

# Ecclesiastes

Part Six: *wisdom for life pt2*

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Ecclesiastes Chapter Eight is divided into two parts. The theme of the chapter is wisdom. Solomon teaches us that wisdom can help us better understand and live life on earth.

## **1<sup>st</sup> – Solomon tells us how wisdom can help us. 8:1-8**

- In Vs. 1, Solomon says wisdom enables us to understand things.

*“How wonderful to be wise, to analyze and interpret things. Wisdom lights up a person’s face, softening its harshness.” (Ecclesiastes 8:1, NLT)*

- In Vs. 2-6, Solomon says wisdom enables us to do the right thing at the right time.
- In Vs. 7-8, Solomon says wisdom protects us from harm.

Solomon says no one can see the future or know what will happen. He then states that none of us can hold back our spirit, postpone the day of our death, or be discharged during a war. These are impossibilities. Finally, Solomon says wickedness cannot save people from harm. Only wisdom can rescue sinners!

## **2<sup>nd</sup> - Solomon tells us how wisdom cannot help us. 8:9-17**

- In Vs. 9-14, Solomon says wisdom cannot keep us from being mistreated.

Solomon has said that our lives will be better if we fear God and live by His wisdom (3:14; 5:7; 7:18). He has also said that God will judge the wicked (3:17). But now Solomon tells us that wisdom cannot keep us from being hurt by others.

- In verses 15-17, Solomon says to enjoy life, for we do not know what God is doing.

*“So I recommend having fun, because there is nothing better for people in this world than to eat, drink, and enjoy life. That way they will experience some happiness along with all the hard work God gives them under the sun. In my search for wisdom and in my observation of people’s burdens here on earth, I discovered that there is ceaseless activity, day and night. I realized that no one can discover everything God is doing under the sun. Not even the wisest people discover everything, no matter what they claim.” (Ecclesiastes 8:15–17, NLT)*

*After he says in Chapter Eight that we cannot understand everything God is doing on earth, Solomon tells us in Chapter Nine about two things he does not understand.*

## **1<sup>st</sup> – Solomon tells us death is unavoidable. 9:1-10**

- In Vs. 1-6, Solomon says even good people die.

Good people dying seems wrong, but the Bible tells us Adam’s sin condemned every human being on earth to die (Rom 5:12). Adam’s sin cursed us to die physically, and the sins we commit against God curse us to die spiritually (Rev 20:11-15). Thankfully, Jesus died for our sins so we can be forgiven, be made right with God, and spend eternity with Him in Heaven (Rom 5:13-21). Jesus died for us so we could live forever with Him (John 3:16; 5:24; 11:25-26)!

- In Vs. 7-10, Solomon tells us again to enjoy life while we have it.

*“So go ahead. Eat your food with joy, and drink your wine with a happy heart, for God approves of this! Wear fine clothes, with a splash of cologne! Live happily with the woman you love through all the meaningless days of life that God has given you under the sun. The wife God gives you is your reward for all your earthly toil. Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.”* (Ecclesiastes 9:7–10, NLT)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> – Solomon tells us life is unpredictable. 9:11-18**

- In Vs. 11-12, Solomon says we cannot predict when hard times will come.

*“I have observed something else under the sun. The fastest runner doesn’t always win the race, and the strongest warrior doesn’t always win the battle. The wise sometimes go hungry, and the skillful are not necessarily wealthy. And those who are educated don’t always lead successful lives. It is all decided by chance, by being in the right place at the right time. People can never predict when hard times might come. Like fish in a net or birds in a trap, people are caught by sudden tragedy.”* (Ecclesiastes 9:11–12, NLT)

- In Vs. 13-18, Solomon says we cannot predict when we will be appreciated or despised.

*“Here is another bit of wisdom that has impressed me as I have watched the way our world works. There was a small town with only a few people, and a great king came with his army and besieged it. A poor, wise man knew how to save the town, and so it was rescued. But afterward no one thought to thank him. So even though wisdom is better than strength, those who are wise will be despised if they are poor. What they say will not be appreciated for long. Better to hear the quiet words of a wise person than the shouts of a foolish king. Better to have wisdom than weapons of war, but one sinner can destroy much that is good.”* (Eccl 9:13–18, NLT)

### **Takeaways from Ecclesiastes Chapters 8 & 9...**

1. Wisdom is valuable but cannot keep you from hard times.
2. Enjoy your life because death is unavoidable, and life is unpredictable.
3. The only way to find meaning in life is to trust God with your life and death.