approved your works”

“one of the first glimmers of the new covenant
back in the Old Testament...”

“Why? Because we are in Christ. We are no longer distant foes, we’re intimate friends.”

“What a wonderful hope for believers! We don’t have to live under guilt! We don’t have to worry each morning about whether or not God is going to club us into eternity! We don’t have to live in fear, wondering if we’re in the family or not in the family. We’re there. And we’re approved. Isn’t that great news? No wonder we can eat and drink with happiness and cheer. He’s already approved us. You and I are to live happily wherever we are. So live it up!”

BUT

vs. 8 – Let your clothes be white all the time, and let not oil be lacking on your head

practical application: this was done in festive, joyful times, so this is how we should always live once we're right with God...

symbolic application: white is a symbol of God, purity and righteousness (Jesus and Mary); and olive oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit of God.

9a 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...

9b-10 and in the labor which you perform under the sun. 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.

once again, literally true, there's not much for a body to do inside a grave, but there's plenty to be done in the life beyond the grave!

That's the end of the thought and the section,
even though it's not the end of the chapter

You just thought he was finished with us!

To Sum up:

vs. 1a – Solomon's looked at it all and here's what he knows:

vs. 1b – God is in control

vs. 1c – We don't know if we will get what good or bad things out of life, anything can happen to us no matter how we live.

vs. 2 – Everybody is going to die.

vs. 3 – Folks is nuts.

vs. 4 – But there is always hope while you're alive (after all, anything can happen)

vs. 5 – our lives should be guided by our awareness of our limited time here, and once it's up, it's gone and not coming back.

vs. 6 – all the love, hate and zeal for life on earth has perished, either because we're in Sheol, where nothing much is going on or we're in heaven or hell where earthly things don't matter, one way or the other, anymore.

vs. 7 – Eat and drink and be joyful and cheerful once you’ve been accepted by God

vs. 8 – “But live a pure and godly life, walking in righteousness and letting the power of the Spirit flow through us”

vs. 9-10 – enjoy your wife and family and the work and jobs you have – do everything with all you’ve got!

“Where Do I Go from Here?”

“So how are we supposed to live, now that we’ve been exposed to this new way of life? If we take away materialism, epicureanism, humanism and fatalism, what’s left? If we follow Solomon’s advice and God’s plan, the options are simple.

We're to live life to its fullest.

- free of guilt
- contagiously happy
- committed to God and our marriage
- thoroughly involved