

**As we close out Chapter 3 and begin Chapter 4, Solomon, (Qoheleth) or the Preacher continues to behold humanity in a fallen and sinful world, and he continues to write what he has seen and considered.**

This morning, the death of the body common to both men and beasts, but what of the soul? What is that GREAT DIFFERENCE between your life and the life of an animal, dog, fish, or a whale? Psalm 104:27-30

And then, Solomon revisits oppression in the world, which is one of the terrible effects of the fall; it comes from the love/thirst for POWER over others. Start our review in (3:16-17) for continuity of text.

**Solomon beheld the terrible effects of sin in his kingdom:(V16-17)**

Specifically, among those appointed to positions of authority and dominion in governments; regrettably, the sin of oppression was seen in the temple, the place of worship and truth! The priests of the temple, who should have been pastoring and caring for God's people, and pointing them away from their sins to God, had corrupted themselves by their own sin; rather than comforters of God's people, they became oppressors of God's people.

This is clearly seen in the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas.

And so, the place of judgment was full of wickedness, and the place of righteousness, was full of iniquity and oppression.

Solomon said in his heart; there would be a time for justice, (for as there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven, so there will be a time when God will judge the righteous and the wicked); (V17) we know from the scriptures that THAT DAY and time has not yet come. The dead have not yet been judged; the day of judgment will come at the end of world. The Apostle Paul called it The Day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel;

Matthew 25:31-33, John 5:28-29, Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.

Let me add an admonition; vengeance does not belong to you and me, that is, to repay sinners for their offences, hatred, and malice against us; that is God's business. This is your part. Romans 12:17A; 19-21

**0 that God would manifest and expose sinful men and women to themselves before the day of judgment comes!**

Oh, that sinners might **flee from the wrath to come**; that they might see their current sinful condition before God NOW and repent!

(V18): I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them (or expose them to themselves) that they might see that they are beasts

Solomon saw, under the sun that man, who was created in the image of God had in many ways become no better than animals

and beasts.

**Death is the common enemy & the end to ALL life in this world; to both humans and beasts; we die just like animals. In this, we have no preeminence above a beast. (V19-20)**

BUT IT IS AFTER our bodies die and return to the dust, THERE IS A MAJOR DIFFERENCE in the dispatch of the soul! The spirit or life of a beast or animal or fish returns to the earth and is extinguished forever;

Charles Bridges wrote: The soul of a beast at death is like a candle that has been blown out

Animals do not possess a never dying soul; but when we die; our souls, which gave life to our bodies does not end; YOUR SOUL is not extinguished forever (or blown out like a candle) like the animal's life, (although MANY would like to believe and teach the heresy of the annihilation of the soul); the Biblical truth is, YOUR SOUL is returned to God who gave it. For you and me, there is CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE AFTER THE DEATH OF THE BODY! Luke 16:22-23

Hebrews 9:27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die, BUT AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENTÓ, (V21, 12:7)

THIS TRUTH ought to awaken YOU to the highness to which you were created! You were created in the image and likeness of God to commune with God, to fellowship with Him, and to magnify His Majesty and Highness! Your existence in the world should bring order and rightness to it. But sin has so terribly ruined humanity so that we are very often no better than beasts that have no understanding!

**(C4:1-3) Solomon returns to all of the oppressions that exist under the sun. (Cp. 3:16-17)**

What is oppression, but tyranny/abuse of power, it exists in every corner of the world! It happens in individual relationships, in families, and in whole societies of people/nations.

Oppression is visibly exposed when powerful leaders exercise cruel dominion over those under their charge. Instead of love and care and compassion for them, there is wickedness, hatred, and cruelty; oppressors mentally abuse their people and continually threaten them for non-compliance to unreasonable commands, orders, or rules.

OPPRESSION is a sinful danger that lurks near the heart of any who are appointed to positions of authority/power. It is a very dangerous thing to LOVE having POWER over others.

The sin of oppression begins in children, you see it when one child taunts, picks on, and bullies another child. Bullies want to be noticed, exalted, and admired. They want to be popular, and so they will flaunt their power over weaker children, and they will very often attract other weaker/fearful children to follow them. The primary reason that some children will follow and not resist bullies is fear of the bully.

Every oppressor, every bully has YES MEN! Even their

subordinates are afraid of them.

Proverbs 3:31: Envy thou not the oppressor, (the bully) and choose none of his ways

Children can be relentlessly cruel to other children; when left to themselves, unchecked and undisciplined, they become cruel teenagers and then they grow into cruel, oppressive, and power-hungry adults.

**Solomon saw oppressions happening everywhere; in every corner of society:**

There are people every day in this world that are being oppressed: In their workplaces, schools, families, neighborhoods, and even in churches, and under pastors that abuse their power; and there are entire societies of people (nations) that are oppressed by cruel tyrants and dictators.

Psalm 74:20: For the the dark places of the earth are full of habitations of cruelty Proverbs 28:15-16, Ezekiel 22:29

**Oppression is such a wicked sin, Solomon praised the dead more than the living. (V2-3)**

Why? Because those that are dead are free from their cruel oppressors who have no more power over them. They are freed from their tyranny.

Job 3:18

Solomon goes further to say BETTER are the unborn than both the dead and the living, because the unborn have never experienced tyranny, oppression, and cruelty.

**I would like to finish this morning with all the oppressions that are done under the sun. Psalm 44:23-26: God hath not cast us off or forgotten us!**

Here is where you MUST look/live above the sun. There will be oppressions under the sun; cruel tyrants will continue to exist in this fallen and sinful world. But there will be an end to all oppression at the last day.

Psalm 72:1-4, 103:6: God has seen your tears! Psalm 116:1-8

The Lord Jesus suffered in every way that we shall suffer in this world, including His being oppressed by the devil's religious agents. Isaiah 53:7

The devil is the worst oppressor, he has oppressed every generation of humanity; at this very moment he is exercising dominion and power over lost souls in the world. He cruelly drives every lost sinner by his tyranny and power over them to sin and rebel against their God and Creator. At the end of his deceitful oppression is the eternal damnation of the soul! The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One that can free you from his dominion, captivity, and oppression. Colossians 1:13, Acts 26:18, Luke 11:21-22

**SOON: When all things have been made ready, (at the end of the age); God will crush the serpents head, and He will also break the power**

**of every earthly TYRANT and OPPRESSOR.**

And then (when all things have been fulfilled) shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with POWER and great glory. And when these things being to come to pass, then look up, and lift your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh