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**We ended last time with words of comfort to Christians: (9:1-2) READ.**

Solomon said: I CONSIDERED all of these questions about life (in my heart) so that I could DECLARE ALL of what I considered:

All of this, (saith Solomon), so I could answer questions about life in a fallen world. But even with all of my wisdom; STILL, I do not understand why things happen, when they happen, and the way they happen. I understand very little about God's governing providence! Isaiah 55:8-9

But what I can declare to you is this: (9:1B): "That the righteous and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God"

Christian: Is there ANY GREATER COMFORT given to you than this....that you are in God's Hand? Psalms 31:15

In (V2): Solomon wrote, ALL things come alike to ALL, and there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked. Therefore, you cannot make a distinction as to one's standing with God from what has or is providentially happening in their life.

You cannot say this calamity happened to them because they have sinned, and you cannot say, they are righteous because everything is going well for them! John 9:1-3. But then (V3): READ

**No one knows the ways of God nor the designs of His providence, but there is an evil among all things done under the sun.**

Since there is "one event to all", and the wicked see no distinction or advantage to fearing God, they are therefore full of evil and madness while they live. Ecclesiastes 8:11

Sinners in the world see no immediate consequences or judgment for their wickedness from heaven, and so they continue to run headlong to their sins!

Instead of believing the gospel and turning from their wicked ways to Christ in repentance and faith, they JUDGE Christ and Christianity by what they see with their eyes.

If "all things come alike to all" what's the point?

The wicked see no point in following God, and consequently no reason to fear God. If the righteous suffer like the wicked in the world, what's the point in following God?

"Madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead"

The definition of "MADNESS" is when sinners continue in their sins, and in the destruction of their own souls while they live; (they KNOW that they will die), and still, they DO NOTHING to seek after or be reconciled to God. Hebrews 10:26-31

**(V4-6): The living BETTER than the dead!**

Now, when we go back to (4:1-3), Solomon praised the dead more than the living. But the context (there) was in regard to the oppressed who had no comforter; no helper. BETTER, saith Solomon, were the dead, because they were freed from their oppressors and all of the evil and wickedness that is done under the sun.

But here, Solomon wrote of HOPE to the living; the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil, but at least they are ALIVE; and to all who are STILL IN LIFE, there is HOPE!

For a living dog is better than a dead lion; or think of it this way....it's better to be poor, hungry, and despised like a dog, AND ALIVE (with the hope of eternal life), than TO HAVE BEEN rich, powerful, admired, and comfortable in THY LIFETIME, BUT NOW, you are dead, with no hope.

Proverbs 10:28, 11:7, John 5:24-25, 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

**(V5): “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten”**

If you know that you are going to die; NOW, not tomorrow or next week is the time to get busy and tend (with URGENCY) to the business of your soul! Though ALL living persons know that they will die, so few prepare themselves for eternity. 2 Corinthians 6:2, Romans 13:11-14

TO LIVE without any concern about death, while KNOWING that your death is imminent, (it could happen at any moment) is MADNESS!

Understand that the dead NO longer have any consciousness or awareness of anything that is happening in the world. The dead aren't going to be rewarded or benefit (in eternity) for anything done in this life for them AFTER they are dead. Job 14:7-12, Psalm 6:5, 88:10-12, 115:17

The dead are PERMANENTLY cut off from the land of the living. This idea of THE DEAD somehow consciously seeing what is happening in this life, like watching over and being cognizant with what is going on in the lives of their living relatives is completely false. Those that have died ARE NOT checking out what you're doing here!

Solomon completes this thought with the memory of the dead; they are soon forgotten. Ecclesiastes 2:16, 8:10

**In closing: it's madness to live in the world, knowing that you are going to die, but to carelessly go on in your sins. John 3:36**

Once we cross the river of death, there is a “great gulf fixed”, giant uncrossable chasm between eternal life/blessedness and eternal damnation/hell. You CANNOT return to correct and reconcile what you left undone WHEN you had space to repent, and when TIME and OPPORTUNITY were in your favor.

(V6): “Also, their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun”. Proverbs 10:28