

WEEK 11: November 19, 2017	Ecclesiastes 8:1-14	POWER STRUGGLE
-----------------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------

Question: WHAT IS GOD DOING?

Ecclesiastes 8:1-4

¹Who is like the wise man? Who knows the explanation of things? Wisdom brightens a man's face and changes its hard appearance.

²Obey the king's command, I say, because you took an oath before God. ³Do not be in a hurry to leave the king's presence. Do not stand up for a bad cause, for he will do whatever he pleases. ⁴Since a king's word is supreme, who can say to him, "What are you doing?"

AUTHORITY IS ESTABLISHED BY GOD (8:2)

WE ARE OBLIGATED TO PLEDGE OUR ALLEGIANCE (8:3)

RULERS ARE GOD'S AGENT OF JUSTICE (8:3-4)

Ecclesiastes 8:5-8

⁵Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm, and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure. ⁶For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter, though a man's misery weighs heavily upon him.

⁷Since no man knows the future, who can tell him what is to come? ⁸No man has power over the wind to contain it; so no one has power over the day of his death. As no one is discharged in time of war, so wickedness will not release those who practice it.

WISDOM IS GOD'S PROVISION TO PERSEVERE (8:5)

WISDOM IS THE WEAPON TO FIGHT EVIL (8:6)

Ecclesiastes 8:9-11

⁹All this I saw, as I applied my mind to everything done under the sun. There is a time when a man lords it over others to his own hurt. ¹⁰Then too, I saw the wicked buried—those who used to come and go from the holy place and receive praise in the city where they did this. This too is meaningless. ¹¹When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong.

A CASE STUDY ON WICKED LEADERSHIP:

- **ABUSE OF POWER**
- **FALSE PUBLIC PRAISE**
- **DELAYED JUSTICE**

Ecclesiastes 8:12-14

¹²Although a wicked man commits a hundred crimes and still lives a long time, I know that it will go better with God-fearing men, who are reverent before God. ¹³Yet because the wicked do not fear God, it will not go well with them, and their days will not lengthen like a shadow.

¹⁴There is something else meaningless that occurs on earth: righteous men who get what the wicked deserve, and wicked men who get what the righteous deserve. This too, I say, is meaningless.

GOD WILL JUDGE

JUDGEMENT AWAITS HIS TIMING

For further study . . .

1. Read Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-25. How are we to look upon our authorities?
2. What are some limitations we may place upon our allegiance? Cf. Acts 5:29
3. It was mentioned in the sermon that God provides us with wisdom in order to persevere. Read James 1:2-8 and reflect further upon this teaching.