

ETERNITY IN THE HEART



Ecclesiastes...The Search for a Christian Worldview

“LIKE A SHADOW” (*Ecclesiastes 8*)

“In this division, dealing with the evidences of the vanity of life, the preacher sets forth certain deductions. The highest wisdom is submission to things as they are. Who knows anything? He asks. Therefore it is good to recognize the king’s authority and yield to it, to recognize the inevitableness of things and submit to them.”

—G. Campbell Morgan

I. RESTATING THE QUEST (Ecclesiastes 8:1)

- A. Solomon’s search
- B. The fulfillment in wisdom.

“Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. To know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom.”—Charles Haddon Spurgeon

II. KINGS AND THINGS (8:2-8)

- A. The human soul and respect for authority (vs. 2-6)
- B. The human soul and the place for balance (vs. 7, 8)

“In spite of all appearances to the contrary, God has a plan for this bankrupt world. He still has something in store for it. This dark, satanic earth, drowned in blood and tears, this earth of ours, he still wants as a theatre for his grace and glorious direction.”—Helmut Thielicke



III. LIGHTS AND SHADOWS (8:9-13)

- A. Unfairness in life (v. 9)
- B. Unremitting death (v. 10)
- C. Wheels of human justice (vs. 11, 12)
- D. Inevitabilities of the soul’s destiny (v 13)

“Justice delayed is justice denied.” —William Ewart Gladstone

IV. FULFILLMENT “UNDER THE SUN” (8:14, 15)

- A. The obvious principle restated (v. 14)
- B. Legitimate joy in blessings and benefits (v. 15)

“The whole history of the world is discovered to be but a contest between the wisdom of God and the cunning of Satan and fallen men. The outcome of the contest is not in doubt”—A. W. Tozer

V. LIMITED VISION (8:16, 17)

- A. Limitations of body and soul (v. 16)
- B. Limitations regarding spiritual truth (v. 17)

“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.” —Proverbs 29:18

FOR REFLECTION...

1. *The conclusions of verse 15 may appear to be cynical and subjective. One commentator noted, “...this is not Epicurean hedonism based on despair but is a note of submission. Man cannot control or predict adversity or prosperity; however, each day’s joys should be received as gifts from God’s hand and be savored as God permits. ”Do you agree with the first or second view? Why?*