



The Sacrifice of Fools



Ecclesiastes 4:9 – 5:6

~ Our Spiritual Safari continues our examination of King Solomon's ancient quest for satisfaction of life in this leg of our modern-day expedition through the entire Word of God. Men and women are searching incessantly for something — anything — to fill the void of that which feels missing in their hearts and lives. In this report, Solomon continues espousing the erroneous advice of living for self, and doing whatever it takes to make yourself happy. This book of the Bible is the Alice in Wonderland section of Scripture; and, while I am no Lewis Carroll, I am making my best attempt to explain this inverted and rearward-thinking book to you dear readers. Up is down. Inside is out. Nothing is as it appears.

Now, there is no sense writing to me and telling me I have failed in my commentary — because I already know that. We have seen extremely strange sights, and have heard nearly unintelligible sounds on the pages of Scripture in our first five reports — from a Cheshire cat that smiles and then suddenly disappears — to a house of cards in which the Queen of Hearts proclaims “... *off with their heads*” — some of this philosophy is simply beyond my capacity to articulate properly. But, either way, if you have not read our first several reports from Ecclesiastes, I would suggest you go back and do so now.

Chapter four is where we began Solomon's laboratory experiment of egoism — or egotism — which is living for self. An excessive love of self is the philosophy of this world today. The natural man places his own interest above everyone and everything else in his life. As we have seen so far, and will continue to see, Solomon tried everything under the sun, from wisdom to science to philosophy to humanism to materialism to pleasure to fatalism, to bring satisfaction to his life — but none of those things worked. This section on egoism began in chapter three at verse sixteen; however, here, where our safari resumes today, as we continue to consider egoism, Solomon has made the realization that it is almost impossible to “... *go it*



alone.” Solomon understood he has made yet another failed experiment; and that life requires other people to stand with us, or we won’t be standing for long....

IV

9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

~ Naturally, there are many things we can do together that it would be impossible to do alone. We’ll never find satisfaction being alone, either; it may work for a while, but it won’t work forever. If you go mountain climbing, for example, it is a good idea to have other people with you — in case of an accident, or an encounter with wildlife. It is also good for the elderly to have someone who looks in on them regularly; because they might fall down and break their hip or something like that. If no one else is around, they may lay there unable to get help until they die. Further, if two is company, and three is a crowd, then there are times it’s best to have the crowd! If you’re going out in public late at night, for example, three are better than two. One person walking alone is a definite target to criminals.

Of course, the term “*law and order*” is always hated by the liberal – but we just happen to need a little bit more order to our laws. The idea that we are a civilized people who do not have a lost and depraved nature – and that the theologians of long ago were wrong, and man is improved today – is laughable and ridiculous. So, while these principles that Solomon states are true, the place where they become wrong is when one person is only using the other person for their own self-interest; which is usually the case. If you

are a saved person, and you go into business with an unbeliever, you'll quickly discover the unbeliever isn't really interested in the business, or you, or anyone except themselves....

13 Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.

~ Solomon was both a wise child and foolish king! I believe the child of God should be aware of the political climate around them, because it affects their lives personally, but should keep politics at a distance. The poverty programs that rich politicians have concocted are outside of Godly principles, and are not wrought according to the Word of God. Therefore, they do not function; and, in fact, are causing many people to become poor who were not poor before. Now, if oppression of the poor is honestly what you're marching, protesting, and demonstrating against, then I'll go along with you on that. But I doubt that's the motivator. The corruption in the governments of this world is completely out of control. These are tremendous statements in Ecclesiastes; and they reveal that God is interested in our lives — as children, as we mature, and as we grow old. God is concerned with our well-being. He cares about every aspect of our welfare at all times in our earthly walk....

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

~ America has had some very popular presidents who, as time rolls on, have been exposed as second-rate leaders. When the glamour of the election dies off, and policies fail — public interest wanes. The prudent reflect on their term, their accomplishments, and achievements, if any; and, more often than not, we discover they brought no blessing to the

nation whatsoever. In fact, we usually uncover how their office propagated nothing except corruption and moral, societal decay and deterioration. That's what the Lord is talking about here.

What we all desperately need is good old-fashioned consecrated horse sense, friends. Solomon was the second child of Bathsheba; remember, the first child of David and Bathsheba had died. Well, Solomon was not David's choice as successor to the throne, either. No, *Absalom* was the son David wanted to rule after him; but Absalom was dead. Isaac was not the first son of Abraham. Jacob was not the first son of Isaac. God has a way of choosing those who are *second*. So, if you feel like a second-class citizen as a believer, you're first in class with God Almighty....

V

1 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.

4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

~ Now, in chapter five, everything else has failed, and Solomon must try something new yet again; and that something is that Solomon is going to seek satisfaction of life in religion! Unfortunately for Solomon, this will be the most cataclysmic of all of his failures! Religion has damned more people in this world than anything else. Religion is *NOT* man at his best; no, friends,

religion is man at his absolute worst. I am going to make some startling statements here that will cause many of you to scratch your head and question old man Andrew; but don't reject them or dismiss them out of hand before you have considered them carefully in prayer.

The pagan religions of centuries and millennia gone by, and those in our present, have not been helpful to mankind. Take the country of India, for example; their problems are not because the people have a lower mentality or ability. Some of them are amongst the smartest in the world. However, their religions have literally chained them down and strangles any hope of prosperity. China is in the same condition. Technically, China is a communist country; although they allow capitalism in a limited capacity to serve certain self-interests. Well, China flourishes under communism. They never prospered under their horrible pagan religions of ancient dynasty rule. All they knew was war. Now, I am not advocating communism – so don't miss the point – which is: their religions never helped them; not one bit – it *harmed* them immensely.

Consider the Moslem world and their “*religion of peace*.” They are hopelessly fractured, they have no peace, and they kill and destroy each other until their countries and cities are in ruins and uninhabitable. Their condition is egregious; which is an understatement. It's the result of religion. Consider South America with their heavily Roman Catholic influences. South America is as rich in resources – perhaps even more so – as North America is; and, in many instances, they have a distinct advantage over North America. But they are lawless, corrupt, bankrupt and suffering unspeakable tragedy as I type this report and as you read it – all because of religion! Further, liberal Protestantism from the pulpit in North America has brought homosexual perversion being accepted as normal, lying deemed acceptable, and an overall divided society that, my friends, can never be reunited by man's efforts. It's not going to happen. All I can do is suggest they exchange liberalism for the Lord Jesus Christ; but I am not apt to be listened to – and I hold no delusions that perhaps they will listen. They will not.

Christianity cannot be credibly categorized as a “*religion*.” Of course, I understand the dictionary definition of religion; but Christianity is too large

for such a small-minded box. Religion necessarily encompasses a ritual and a ceremony; Christianity demands no such things. We can sing the Doxology – or not; there’s nothing wrong with the Doxology – but there’s nothing particularly right about it, either. Christianity gives us no form to worship by, because Christ is a Person; and we worship in Spirit and in Truth — emphasis on truth. We either have the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ indwelling us – or we don’t. We trust and obey Christ, or we don’t trust and obey Christ. There’s no middle ground.

In other words, Solomon says, “.... *Be careful and don’t put your foot in your mouth.*” We need to be more ready to hear than speak. We also need to understand that attending certain churches is not only a complete waste of time – it’s wrong. A so-called Christian is dead-wrong to give their approval and support to a liberal pulpit. In fact, in most cases, it is rank Satan worship in disguise. I think you’re as wrong as you can be if you are not supporting a fundamental Bible teacher who is devoting his entire life attempting to bring you sound doctrine from the Word of God. I just happen to know that God is going to hold *MANY* Christians accountable for reckless, irresponsible, and ignorant giving to causes that He has nothing to do with. I am sure that giving is going to be one of the worst parts of the judgment of a believer’s works down here and that, for many people, the way they gave, and the causes they chose to give to, will render them no reward in Heaven.

Solomon was religious to his fingertips. He went to the temple every day. Many people sit in the front pew of their church every Sunday, but have as little to do with edifying the church as possible. The only time they open their mouth is to spread lies, criticism, or gossip about others — or speak in tongues for their own edification. They don’t do anything except take up space in the sanctuary. They *NEVER* commit to *ANYTHING*, and never promise the Lord anything, either. Of course, they’ll go buy a new car or house, and they’ll sign documents in twenty-five places promising the man of the world everything they own – but they’ll not commit themselves to God that way. That’s religion, friends; they go through a form, they offer lip-service, but their hearts are not changed, it means nothing at all in their day-to-day lives. Christ has no reality to them. This is the reason there are so many unhappy people going to church. They’re disconnected; their

worship is meaningless – both to them *AND* to the Lord. They go through the motions of a ritual with a piously-pickled pretense on their faces – but there is nothing as dead inside as they are.

Of course, we should not make decisions under the stress of emotion or sensationalism, either. Going forward to the altar as a public display is utterly sinful, friends; and some people wail and cry incessantly every time the altar call is given. It's phony. They are phony. Their profession of faith is phony. Whenever they make a vow, they don't follow through; because they are insincere about holiness. Well, if you read back through Leviticus chapter twenty-seven, you'll discover that a vital relationship with God is never going to happen until we pay the vows we have made to Him. Many people make promises to the Lord, perhaps in a moment of tragedy or need — but they have no intention of making good on their promise to Him. Unfortunately for them, God is going to require it! When you make a promise to God – even in the heat of the moment – you're going to pay that vow; you can do it the easy way, or the hard way – but it will be done.

So, as our Spiritual Safari closes out this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God, I want to give a strong warning against promising something to God that you don't have — or cannot perform. If you have made that mistake, talk to God about it today – right now. God means serious business in our lives, friends. I believe this may be one of the foremost reasons Christians are not happy – because they owe God, but either refuse to pay, or are unable to pay. That causes God to exact that thing from their lives the hard way; and it is never pretty. There are many missionaries that God has removed from the mission field, many preachers the Lord has locked out from the pulpit, many Bible teachers God has closed understanding to; and many lay people that are simply set aside and not used by God for His plan and purpose — because they piously promised and reneged. See, we're dealing with a Person in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that Person expects you to mean what you say – and *DO* it. I don't think most people realize they are dealing with a *living* God. Well, He isn't playing games with us. God accepts no excuses in any way, shape or form in this connection, my beloved....

6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands? ~

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