

Message #16

Ecclesiastes 5:8-12

There seems to be a common thought among those who do harmful things and oppressing things against others—they think they are getting away with it. They most assuredly are not. If you have been hurt or demeaned or have been trodden down by those proud and arrogant who will speak out against any authority, just wait on the Lord, for His day is coming when He will settle the score.

In chapter 5:1-7, Solomon wanted God's people to have a proper perspective of worship. In chapter **5:8-12**, Solomon wanted God's people to have a proper perspective of oppression. He wanted God's people to realize that oppressive people and oppressive acts are not going unnoticed, as R. G. Lee used to say—there will be a “Payday Someday.”

GOD'S PEOPLE MUST NOT BE SHOCKED WHEN THEY SEE OPPRESSIVE THINGS ON EARTH BECAUSE THOSE RESPONSIBLE ARE ACCOUNTABLE AND WILL BE MISERABLE.

Now the term “oppression” is one that describes one who treats people unjustly, one who defrauds or extorts in a proud way (Gesenius, p. 660). The term describes one who wrongly and arrogantly defrauds or cheats people in an unjust way. This type of person is not truthful, but is one evil.

Now you will carefully notice that there are two key ways oppression occurs: 1) By a denial of what is just; 2) By a denial of what is righteous.

The term “just” means God views an oppressive act as being one in which a person who is in an authoritative position does not hand down a decision that God deems as right and just and according to His Law (Gesenius, p. 519-520).

The term “righteous” means God views an oppressive act as being a decision that is not straight and true and upright (*Ibid.*, p. 702).

God expects leaders to make judgments and if they do not make judgments based on His Word and they twist or distort righteousness, it is an oppressive act.

The word “shocked” is one that means one can see these things and marvel in terrified astonishment (Gesenius, p. 866).

REMEMBRANCE #1 – There will eventually be a judgment pronounced by a higher official. **5:8b**

As I understand the meaning of the last part of **verse 8**, it is that eventually those who are committing oppressive acts and making oppressive judgments will discover that others who are more powerful than they are will do the same thing to them and eventually such a one will receive a judgment from the highest official of all—Almighty God.

The words “higher officials” may be in Hebrew a plural of majesty, referring to the Triune God. In other words, those who are making unjust and untrue judgments will discover they will face Almighty God someday and He, who is carefully watching them, will judge them.

Leadership is serious business in the sight of God. Most people do not understand the weight or the burden of making a decision as a leader. You must prayerfully and carefully try and analyze all Biblical data and decide what is just and true. It is a lonely and heavy responsibility. The leader who “fears God” (v. 7) will take this responsibility very seriously, realizing there will come a day when he will face God.

REMEMBRANCE #2 – There is some hidden positive in acts of oppression. **5:9**

The illustration used in this verse is one of agriculture. In this case, the “poor” of **verse 8** would be those who worked the land and then were not given what was just or fair.

As a result, the land is cultivated and that is an advantage for the king, people, and for the land. Cultivated land means food for the people. Even though a king may be oppressive, if the land is being cultivated it is still better than if it isn’t. Cultivated land means food and jobs.

REMEMBRANCE #3 – The one who is oppressive will never be satisfied. **5:10**

Now we learn here one of the real, underlying motives for judicial acts of oppression—greed. Those who deny just and righteous decisions do so motivated by a love of money.

The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil and none are more evil than oppressive acts. There are some who will twist a decision in favor of a dollar.

There is nothing wrong with working hard and laboring for money for the glory of God, but there is something wrong when one will do oppressive things to get it.

REMEMBRANCE #4 – The one who is oppressive will watch more and more of what he has disappear. **5:11**

All a greedy owner can do is look on and watch his numbers and his expenses rise.

REMEMBRANCE #5 – The one who ultimately will be tranquil is the working man, not the rich man. **5:12**

The oppressive man who is greedy has a hard time getting to sleep at night. He may use alcohol or pills to try and help him, but the truth is the greedy oppressor is not happy or peaceful.

Perhaps you have been oppressed recently. You have deserved and earned money, respect or honor you are not getting. Remember this—God’s judgment will come. Those who have wronged you and oppressed you will pay. Keep your focus above the sun, for God’s help and judgment will settle the score.