

THE DUST OF DEATH (Ecclesiastes 3:18-22)

The MESSAGE of Ecclesiastes is that God designed life to _____ Him and be _____ in relationship with Him, for apart from a _____, vertical, _____ relationship with God, man is _____ and life is _____.

I. SOLOMON'S INTRODUCTION (1:1-11)

II. SOLOMON'S INVESTIGATION (1:12-11:10)

A. Solomon's PURSUITS. (1:12-18)

B. Solomon's PROOFS that 'ALL is VANITY' {apart from God} and the Secret of PLEASURE / ENJOYMENT and LASTING VALUE in Life. (2)

C. Solomon's PERSPECTIVE on the EVENTS of Life & the Secret of God's PROVIDENCE. (3:1-5:20)

1. The *beginning observations* regarding this first section:

2. The 7 biblical principles to factor into the equation of life. (3:1-15) Man cannot *control*, nor fully *comprehend* the events of life yet God gives your life *significant meaning and lasting value* when you *enter and enjoy* by *reverential trust a personal relationship with Him in time but in view of eternity*.

3. The 6 *goats of human frustration* which are puzzling from a HVP but designed or allowed by God to show you the vanity of life apart from a personal relationship and fellowship with Him from an eternal perspective. (3:16-4:16)

a. Goad #1: The frustration of earthly _____. (3:16-17) How can you trust that God is sovereign and good {His providence} when the world is filled with injustices?

1) The *difficult problem*: Moreover I saw under the sun: In the place of judgment, Wickedness was there; And in the place of righteousness, Iniquity was there. (3:16)

2) The *divine perspective*: The righteous _____ of Heaven, not the earthly courts of sinful man, will have the last & final say & judgment. I said in my heart, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, For there is a time there for every purpose and for every work." (3:17; 11:9; 12:14)

b. Goad #2: The frustration of _____ for a man like a beast. (3:18-22)

1) The *difficult problem*: "I said in my heart {I thought to myself}, "Concerning the {human} condition of the sons of men {the descendants of Adam}, _____ {Elohim} _____ {to test or make clear the reality of something through human injustices to} them, that _____ that they themselves are like _____ {in this respect, they are essentially no better than animals and have a corruptible body unlike the holy & eternal God}." 19 For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one _____, so _____ the other. Surely, they all have one breath {the same vitalizing spirit – Gen. 2:7; 7:22}; man has no advantage over animals {in this event}, for all is _____ {transitory, lacking eternal value & puzzling}. 20 All go to one _____ {the grave or dust}: all are _____ the dust, and all return _____ dust." (3:18-20) This is HVP or 'under the sun' thinking which cannot see with the naked eye the invisible, internal, or eternal part of man or God's eternal plan but has some truth to it such as ...

2) **The divine perspective on eternity:** “Who knows the spirit of the sons of men, which goes _____, and the spirit of the animal, which goes _____ to the earth?” (3:21) What is the 3-part make-up of man according to the WOG?

They are a variety of verses in the Bible that indicate the eternal existence of man and that physical death involves the separation of one’s eternal soul / spirit from his temporary physical body such as ...

- Gen. 5:22-24; Genesis 15:15; Gen. 35:18
- Job 19:25-27
- Psalm 23:4-6; 49:10-20
- Luke 8:55
- John 19:30
- James 2:26

What does “death” mean to the believer in Christ?

- 2 Cor. 5:1- 10
- Phil. 1:21-23
- Rev. 14:13
- John 17:24

What’s even better than “death”? {1 Thess. 4:16-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58}

What does “death” mean to the unbeliever?

The divine perspective on this life: “So I perceived that nothing is better than that a man should _____ {to have an attitude of joy} **in his own** _____ {esp. if 3:12 & 1 Cor. 15:58 are true of him}, **for that is his** _____ {lot, reward}. **For who can bring him to see what will happen** _____ **him** {in the future after death}?” (3:22; 2:24-26; 3:13; 5:18)

- How does this apply to you?