

He That Hath Labored for the Wind

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Ecclesiastes 5:13-20 There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness. Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

- I. Riches are kept to the hurt of their owners.
 - A. The effort put forth to hang on to riches costs the owners some things:
 1. Brings adversity and affliction in many ways
 2. Makes enemies
 3. Robs you of peace of mind
 4. Brings uncertainty and mistrust of others, even close friends and loved ones
 5. Eventually, it may even destroy your mind and your health.
 - B. They sometimes spend all their riches in an effort to hang on to them.
 1. Insurance premiums and then crooked insurance companies who crawlfish when it comes time to pay
 2. Investments that fail or are stolen from them by crooked financial salesmen
 - C. But those riches perish by evil travail ...
 1. Sometimes their own health fails and they lose their riches trying to pay for doctors, hospitals, and medicine.
 2. Sometimes they end up in a nursing home and they take all their money and property
 3. Sometimes someone is hurt on their property or in an accident and finds a way to take everything they have away from them
 - D. We are told here that, for whatever reason, many times people become wealthy and then lose it before they die and leave nothing to their children.
 1. By the time they leave this world they have no more than when they came into it.
 - E. "...in all points as he came, so shall he go" and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? v.16
 1. How sad that his life has been spent for absolutely nothing!
 2. How sad that all his labor and toil and effort to hang onto what he had was for nothing!

Prov 23:4 Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

Prov 23:5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

- F. All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.
 - 1. He doesn't enjoy any of his riches and his life is filled with sorrow, wrath, and sickness.

II. There must be a better way to live!

Ecc 5:18-20 Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

- A. We should enjoy the fruit of our labor – not hoard it.
 - 1. We should be prudent and wise, but not miserly.
 - 2. A miser is one who in wealth makes himself miserable by the fear of poverty.
- B. We should look at the fruit of our labor as something to enjoy and not something to guard from others.
- C. If a man does obtain wealth and riches and is able to enjoy them and not become a slave to them then it is a gift from God.
 - 1. God obviously can't give this gift to everyone because everyone cannot handle it this way.

For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

- D. This type of man will not be filled with regrets and bad memories of his life because his heart will be filled with joy from the Lord.
- E. This can only be if a man makes God first in his life.
 - 1. One who sets his affection on things above and not on things on the earth.
 - 2. One who seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.
- F. Life is wasted that is not lived for the glory of God.