

THE STRUGGLES OF LIFE

Solomon noted six categories of people in their Struggles of Life in our lesson text. He concluded that without God these struggles in life were futile and Chasing after the Wind.

We will begin by examining these six struggles of life.

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| • Eccl.4:1-3 | Oppressed | authority abuse |
| • Eccl.4:4 | Rivals | business competition |
| • Eccl.4:5-6 | Fools | underachievers and overachievers |
| • Eccl.4:7-8 | Heirless | without legal dependents |
| • Eccl.4:9-12 | Companions | two is better than one |
| • Eccl.4:13-16 | Rulers | fickle followers |

Solomon used the phrase, **chasing after the wind**, three times in this Struggle of Life passage

Eccl. 4:4 _____ 4:6 _____ 4:16 _____.

**We will study each of the six categories of people in their Struggles of Life
And show how futile they can be without God.**

1. The first category of people in their struggles of life is the oppressed (ashuqim) of society (4:1-3).

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| • Uncomforted (Eccl.4:1a) | fear – no one cares |
| • Unprotected (Eccl.4:1b) | power – authority abuse – no one cares |
| • Uncongratulated (Eccl.4:2) | laud or praise (shabah) |
| • Unborn (Eccl.4:3) | better off than living and dead |

The state of oppression led them to a sense of hopelessness: “I saw the tears of the oppressed and that they had no one to comfort (nacham / piel ptc) them.” (Eccl. 4:1; 5:8)

Their hopelessness was compounded because those in authority were the oppressors rather than the deliverers. “And on the side of their oppressors was power, but they had no one to comfort them.”

“The Lord also will be a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble, and those who know Thy name will put their trust in Thee; For Thou, O Lord, hast not forsaken those who seek Thee.” (Ps.9:9-10)

Who could be considered oppressed in America today? _____(James 1:27; Job 29:12-17)

- **It would be Chasing the Wind to go through this struggle of life WITHOUT GOD.**

2. The second category of people in the Struggles of Life is rivals (qiniah) in business world (Eccl. 4:4)

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| • Commerce | manual labor |
| • Competence | skill labor |
| • Competition | rivalry (1 Pet.2:13-21) |

“I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one’s lifetime; moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor – it is the gift of God.” (Eccl.3:12-13)

WITHOUT GOD “This is vanity and chasing after the wind.”

3. The third category of people, in the Struggle of Life is fools (kesil) [stupidity] regarding employment (Eccl. 4:5-6).

- Folds his hands (Eccl. 4:5a) self-limited (Prov.24:30-34)
- Flesh consumed (Eccl. 4:5b) self-destructive; under-achievers(Prov.6:6-11)
- Failure to rest (Eccl. 4:6) self-absorbed; over-achievers (**find a proverb in this verse.**)

Solomon’s point was that neither the under-achiever nor the over-achiever is the source of one’s happiness and success in life. **Who give us our daily bread?** _____ (Matt.6: 11) (Phil.4: 11-13)

“Two things I asked for of Thee, do not refuse me before I die: keep deception and lies far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, ‘who is the Lord?’ Or lest I be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God.” (Prov.30: 7-9; Deut.8: 10-17)

WITHOUT GOD – “This is vanity and chasing after the wind.”

4. The fourth category of people in the Struggle of Life is being heirless (en sheni/ no dependent) (4:7-8).

“Then I looked again at vanity under the sun.”

- Unfruitful neither son nor brother to leave it
- Unending labor no end to all his labor – live to work or work to live
- Unsatisfied labor his eyes were not satisfied – over-achiever- smell roses along the way
- Unnecessary labor but never ask, ‘and for whom am I laboring and depriving myself of pleasure?’

WITHOUT GOD - “This too is vanity and it is a grievous task.”

5. The fifth category of people, in the Struggle of Life are companions: (Eccl. 4:9-12; 2 Cor.6: 14-16).

- 2 are better than 1 work
- 2 are better than 1 warm
- 2 are better than 1 welfare

[Marriage - worship - “Fellow heirs of the grace of life.” (1 Pet.3: 7)]

6. The sixth category of people in the Struggle of Life is rulers (melek) (Eccl. 4:13-16).

- Faithful kid poor yet wise
- Foolish king no longer knows how to receive instruction (admonish)
- Fickled kingdom throng to side of lad yet later will be unhappy with him

**“Whoever serves Me must follow Me; and where I am, my servant also will be.
My Father will honor the one who serves Me.” (John 12:26)**

GOING THROUGH STRUGGLES OF LIFE WITHOUT GOD IS “CHASING AFTER THE WIND”.