

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 199 – No Comforter Through Being Alone (Ecclesiastes 4:1-8)

1. When considering the carnal side of life, who is comfortless and who is powerful?

Carnally, the BOTH (oppressor and oppressed) are comfortless while the oppressors are powerful: *“So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter” (Ecclesiastes 4:1).*

- There is no sure comfort that is of this world (**Psalms 69:20, Psalms 142:4, Proverbs 19:7, John 16:33, and II Timothy 4:16**).
- Oppression is a worldly reality (**Exodus 3:9, Ezekiel 22:29, and James 2:6**).
- The cries of the oppressed are not ignored, as the oppressors will answer for their wrongs (**James 5:1-7; cf. Psalms 103:6**).
- Thankfully, we can find comfort through the Lord (**II Corinthians 1:3**), the Scriptures (**Romans 15:4 and I Thessalonians 4:18**), and faithful brethren (**I Thessalonians 5:11**) in times of oppression.

2. In seeing the oppression and lack of comfort in this world, is it better to be living or to be dead?

Dead: *“Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive” (Ecclesiastes 4:2).*

- For some, being dead is more appealing than being miserable (**Job 3:11-22 and Ecclesiastes 9:4-6**).
- For us who are faithful, we’ll embrace life (**Philippians 1:20-24 and I Peter 3:10**) and death (**Ecclesiastes 7:1 and Luke 23:43**).

3. In fact, are there times wherein it would be better to have never been born?

Yes: *“Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 4:3).*

- When hope is lacking and sorrow abounds, people can hate that they’ve been born (**Jeremiah 20:14-18 and Luke 23:27-31**).
- This applies in other circumstances, such as with Judas (**Matthew 26:24**).

4. Could your hard work turn out to be something that causes others to envy you?

Yes: *“Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 4:4).*

- **Genesis 4:1-8** (cf. **I John 3:12**), **Genesis 37:9-11** (cf. **Acts 7:9**), **Psalms 106:16, Matthew 27:18, Acts 13:45, and Acts 17:1-5**; cf. **Proverbs 27:4**.

5. What verse, in our current context of study, describes a lazy person?

"The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh" (Ecclesiastes 4:5).

- **Proverbs 6:6-11, Proverbs 12:27, and Proverbs 13:4.**
- The slothful man will starve himself through laziness (**Proverbs 19:15** and **Proverbs 26:13-15**).

6. What is better than having an abundance of things that are accompanied with travail and vexation of spirit?

Having a little with quietness: *"Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 4:6).*

- Having a little (**Psalms 37:16, Proverbs 15:16-17, Proverbs 16:8, and Proverbs 17:1**).
- Having an abundance of things doesn't make travail [labor that is wearing] (cf. **Psalms 107:10-13**) and vexation of spirit (**Isaiah 65:14**) better.

7. What is the point of working hard and gaining wealth if you have no one to share it with?

It is vanity: *"(7) Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun. (8) There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail" (Ecclesiastes 4:7-8).*

- **Psalms 39:6, Psalms 49:10-11, Proverbs 27:24, and Luke 12:20-21.**