

Twelve Tribes of Israel

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 Q I K V N A R U B I S R A E L
 R P L W A I Q E S N T K Y A T
 A E D I M O Z Y Q U D X B N C

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Memory Verse

“But I say that wisdom is better than might, though
 the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words
 are not heard. The words of the wise heard in quiet
 are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools.”

- Ecclesiastes 9:16 - 17

I have completed my Bible studies for the following days:

- ☐ Lord's Day & Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday & Saturday

Signature

Daily Bible Studies

September 15 - September 21, 2013

“Discouragements And Directives”

Ecclesiastes 9:1 - 18



The Lord's Day & Monday

Read **Ecclesiastes 9:1 - 18**.

Have you ever expected something to turn out a certain way only to be disappointed? I remember when my first daughter died. I can't explain to you how I felt except to say that for many days, if not weeks, I constantly thought, "Did that really happen? I can't believe that just happened. Why did God let this happen to me? I can't change this. I can't undo this. Will I ever feel 'normal' again?" In those days and weeks, I saw Jesus in a way that I had only glimpsed before. I felt the weight of his glory as C.S. Lewis might say.

"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

- Revelation 1:17-18

"But our God *is* in heaven; He does whatever He pleases." - Psalm 115:3

It is often quoted, but it is such a good illustration that I will borrow from Lewis again. In the book The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe, the lion Aslan who created and ruled Narnia is loved and adored by many creatures. Others are repulsed by him and hate him. One thing that all of the creatures have in common is that they fear him. His worst enemies tremble in his presence. Surprisingly, those that love him and are loved by him also fear him. The only ones that do not fear him are the ones that have not heard of him. One of the characters who has not met Aslan asks if he is safe. Another character responds, "Safe? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

This is true of Jesus. You might think he is "safe." You might think that he only operates according to your ideas of how things should be or your ideas of what is good and fair. You might think that God's children are entitled to an easy, fun, care-free ride through life, but He knows better than you and I.

What does all of this have to do with Ecclesiastes? Well, read what Solomon has to say this week and ask God to teach you. I think you will learn from Solomon that life very often does not go the way we expect it to. It might be difficult and painful, but know this for sure, ladies and gentlemen: If you are God's child you can calmly live your life assured that God is holding you in his hand.

Friday & Saturday Activity

1. How do you think people will react when you tell them the truth from God's word?

2. Why should we seek wisdom?

3. What might happen if we only seek the approval of people instead of God?

Prayer

Pray about today's lesson. Here is an idea of what you could pray:

"Lord, please give me wisdom and please keep me from seeking the applause of men. Help me to believe that knowing you is great gain and strengthen me when the world belittles the relationship I have with you. Remind me that it is the greatest thing and help me to rejoice in it."

Pray for the Lord's Day service:

1. Pray that everyone would think it is important to come and be able to come.
2. Pray for Sunday School and Pastor Tim's sermon.
3. Pray that we would encourage each other to love the Lord Jesus.

Friday & Saturday

The last reading for this week is **Ecclesiastes 9:13 - 18**.

Yet again Solomon gives us a heads up and tells us what to expect in this life. He tells the story of a small city that is attacked by a big, strong army. There does not seem to be any hope, but inside the city is a wise man who makes a wise plan and defeats the army. Everyone felt hopeless, they were ready to die, but the man's wisdom saved them. You would think that the people of the city would make a statue of him, declare a national holiday, and give the man a promotion. That's not what happened though. He was forgotten. They clapped and cheered for a day, but the next day they were back to normal. The man's wisdom was not respected. No one asked his advice anymore. The people went back to revering football players and movie stars.

Boys and girls, when you fear and obey God, don't expect the world to pat you on the back. The Bible says, "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (2nd Timothy 3:12) When you speak the wisdom of God to people, they will not give you a round of applause very often.

So what did Solomon conclude? Should we forsake wisdom? No. He tells us that wisdom is better than strength. He tells us that we should listen to the quiet words of the wise rather than the loud words of fools. He even tells us that wisdom is better than weapons of war.

Basically, he is telling us that even if the world does not recognize it, wisdom is a very good and profitable thing. He also adds that on the other hand unwise sinners leave destruction in their wake.

If you know God and have His word hidden in your heart, know that you are blessed. You have great strength and great blessing that those who do not know God do not have. Be encouraged and don't lose heart when the world thinks you are a fool.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ..."

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

The Lord's Day & Monday Activity

What do we mean that we should fear God? Is God "ready to snap" and lash out at us in anger like a person with a really bad temper?

Prayer

Pray about today's lesson. Ask you mom and dad if they will pray with you. You could pray something like this: "Dear God, please teach me as I study your word this week. Thank you that even though you are powerful and can do whatever you want, you choose to do what is good and right. Thank you that you show mercy to those that love you. I believe you are true and I love you. Amen."

Pray for your family:

1. Dad and Mom
2. Brothers and Sisters
3. Grandpas, Grandmas, Uncles, Aunts, and Cousins

Tuesday

Today we will be reading **Ecclesiastes 9:1-6**.

I hope that as you read and think about God's word this week you believe that God's people are blessed. The world around them may be stormy, enemies may attack and mock them, but they have a confidence that God is with them and will not leave them.

In today's reading we find out from verses 1-3 that in this life it is hard to tell the difference between what happens to righteous men and wicked men. Can you find a righteous man who is rich? You will also find a wicked man who is rich. Can you find a wicked man sick and suffering in the hospital? You will also find a righteous man lying in the bed next to him.

How do we react? The wicked laugh and mock God thinking that he does not see their evil or does not care. The righteous however are given wisdom through the Bible. They know that everything is under God's control. They know that God has written down the day that everyone will die and that on the last day ever, God will separate the righteous from the wicked. It may seem that there is no difference between the two groups of people now, but there will be an eternal difference on the last day. The wicked will lift themselves up in pride today, but God will throw them down tomorrow.

In verses 4-6, Solomon teaches what we must do in light of these things. We must not despair. Solomon says a living dog, an annoying little chihuahua, is better than a ferocious, strong lion that lies dead. Why? Because he is alive. Many people in hell long to go back in time and obey God but they cannot. You still can.

"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near."
- Isaiah 55:6

Our hope and confidence is 100% certain if we are hoping in Jesus. He has made us a promise and his promises are always true:

"You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."
- Jeremiah 29:13

Boys and girls, do not be stubborn and fight against God. Don't think that your way is better. Trust Him. Believe Him. Obey Him. Today.

"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he might exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him, for he cares for you."

Thursday Quiz

1. Why shouldn't we be discouraged if we don't feel that talented?

2. When we do see others who are stronger than us, smarter than us, richer than us, what sin can we be tempted to commit in our hearts?

3. Is there a such thing as luck? What is really happening when it looks like good or bad luck has happened?

Prayer

Pray about today's lesson. Here is an idea of what you could pray:

"Lord Jesus, thank you that you do not pick the biggest, the strongest, the fastest, the smartest, or the prettiest to bless. Thank you that you choose to bless people not because they deserve it, but because you want to bless them. I don't deserve your blessing, but I ask you for it and thank you."

Pray for the leaders of our government. As always, pray that they would fear and honor the Lord Jesus with the decisions they make.

1. Sandra L. Magiera (Salamanca City Council)
2. Joseph M. Giglio (NYS Assemblyman)
3. Thomas W. Reed II (US House of Representatives)

Thursday

Today you should read **Ecclesiastes 9:11-12**.

The verses that we read today should strengthen us if we are believers. They tell us that blessing does not come based upon your accomplishments or your “greatness.” Blessing comes from the hand of God.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father...” - James 1:17

You may be fast, but you cannot win the race without God’s blessing. You may be strong, but you can’t win the fight without God’s blessing. You may be skilled, you may be wise, and you may have great understanding, but you are not guaranteed success. Solomon says, “Time and chance happen to them all.” Does that mean that people have bad luck? Well that’s what many people think, but we know that the “coincidences,” the “good fortune,” the “bad luck” that happen to people are all really the hand of God working in this world.

Verse 12 tells us that God can bring tragedy or death to a man at any time he wants...even when he is least expecting it. Man can build the “unsinkable” Titanic in pride, but God can put a giant iceberg in its path.

What can we conclude from all of this:

1. We may be having great “success” in this life, but God can end our blessings or even our life at any time that he chooses. We need to be mindful of this and be humble.
2. If we are God’s child, we should be very joyful. We do not need to be fast to win the race, we do not need to be strong to win the fight. God decides who will be blessed and of course he chooses to bless his children.. Abraham could not have a son, but God gave him Isaac. David could not defeat Goliath, but God did. You could not save yourself, but Jesus saved you.

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Tuesday Quiz

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|--|---|---|
| 1. If you are suffering or having a hard time in life, then God must not love you. | T | F |
| 2. There may not seem to be a difference between the righteous and the wicked now, but there will be a big difference on the last day. | T | F |
| 3. We should procrastinate and wait until tomorrow before we seek the Lord. | T | F |
| 4. God promises that if we seek him with our whole heart we will find him. | T | F |
| 5. No matter the circumstances of life we should be humble before God. | T | F |

Prayer

Pray about today’s lesson. Ask your mom and dad if they will pray with you as well. Here is an idea of what you could pray: “Lord Jesus, keep me from temptation, especially the temptation to believe that there is no penalty for living wickedly and in rebellion against you. Help me to seek you with my whole heart and to do it now while I have life and strength. Thank you for what I have seen in your word today.”

Pray for your church family:

Pray for the members of our church to fear God and to love one another. Pray that we would look into the mirror of God’s word and be honest about what we see. Pray that we would love and obey God.

1.F 2.T 3.F 4.T 5.T

Wednesday

Please read **Ecclesiastes 9:7-10**.

Yesterday we spoke about the fact that apparently good and bad things happen to the righteous and wicked. Remember though that the Christian man knows that no matter what happens in his life, God loves him and is doing what is best for him. He may not have any money, he might be sick, everyone he knows may be against him, but the Christian man knows that God is on his side. This should bring us great comfort and joy and so Solomon tells us today to enjoy the lives that God has given us.

He says eat with joy and drink with a happy heart because God has already accepted your works. "Now, wait just a minute there," you say. "I thought that our works do not save us." You're right. You are not saved by works, but if you are trusting Jesus to save you, then God has accepted you and the good works that he produces in you. You do not have to fear God's judgment even when you do "mess up" and sin. Whether you have a good day or bad day, God has accepted you. Before he did not hear your prayers, but now he does. Before your good works were "filthy rags," but now you God is working through you to do good things that he had planned before time began.

As it is often said, these truths are very "freeing." When we are sure that God loves us, we no longer stress out, worry, and fret about making ourselves good enough for God. We can live joyfully and enjoy life.

One final note today. Solomon recommends that we live joyfully before God, but that does not mean we live lazy, careless lives. We are to live righteously, and Solomon tells us that whatever our hand finds to do, we are to do it with all our might. That means we should be content with the circumstances we are in. If we are in school, we should study hard. If we are working at a job, we should work hard. If we are serving others, we should serve them well. We do all these things for God realizing that when our life has ended we will no longer have the chance to do them.

Wednesday Quiz

1. On what basis can God accept our works?

2. Read Ephesians 2:8-10 and summarize it in your own words.

Prayer

Pray about today's lesson. Here is an idea of what to pray: "Dear Heavenly Father, thank you that I am accepted by you because of what your son Jesus has done for me. Jesus, thank you that you do your father's work perfectly. Thank you that I am loved as though I did that work and that I no longer have to fear your judgment."

Pray for missionaries who tell others about Jesus:

Mr. Brent Meyers and his family live in South Africa. Mr. Meyers helps the pastors there. His website says, "We have worked with pastors who have no Bible, pastors who can't read, and pastors who have had little to no education in the Bible or theology. Yet these men love God..."

<http://www.biblicalministries.org/content.php?pid=173>

