

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 207 – Who Is As The Wise Man Through Unknowable Work Of God (Ecclesiastes 8:1-17)

1. Does wisdom change the facial expression of a man?

Yes: *“Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness [hardness; ASV] of his face shall be changed” (Ecclesiastes 8:1).*

- Real wisdom is of God (**I Corinthians 2:13-16**), not of man (**I Corinthians 3:18-19**). Thus, one must be sure he or she is not just wise in his or her own eyes (**Proverbs 3:5-7** and **Proverbs 12:15**).
- Our interpretation of things is not good (**II Peter 1:20**).
- There have been times wherein man's face literally changed and shined after learning things of God (**Exodus 34:29-30** and **Acts 6:15**).
- The wisdom of God can certainly harden your facial expression (**Ezekiel 3:4-9** and **Acts 4:13**).

2. Was it wise to keep the king's commandments?

Yes: *“(2) I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God. (3) Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. (4) Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou? (5) Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment” (Ecclesiastes 8:2-5).*

- Obey the king (**Proverbs 24:21**, **Titus 3:1**, and **I Peter 2:13-17**) unless the commandment is contrary to the will of God (**Acts 5:29**).
- The king has authority (**Romans 13:1-7**), so he is no joke (**Proverbs 19:12** and **Proverbs 20:2**).
- A truthfully wise person has the ability of discernment (**Hebrews 5:14**).

3. Why is the misery of man great upon him?

“Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him” (Ecclesiastes 8:6).

- We talked about the word translated “purpose” [Strong's # 2656] when we studied **Ecclesiastes 3:1**. The term is defined as, “pleasure; hence (abstractly) desire; concretely a valuable thing; hence (by extension) a matter (as something in mind): - acceptable delight (-some) desire things desired matter pleasant (-ure) purpose willingly” (Strong's Dictionary).
- Other verses translate this same Hebrew term as “delight” (I Samuel 15:22, Psalms 1:2, and Psalms 16:3), “desireth” (I Samuel 18:25), “desire” (II Samuel 23:5, I Kings 5:8, I Kings 5:9, I Kings 5:10, I Kings 9:11, I Kings 10:13, II Chronicles 9:12, and Proverbs 3:15), “pleasure” (Job 21:21, Job 22:3, Job 31:16, Psalms 111:2, Ecclesiastes 5:4, Ecclesiastes

12:1, Isaiah 44:28, Isaiah 46:10, Isaiah 48:14, Isaiah 53:10, Isaiah 58:3, Isaiah 58:13, Jeremiah 22:28, Jeremiah 48:38, Hosea 8:8, and Malachi 1:10), “desired” (Psalms 107:30 and Proverbs 8:11), “willingly” (Proverbs 31:13), “purpose” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, Ecclesiastes 3:17, and Ecclesiastes 8:6), “matter” (Ecclesiastes 5:8), “acceptable” (Ecclesiastes 12:10), “pleasant” (Isaiah 54:12), and “delightful” (Malachi 3:12).

- There is an appropriate time and judgment for everything, which simply means that there are consequences for everything we choose to do (**Job 4:8, Proverbs 14:14, Proverbs 22:8, Proverbs 24:12, Isaiah 3:10-11, Jeremiah 2:19, Jeremiah 4:16-18, Jeremiah 32:19, Ezekiel 22:31, Hosea 7:2, Hosea 8:7, John 5:28-29, II Corinthians 5:10, and Galatians 6:7-8**).

4. Can we know what shall be for everything?

No: *“For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be” (Ecclesiastes 8:7)?*

- **Ecclesiastes 10:14 and James 4:13-16.**

5. Do you have complete control over your spirit?

No: *“There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it” (Ecclesiastes 8:8).*

- You cannot control your spirit or prevent death (**II Samuel 14:14, Psalms 89:48, Ecclesiastes 12:7, and Hebrews 9:27**).

6. Why will one person harm another and continue to have his or her heart set to do evil?

Because judgment is not executed on that person speedily: *“(9) All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt. (10) And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity. (11) Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:9-11).*

- Man, in power, often harms others (**Psalms 94:20-22, Ecclesiastes 4:1, Isaiah 1:23, Isaiah 59:14, Jeremiah 5:26-28, Micah 2:1-2, Micah 7:3, Matthew 26:59, and Luke 18:1-5**).
- When people think they are getting away with something they get bold. Their error is in not realizing that though judgment may not happen on earth speedily, the Lord will handle it in the Judgment (**Romans 2:4-5 and Romans 12:17-19**).

7. Though a sinner seems to live long and well, will he or she get away with his or her sins?

No: *“(12) Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: (13) But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God” (Ecclesiastes 8:12-13).*

- **Psalms 73:1-22, Isaiah 3:10-11, Isaiah 57:21, and II Peter 2:9.**

8. Do the just have a better life in this world because of living righteously?

No: *“There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity” (Ecclesiastes 8:14).*

- Solomon is considering things carnally (**Ecclesiastes 7:15**). Carnally, it may actually become harder in this world to live justly than unjustly (**Matthew 16:21** and **II Timothy 3:12**).
- However, the end of living a just life is worth WHATEVER we face in this world (**Matthew 5:10-12**).
- Remember that Solomon was limited in his knowledge of the redemption we have in Christ (**Romans 16:25, Ephesians 3:1-11, and I Peter 1:10-12**).

9. As far as this world is concerned, should we enjoy the fruit of our labors as we can?

Yes: *“Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 8:15).*

- **Ecclesiastes 2:24-26, Ecclesiastes 3:22, Ecclesiastes 5:18-20, and I Timothy 6:17.**

10. Though Solomon applied his heart to know wisdom, and he was wise (I Kings 10:23-24), did he find that wisdom would reveal all the work of God?

No, you cannot find out the work of God even by wisdom: *“(16) When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:) (17) Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea further; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it” (Ecclesiastes 8:16-17).*

- **Job 37:23, Psalms 92:5, Ecclesiastes 3:11, and Romans 11:33-36.**