

"There Is an Evil Which I Have Seen"

Ecclesiastes 6:1

One thing about evil ... there is plenty to go around. Evil can be defined as something bad or hurtful. We readily see the effects of evil in our society.

When Jehovah spoke to Israel, through the prophet Isaiah, He described a society whose moral base was corrupt. In chapter 5, verses 20 and 21, Jehovah said, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" What a description! These, so steeped in iniquity, are also described as "them that are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight!"

In Ecclesiastes 6:1, the writer says, "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun ... " How many evils have you seen "under the sun:" actions and attitudes that are hurtful to those they influence? As there is not just one evil under the sun, we could no doubt list a great many that influence our lives.

"There is an evil which I have seen under the sun" which would do us well to consider. This evil is one "heavy upon men" because it affects every society, every home, and everybody in Christ. It is evil because it is hurtful to those who practice it, and also to those influenced by it. It is the evil of rebellion. Rebellion is defined as, "bitterness, i.e. (fig.) rebellion" (Strong's), and "is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim" (1 Samuel 15:23). The rebellion, in 1 Samuel, was a rejection of the word of Jehovah. The term rebellion describes the act, and its definition describes the condition of the heart.

Considering the term, individuals are brought to the realization that several circumstances may promote rebellion, i.e., the individual may be forbidden to do something they want to do. This happens with children. In Deuteronomy 21:18, a son refuses to "obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother." Such a child is described as being stubborn and rebellious." A bitterness exists within the heart of the child. The opposite of such is described in 2 Chronicles 30:8, which says, "be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves unto Jehovah ... " As opposed to bitterness, which is hurtful, one yields to Jehovah. Rebellion, whether against Jehovah, one's father and mother, or the government (as Jehovah's minister), is an expression of the bitterness emanating from the heart. And, just as this bitterness was passed on from father to son when Israel refused to hear the word of Jehovah, so it is today. Rebellion, as any characteristic, is as a seed that is planted. It is often passed from father to son, generation to generation, until it finally reaches maturity and destroys the one it possesses: for the

scriptures reveal, "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he also brought into bondage."

As the writer of Ecclesiastes saw "an evil," so we also have seen the planting and the reaping of rebellion in the heart: When a son or daughter comes home from school, having been disciplined by a teacher, and the parent expresses outrage, marches into the principal's office demanding satisfaction, the seed has been planted in the heart of the child. When a family member is incarcerated by the authorities, as a result of a violation of the law, and the parents verbally deride the authorities for so doing, the seed is planted, and when that seed reaches maturity, it will reap a harvest of bitterness and anguish.

"There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is heavy upon men." ret