

ECCLESIASTES

Lesson 7 w/Answers

Ecclesiastes 8:1-17

This is a shorter lesson than usual, but even in this short chapter, Solomon has some observations that hit home today with our electoral system, our judicial system, and the world around us.

Let's read Chapter 8 this week and complete the following:

1. Consider verses 1 through 5. Who would the wise king be today? Does one exist?
 - a. ANSWER: Yes, one exists; the wise king today is God. All that Solomon says in these verses about the king apply to our relationship to God and His Son Jesus.
 2. Read verse 6. Have you ever had a time when your misery "weighed heavy" on you? What does Solomon mean in this verse about a proper time and procedure? (see also verse 5)
 - a. ANSWER: See verse 5. The wise man knows what is right and when to do it, in spite of his personal circumstances. We are to know and do what is right regardless of our personal situation. The King's wisdom is better than ours.
 3. In verses 7 and 8, it appears Solomon is talking about someone with a personal struggle. Who, or what, is he blaming for this struggle?
 - a. ANSWER: He blames wickedness and people who try to take matters into their own hands, trying to manage or control their future. They are at war within themselves and cannot escape it.
 4. In verse 8, what is it that man is trying to "contain"?
 - a. ANSWER: His future. Many of us struggle trying to know the future, or through some personal effort, trying to control it, or influence it. This is a foolish effort, since we have no power over the future, nor can we control it.
 5. Can we see examples of people today like those Solomon refers to in verse 9?
 - a. ANSWER: Yes, unfortunately we can. Mankind has not changed; even those who appear "holy" or "religious" are with us today. Having an outward appearance of being religious, many use their position of power or authority to lord over others—only to die in the end like the rest of us, their life being meaningless.
 6. Verses 11 through 13 apply directly to the world around us today. What is Solomon saying about our judicial system and the tendency to want to avoid responsibility for our actions?
 - a. ANSWER 1: Crime, not punished, results in a society with a heart to do evil; wickedness unpunished creates more wickedness.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Solomon is also warning we who worship God and follow Christ to remain reverent before God and to not allow our walk to be compromised simply because everyone else around us is ignoring law and order and following after their evil schemes.
 7. What else in verse 14 does Solomon see happening around him that is also observable around us today?
 - a. ANSWER: The innocent suffering harm and injustice while the wicked appear to succeed and get what belong to the righteous.
 8. After seeing all of the injustice and wicked deeds of the unrighteous around us, what does Solomon command us to do in verse 15?
 - a. ANSWER: We are to enjoy the life that God has given us and be glad in our work. Then God's joy will fill our lives.
 9. In his final analysis, Solomon describes the awesomeness of God and His creation. What does he tell us about it?
 - a. ANSWER: We cannot comprehend it; no one can but God. And if someone tells you that he or she can comprehend it, then they are in error. It is not possible for man to comprehend all that God does, or that all goes on within God's creation.
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Let's take Solomon's instruction to heart and give thanks for the life and work that God has given each of us. Enjoy the great gifts God has given you and thank Him for it.

In Christ,

Wes