

Ecclesiastes 6

Verses 1- 2

There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is widespread among mankind: ² a person to whom God has given riches, wealth, and honor, so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God has not given him the opportunity to enjoy these things, but a foreigner enjoys them. This is futility and a severe affliction.

The most common evil that would cause a foreigner to enjoy another man's riches would be a war.

Verses 3 – 6

³ **If a man fathers a hundred *children* and lives many years, however many they may be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things and he does not even have a *proper* burial, then I say, “Better the miscarriage than he,** ⁴ **for a *miscarriage* comes in futility and goes into darkness; and its name is covered in darkness.** ⁵ **It has not even seen the sun nor does it know *it*; yet it is better off than that *man*.**
⁶ **Even if the *man* lives a thousand years twice, but does not see good things—do not all go to one and the same place?”**

³ **If a man fathers a hundred *children* and lives many years, however many they may be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things and he does not even have a *proper* burial, then I say, “Better the miscarriage than he,**

There were several men in the O.T. that had 100 children and lived many years.

1. Gideon, a judge of Israel had 71 sons so if he had just 29 daughters, he had 100 children.

See Judges 8:30

³⁰ Now Gideon had seventy sons who were his direct descendants, for he had many wives.

2. Ahab had 70 sons so if he had just 30 daughters, he also had 100 children.

See 2 Kings 10:1a **Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria.**

However, both of these men had a proper burial so Solomon was not referring to these two men. This scenario may have been a hypothetical situation used to teach a lesson not an actual example.

⁶ Even if *the man* lives a thousand years twice, but does not see good things—do not all go to one *and the same place*?”

In verse 3, Solomon gave an example that was unusual but we know it was possible. A wealthy man had 100 children and lived a long life but here he says even if that man lived for 2,000 years he was no better off. So what is the point? Wealth does not guarantee a life worth living; the rich may have some advantages in this life but even that is not always the case because some lose their wealth and some can't enjoy it. Whatever our station might be in this life we all end up in the same place, the grave.

Verses 7 - 9

⁷ All a person’s labor is for his mouth, and yet his appetite is not satisfied. ⁸ For what advantage does the wise person have over the fool? What does the poor person have, knowing *how to walk before the living*? ⁹ What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is futility and striving after wind.

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The daily need for nourishment is like a treadmill, we work to eat, and then we eat so we have the energy to work some more. However, being wise is a long term spiritual goal that takes special care because it is contrary to the flesh which is looking for immediate fulfillment each and every day.

⁹ What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is futility and striving after wind.

Because of the flesh, mankind lives with constant cravings for physical needs and pleasures that can be filled in the moment rather than focusing on spiritual matters that would benefit us now and even more so in the future.

Verses 10 - 12

¹⁰ Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he cannot dispute with the one who is mightier than he is. ¹¹ For there are many words which increase futility. What *then* is the advantage to a person? ¹² For who knows what is good for a person during *his* lifetime, *during* the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a person what will happen after him under the sun?

¹⁰ Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he cannot dispute with the one who is mightier than he is.

Fallen man cannot argue with God about what is best for him in this life.

¹² **For who knows what is good for a person during *his* lifetime, *during* the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a person what will happen after him under the sun?**

Solomon makes two main points in this chapter.

1. That life is unpredictable. Mankind can make their plans but they do so without any knowledge about what will happen in the coming days.
 - A. One man had great wealth but didn't get a chance to enjoy his riches.
 - B. The other man had the opportunity to enjoy his riches, but was unable.
2. Life is very short.

No one knows just how short life is and how quickly it goes until they are in their "golden years" (for some of us it is silver or bronze). ☺