

# **Ecclesiastes 06 - Riches Without Enjoyment; Labor Without Satisfaction; Questions Without Answers**

## **IV. Solomon's search for meaning in wealth (Eccl 6:1—8:15)**

### **(1) Quest for wealth (6:1-12)**

- (A) Futility of God-given assets without the ability to enjoy them (6:1-2)
- (B) Futility of a long unsatisfying life (6:3-6)
- (C) Futility of constant dissatisfaction (6:7-9)
- (D) Futility of seeking to know the future without God (6:10-12)

## **Ecclesiastes 6**

## **IV. Solomon's search for meaning in wealth (Eccl 6:1—8:15)**

### **(1) Quest for wealth (6:1-12)**

- (A) Futility of God-given assets without the ability to enjoy them (6:1-2)

**1** There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is widespread among mankind:

**1** There is an evil which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent among men—

**1** There exists another misfortune that I have observed on earth, and it is a heavy burden upon human beings:

**1** There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:

**2** a person to whom God has given riches, wealth, and honor, so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God has not given him the opportunity to enjoy these things, but a foreigner enjoys them. This is futility and a severe affliction.

**2** a man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires; yet God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is vanity and a severe affliction.

**2** a man to whom God gives wealth, riches, and honor, so that he lacks none of his heart's desires—but God does not give him the capability to enjoy them. Instead, a stranger consumes them. This is pointless and a grievous affliction.

**2** A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

(B) Futility of a long unsatisfying life (6:3-6)

3 If a man fathers a hundred *children* and lives many years, however many they may be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things and he does not even have a *proper* burial, *then* I say, "Better the miscarriage than he,

3 If a man fathers a hundred *children* and lives many years, however many they be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things and he does not even have a *proper* burial, *then* I say, "Better the miscarriage than he,

3 A man might father a hundred children, and live for many years, so that the length of his life is long—but if his life does not overflow with goodness, and he doesn't receive a proper burial, I maintain that stillborn children are better off than he is,

**3** If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.

4 for a *miscarriage* comes in futility and goes into darkness; and its name is covered in darkness.

4 for it comes in futility and goes into obscurity; and its name is covered in obscurity.

4 because stillborn children arrive in pointlessness, leave in darkness, and their names are covered in darkness.

4 For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5 It has not even seen the sun nor does it know *it*; yet it is better off than that *man*.

5 It never sees the sun and it never knows *anything*; it is better off than he.

5 Furthermore, though they never saw the sun nor learned anything, they are more content than the other.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other.

6 Even if *the man* lives a thousand years twice, but does not see good things—do not all go to one *and the same* place?"

6 Even if the *other* man lives a thousand years twice and does not enjoy good things—do not all go to one place?"

6 Even if he lives a thousand years twice over without experiencing the best—aren't all of them going to the same place?

6 Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

(C) Futility of constant dissatisfaction (6:7-9)

- 7 All a person's labor is for his mouth, and yet his appetite is not satisfied.
- 7 All a man's labor is for his mouth and yet the appetite is not satisfied.
- 7 Every person works for his own self-interests, but his desires remain unsatisfied.
- 7 All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.
- 8 For what advantage does the wise person have over the fool? What does the poor person have, knowing *how* to walk before the living?
- 8 For what advantage does the wise man have over the fool? What *advantage* does the poor man have, knowing *how* to walk before the living?
- 8 For what advantage has the wise person over the fool? What advantage does the poor man have in knowing how to face life?
- 8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?
- 9 What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is futility and striving after wind.
- 9 What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is futility and a striving after wind.
- 9 It is better to focus on what you can see than to meander after your self-interest; this also is pointless and a chasing after wind.
- 9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

(D) Futility of seeking to know the future without God (6:10-12)

- 10 Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he cannot dispute with the one who is mightier than he is.
- 10 Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he cannot dispute with him who is stronger than he is.
- 10 Whatever exists has been named already; people know what it means to be human—and a person cannot defeat one who is more powerful than he.
- 10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.
- 11 For there are many words which increase futility. What *then* is the advantage to a person?
- 11 For there are many words which increase futility. What *then* is the advantage to a man?
- 11 Because many words lead to pointlessness, how do people benefit from this?

11 Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?

12 For who knows what is good for a person during *his* lifetime, *during* the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a person what will happen after him under the sun?

12 For who knows what is good for a man during *his* lifetime, *during* the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun?

12 Who knows what is best for people in this life, every day of their pointless lives that they pass through like a shadow? Who informs people on earth what will come along after them?

**12** For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

["all...": Heb. "the number of the days of the life of his vanity."]