

## **Ecclesiastes 8:9-14 - Desirable Things – Part 5 – Learn to Deal with Tyrants**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Tyrants exist all over the world. I heard of some of the most corrupt abusive people in Ukraine where we were recently. Some people worked for over a year in the coal mines and were not paid. In many countries you can't get a birth certificate without bribing someone. And as you have been finding out over the last two decades in North America, communist countries are not the only countries with tyrants. We have tyrants here in our government too. Three thousand years ago Solomon pointed out that even in a theocratic 神权的 state as Israel, there could be tyrants.

So today I want to take some time to add one more thing God wants you to desire (as opposed to simple things like music, wine, wife, and other physical accomplishments). You should desire learn to recognize and deal with tyrants.

Our headings are: The **Existence of Tyrants**, the **Judgment on Tyrants**, and the **Preservation of the faithful from Tyrants**.

Our goals are: That you will be **equipped to recognize tyrants, raise awareness of these tyrants, and point people to Christ who destroys tyrants and helps you to deal with them.**

### **The Existence of Tyrants**

9 All this I have seen, and applied my heart to every work that is done under the sun: There is a time in which one man rules over another to his own hurt.

1. It seems that Solomon was writing about himself here... how he ruled to the hurt of his own people... something that Rehoboam his son continued after his rule (1Ki12). And isn't it true that that kind of rule was to Solomon's own hurt? His own people were angry with him and started to hate him.  
1Kings 12:4 "Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."  
Instead of being rulers under God to promote justice, these rulers abused the people. (Romans 13)

2. You too today must expect tyrannical government and leaders. Oppression will only stop when a man's heart is in the hands of the Lord. For instance, civil governments have redefined "unfair" and call it "fair." Stealing from some and giving to others is called "economic stimulus." It is theft. Because you work better, the government says it is only fair if you pay a higher percentage of what you earn. But not just civil officials are tyrants. There are social and scientific leaders, etc. who are tyrants, tyrants who want to force you to accept their view of things.
  - a. Social tyrants want to make you raise your children the way they think is best...and to teach your children what they think is best (as the government of Alberta tried to do recently). "Spanking is criminal" they tell you. "Each adopted child must have his own bedroom."
  - b. Scientific tyrants manipulate the facts to force some their view of truth on you. For example, it was reported recently in Maclean's Magazine that 33% of scientists claimed that they forged major parts of their studies or copied from others. And 25% of them said they used doctored pictures to advance their cause...like showing how much of the icecap had melted away or not!

3. These tyrants (governments or leaders) hurt themselves by abusing others.

10 Then I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of holiness, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done. This also is vanity.

4. Solomon in Verse 10, pointed out that the existence of tyrants was evidence of spiritual decline. When

leaders moved from a place of holiness to a place to be forgotten... it marks a significant spiritual decline. These leaders were to represent the God of heaven, but they became corrupted. Maybe they were filled with their own power... or they took bribes... Because Solomon realized this later in his life and worked to make it right with God and man. But those who remain in wickedness when they die will be forgotten... and he will leave everything he owned.

Proverbs 10:7 The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot.

Psalms 49:17 For when he dies he shall carry nothing away; His glory shall not descend after him.

11 Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

5. Solomon further pointed out that you will see these tyrants getting more and more daring. Instead of carrying out God's justice, they delay it or deny it. They delay punishing the wicked and they deny the ones who are seeking justice against their abusers. This gives the wicked courage and commitment to commit sin. They sin with impunity 不受惩罚 because of the delay of justice.

### Judgment on the Tyrants

12 Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and his days are prolonged... 13 But it will not be well with the wicked; nor will he prolong his days, which are as a shadow, because he does not fear before God. 14 There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity.

1. The wicked cannot escape the judgment of God, though it may be long in coming. Poole: *God is not an idle spectator. So God must act. He will act.* (It is God's patience with the wicked that they are not destroyed. So they should not take this delay in justice as if justice would not come. They must use this day in justice to repent of their sins and look to Christ.

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance 容忍, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Isaiah gave good warning about this justice that is sure in coming!

Isaiah 65:20 "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.

This curse that comes upon the wicked is fleshed out by the Lord... curses upon those who do not care that they abuse others... and they have no shame for their sins.

Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

The wicked man's eye may bulge 膨胀 with abundance and he may have as much as his heart could wish (Psalm 73) but this end is sure. Job 21:7-13 expressed the same worry that the wicked somehow escape judgment, but he learned the truth. The wicked will be judged. This judgment on the wicked is especially true for those who are tyrants. They will get what they love:

Proverbs 8:36 But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death."

2. Because of God's assurance of the destruction of the wicked, you will know that your present afflictions are not to be a hindrance to your obedience. Rather, this assurance makes you confidently live and work for Christ. Raise your children the way God says. Learn from scientists who believe in the true and living God.

3. There are many bad things and bad people on the earth. God uses those bad things for his purposes.

But the ones who do those bad things will face the judgment of God. God calls on them to change.

Psalms 82:1 A Psalm of Asaph. God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods. 2 How long will you judge unjustly, And show partiality to the wicked? Selah 3 Defend the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy. 4 Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked.

## **Preservation of the Godly from Tyrants**

12 ...yet I surely know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him.

1. The one who serves the Lord with childlike trust and godly respect will find that it will be well with him in the end.

Psalm 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them. 8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him! 9 Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! *There is* no want to those who fear Him.

Psalm 31:15 My times *are* in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, And from those who persecute me.

How does this protection come to him? Through the Lord Jesus Christ...and only through him. God's kingdom was purchased and preserved by Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

Psalm 21:4 He asked life from You, and You gave it to him--Length of days forever and ever.

15 So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor all the days of his life which God gives him under the sun.

2. Instead of being worried and aggravated about the wicked tyrants, for they will be judged by God, you are to enjoy what blessings you have from God...be joyful in this life and use God's providences. This call to enjoy the blessings of life and not be controlled by things you cannot control is repeated throughout this book. Ecclesiastes 2:24, 3:22, 5:18. This was not a call to give yourself over to Epicureans 享乐主义的 lusts...what is similar to North American living. Their thinking was that good and evil did not matter, so enjoy live by indulging in whatever they desired. Their modus operandi 做法 was: Eat, live, for tomorrow we die. As a child of God, you know better. You have eternal life. Your body may die but your soul will live forever.

## **Conclusion:**

Tyrants of various sorts have, do, and will exist, but they will not last forever. In order to express his judgment and in order to protect his people, God will bring judgment on these tyrants. Genesis 6 calls them "fallers upon men."

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Facing tyrants is part of the Christian life. 1Peter 4:12 says: *Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you... But know that the victory belongs to the Lord and he shares that victory with you.* You do not need to fear tyrants – whatever kind they are. Where are Chedolaomer who came after Abraham, the Pharaoh's who enslaved Israel, the Assyrian Empire that captured Israel and took them prisoners, the Babylonian Empire that decimated 毁灭 Judah, the Medes, the Persians, the Greeks that invaded Israel and polluted their worship, the Romans who murdered Jesus and persecuted his people...Communism...? And what do you think God will do to Moslems and Hindus who persecute his people? Stand still and you will see the salvation God will bring to you. You see, you belong to Jesus Christ, body and soul. And one more thing, train your children to recognize tyrants so they can face them.

Finally, Satan may pretend to be your friend, but he is out to "steal, to kill, and to destroy." He uses his people in this world to lure you to eternal death. But Christ has come that you might have life and have abundant life. Ask God to free you from the traps of the Devil by accepting Christ's death as your own. If you do this, God will give you a new lease on life...a lease that never runs out...and a lease that was fully paid for by Christ.