

Ecclesiastes 9

Death Teaches Us How to Live

1. Death is in God's Hands (vs. 1).

So I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands, but no one knows whether love or hate awaits them.

2. Death is certain (vs. 2).

²All share a common destiny—the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the clean and the unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not. As it is with the good, so with the sinful; as it is with those who take oaths, so with those who are afraid to take them.

3. Death is deserved (vs 3).

³This is the evil in everything that happens under the sun: The same destiny overtakes all. The hearts of people, moreover, are full of evil and there is madness in their hearts while they live, and afterward they join the dead.

4. Death is sad (vs. 4-6).

⁴Anyone who is among the living has hope—even a live dog is better off than a dead lion!⁵ For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even their name is forgotten. ⁶Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.

5. Death is unpredictable (vs. 11-12).

¹¹I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all. ¹²Moreover, 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.

6. Death teaches us to enjoy life (vs 7-10).

⁷Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do.⁸ Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil. ⁹Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun. ¹⁰Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

