Understanding Ecclesiastes 6:3 in the Light of Eternal Truth

Main Text: Ecclesiastes 6:3 (NIV)

> “A man may have a hundred children and live many years; yet no matter how long he lives, if he cannot enjoy his prosperity and does not receive a proper burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.”

Understanding the Verse: A Tragic Life Without Fulfillment

The writer of Ecclesiastes, traditionally believed to be King Solomon, is expressing the futility of a life full of outward success but lacking inner satisfaction and eternal purpose. He presents a hypothetical man who has:

- A large family (which in ancient Hebrew culture symbolized blessing and honor),

- A long life (also seen as a sign of divine favor),

- But no ability to enjoy the fruits of his labor or a proper burial (a significant disgrace in ancient Israel).

In Solomon’s context, a proper burial wasn’t just about funeral rites—it symbolized dignity, honor, and the respect of one’s community. To die without one suggested a life without real meaning or recognition.

Solomon’s shocking conclusion is that a stillborn child—a child who never saw the light of day—is better off. Why? Because such a child:

- Never suffers the disappointment and futility of life,

- Is quickly forgotten and spared from the harsh realities of a world under the curse of sin (Ecclesiastes 1:2–3, Romans 8:20).

This comparison is not to devalue human life, but to highlight how tragic it is to live a long, prosperous life with no eternal fulfillment or legacy in God.

Biblical Examples: Ahab and Jezebel

King Ahab (1 Kings 16–22) had wealth, power, children (seventy sons, see 2 Kings 10:1), and a throne. But he died in disgrace. His death was so shameful that dogs licked his blood as prophesied (1 Kings 21:19, 22:38).

His wife Jezebel met an even worse fate—thrown from a window, trampled by horses, and eaten by dogs (2 Kings 9:33–36). Neither received a proper burial. Despite their worldly status, their end was a complete disgrace.

These examples underscore Solomon’s point: Without godliness, even the most impressive life ends in futility.

The Deeper Theological Truth: Burial Before God

The real burial that matters is not the physical one, but the

spiritual one—death to sin and resurrection in Christ.

Romans 6:3–4 (NIV):

> “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... we too may live a new life.”

This means that only those who have died to their old life and been raised with Christ have true meaning, both in life and death.

Jesus said in Luke 12:15 (NIV):

> “Life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”
> *You may gain the whole world, but if your soul is not saved, it profits nothing (see Matthew 16:26).*

Stillborn vs. the Unredeemed: The Eternal Contrast

A stillborn child, though it never lived, is spared from judgment. The Bible never attributes guilt to the unborn; they do not sin knowingly (see Deuteronomy 1:39). But an adult who lives without God and dies without Christ faces eternal separation from God.

Hebrews 9:27 (NIV):

> “Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...”

So if you live your life accumulating wealth, raising a family, and gaining recognition, but die without Christ, your earthly accomplishments are meaningless in eternity.

The Urgency of Salvation

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NIV):

> “I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.”

Christ offers not only forgiveness but a meaningful life and a glorious eternity. Without Him, even a life full of success ends in spiritual death.

Psalm 116:15 (NIV):

> “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants.”
> *This means that when believers die, their deaths have eternal value and are honored by God Himself.*

Final Call: Choose Christ Today

If you died today, where would you spend eternity? Whose presence would you enter? The stillborn may be forgotten on

earth, but the one who dies without Christ is forgotten in heaven.

Today is your opportunity. Believe in Jesus. Let Him cleanse your sins and give you eternal life.

John 3:16 (NIV):

> “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Prayer and Blessing

Open your heart and receive Jesus Christ as Lord. Let Him give meaning to your life—and your death.

May the Lord bless you, and may your end be one of honor in His sight.
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