

“Solomon’s Observations of This World”

Ecclesiastes 9:11-18

September 16, 2026

8 Observations:

1. Human efforts don’t guarantee genuine _____.

“The race is not to the swift”

Ecclesiastes 9:11(NIV)

2. Human strength and numbers don’t always lead to _____.

“or the battle to the strong...”

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (NIV)

“So, he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty.”

Zechariah 4:6 (NIV)

3. Human intellect and understanding don’t always bring lasting _____.

“Nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned”

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (NIV)

4. People are often ensnared by the things they longingly _____.

“Moreover, no one knows when their hour will come: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so people are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them.”

Ecclesiastes 9:12 (NIV)

“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.”

Proverbs 14:12 (NIV)

5. Wisdom is often sought in times of crises but then is no longer sought when the _____ is _____.

“There was once a small city with only a few people in it. And a powerful king came against it, surrounded it and built huge siege works against it. Now there lived in that city a man poor but wise, and he saved the city by his wisdom. But nobody remembered that poor man.”

Ecclesiastes 9:14-15 (NIV)

6. Wisdom is greatly needed but often _____.

“So, I said, “Wisdom is better than strength.” But the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are no longer heeded.”

Ecclesiastes 9:16 (NIV)

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 1:7 (NIV)

“A person may think their own ways are right, but the LORD weighs the heart.

Proverbs 21:2 (NIV)

7. Many people listen to the loudest voice rather than the _____ voice.

“The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools.”

Ecclesiastes 9:17 (NIV)

8. Many people are more influenced by _____ and _____ than by wisdom and truth.

“Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.”

Ecclesiastes 9:18 (NIV)

3 Conclusions:

1. Remember that all our earthly efforts are under God’s _____ and _____.

“but time and chance happen to them all”

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (NIV)

“But I trust in you, LORD; I say, “You are my God.”
My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me.”

Psalms 31:14-15 (NIV)

2. It is not for us to know all the times or reasons in our lives but always to live in _____.

“Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.”

James 4:13-17 (NIV)

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.”

Proverbs 3:5-7 (NIV)

3. It’s not that we shouldn’t use all that we have been given in the pursuit of advancement and success but that we must not _____ and _____ on them.

“it was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them.”

Psalms 44:3 (NIV)

“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.”

Psalms 20:7 (NIV)