

F. Excursus of various sorts and supplementary material

1. Aspects of death in Ecclesiastes.

The writer has been accused of making death more than it really is and having a very cold view of it. Some have thought that he taught annihilation, others have suggested soul sleep, etc. But I think his "death teaching" is practical and in harmony with the rest of Scripture on this awesome subject.

a. Particular ways of describing death:

All of these terms are used and some others have the death implication: "one event" "a great evil" "grave" "memorial" "remembrance". It is alluded to as a war, the breaking of the silver cord, etc., the days of darkness, and an evil time. Not very salutary terms to be sure but they must all be seen in the light of the context of each.

b. Death then, is common to all...it is the great common denominator:

Scripture

Observations

2:14

No one is immune to it. Need we say more?

3:19-20

8:8

9:23

c. It is terminal of all physical experience as we know it in this life. 9:10 (We have a report on this so we dare not go too far in our discussion at this point.)

d. It brings us into a new sphere, however, where God is king and the one to whom we are accountable.

12:14

11:9-10

e. Therefore as grim as it is, it is a teacher,

taskmaster,

or foe,

depending on where one puts one's energy and activity.

f. Summary:

To those given to human enterprise, death is an implacable foe. To those who simply live it is a tyrant; to those who serve God it is a staging area for future accountability. Death is equal to all only in occurrence, not in meaning.