

Ecclesiastes 3:16-22 – Injustice in Light of God’s Sovereignty

July 14, 2019 – Pastor Nick Neves

Four prompts help us to break down this section into logical divisions:

- Verse 16** – The Preacher’s observation (I ____)
- Verse 17** – The Preacher’s first comment (I ____)
- Verse 18-21** – The Preacher’s second comment (I ____)
- Verse 22** – The Preacher’s conclusion (So I _____)

Verse 16 – The Preacher’s Observation

If God is sovereign, how do we account for all the _____ in the world?

What are some examples in our world of places or people who should be helping *secure* justice, but are instead *hindering* justice?

Verse 17 – The Preacher’s First Comment

Solomon wastes no time reaffirming his confidence, not only in the Lord’s _____ to banish injustice, but also in His _____ to do so.

Verse 17 assures us that...

1. God _____ judge
2. Both the _____ and the _____ will be subject to His rule

*For God’s own reasons, justice is not _____, but it is _____.

Verses 18-21 – The Preacher’s Second Comment

Justice is not immediate because God has something to _____ man.

The injustice of this world are born out of our own sinful hearts. Man apart from God is nothing but a brutish beast, and has no advantage over the wild, immoral creatures of the world.

The Preacher alludes to two distinct ways that man apart from God is like the beasts:

1. The beasts are not ideally concerned with _____. They are pragmatic, and care most about what benefits them in the moment.
2. Man and beasts alike are limited by the confines of a _____ life cycle. A man has a great advantage over a beast (man bears the image of God) but death is the eventual end for each.

The very fact that there is a final judgment (see verse 17) shows that life for man cannot end at Sheol - it must extend beyond the grave. In fact, having a sturdy biblical theology of heaven keeps us from seeing the temporary injustices of life as a heartbreaking obstacle that we cannot overcome. We are reminded that the season for perfect justice lies up ahead!

Verse 22 – The Preachers Conclusion

This conclusion coincides with his previous conclusion (3:12-13): that man should enjoy what God chooses to give, not because there’s nothing better, but because it is Sovereign God’s gift for him _____.

In what ways is the idea of a God who is not sovereign *less* scary to us?

In what ways should the idea of a God who is anything *less* than sovereign be terrifying to us?

“Nothing in all the vast universe can come to pass otherwise than God has eternally purposed. Here is a foundation of faith. Here is a resting place for the intellect. Here is an anchor for the soul, both sure and steadfast. It is not blind fate, unbridled evil, man or Devil, but the Lord Almighty who is ruling the world, ruling it according to His own good pleasure and for His own eternal glory.”

— A.W. Pink, The Sovereignty of God