

ECCLESIASTES
The
THE LEGACY BIBLE OUTLINE SERIES
Remnant Church



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THE LEGACY BIBLE OUTLINE SERIES

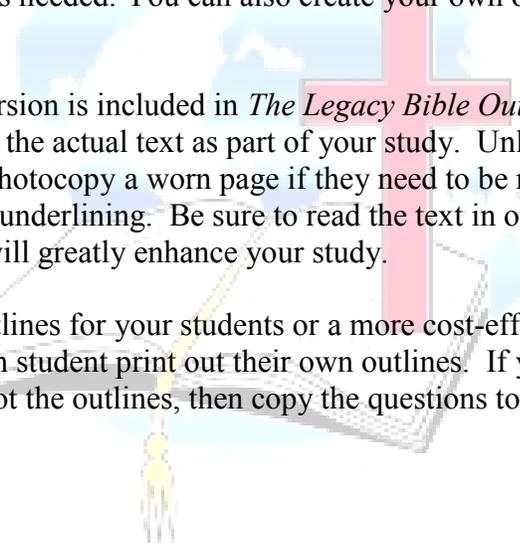
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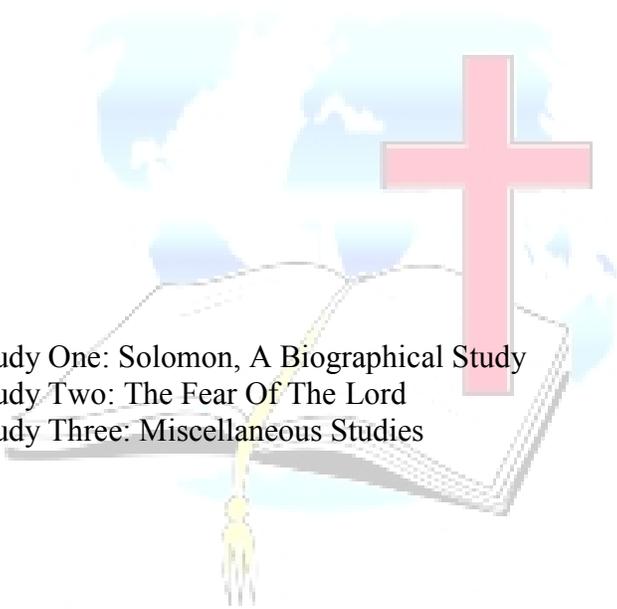
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For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line...
(Isaiah 28:10, KJV)

...His word burns in my heart like a fire. It's like a fire in my bones!...
(Jeremiah 20:9, NLT)

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

AUTHOR: Assumed to be Solomon. See Supplemental Study One for a biographical study. The author is not named in the text, but is identified in 1:1 as “the son of David, king of Jerusalem.” The following internal evidences in the text agree with what is known about Solomon from the historical record in 1 Kings:

- His unrivaled wisdom: 1:16
- His wealth: 2:7-9
- His extensive building projects: 2:4-6
- His collection of Proverbs: 12:9

He refers to himself as Preacher, which means one who publicly teaches.

TO WHOM: Israel and believers in general. This book was read at the Feast of Tabernacles. Ecclesiastes 2:24 may be the reason why.

PURPOSES: A description of the futility of a quest for life apart from God (Ecclesiastes 1:13; 12:9–10) and a warning of accountability and impending judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). One key to understanding Ecclesiastes is found in understanding Solomon’s life. Ecclesiastes reflects how he was affected by poor choices while living life apart from God.

KEY VERSE: *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. (Ecclesiastes 12:13)*

LIFE AND MINISTRY PRINCIPLE: Life apart from God—“under the sun”— is meaningless. The New Testament contrasts this statement in John 10:10, where Jesus says life with God can be abundant.

MAIN CHARACTERS: Solomon. No other characters are mentioned by name.

INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW: The name “Ecclesiastes” means “one who addresses an assembly”—a teacher or Preacher. The appearances of the word “Preacher” in the book are at 1:1,2,12; 7:17; 12:8,9,10. The word is not found in any other Old Testament book. According to Ecclesiastes 12:9, there is definite order to the book. It is not just a collection of random thoughts.

Ecclesiastes is divinely inspired, as all Scripture, but reflects a human rather than divine viewpoint in many verses. Ecclesiastes is a book that usually is not marked up your Bible. People often don’t understand it or they view it as pessimistic, so they don’t spend time studying it. Some think that the book is depressing—which is good because it means they are grasping its true meaning which is that life lived apart from God (or “under the sun”, as the Preacher calls it) is futile.

A key word in this book is “vanity”. As used in Ecclesiastes, it means “meaningless, futile, and passing swiftly away.” (See Supplementary Study Three, number 5).

It is important to keep in mind that the majority of the discussion describes life “under the sun”, living apart from God. This is a key phrase used in the book. (See Supplementary Study Three, number 4). Ecclesiastes contrasts life “under the sun” with life from the opposite perspective of life lived under God. We cannot successfully live “life under the sun.” We need divine perspective. Your life is not in vain when it is lived for God.

In the original text, the writer uses the name for God “*Elohim*” which is associated with the work of creation. He does not use the name “*Lord*” which is the equivalent of redeemer-saviour and reflects an intimate, personal relationship with God. One living life under the sun may acknowledge that God exists, but they will never have an intimate relationship with Him as long as they live life apart from Him.

Job deals with the why of suffering. Ecclesiastes deals with the why of life. It evaluates life apart from God and concludes that only a life lived for Him is worthwhile. Ecclesiastes emphasizes that there is no lasting satisfaction in possessions, prestige, power, pleasure, or people.

For the unbeliever: Ecclesiastes emphasizes the need for God in order to live a meaningful life. For the believer: Ecclesiastes is a warning to avoid being seduced by the things of the world as Demas was (2 Timothy 4:10) and to not love the temporal things of the world (1 John 2:15).

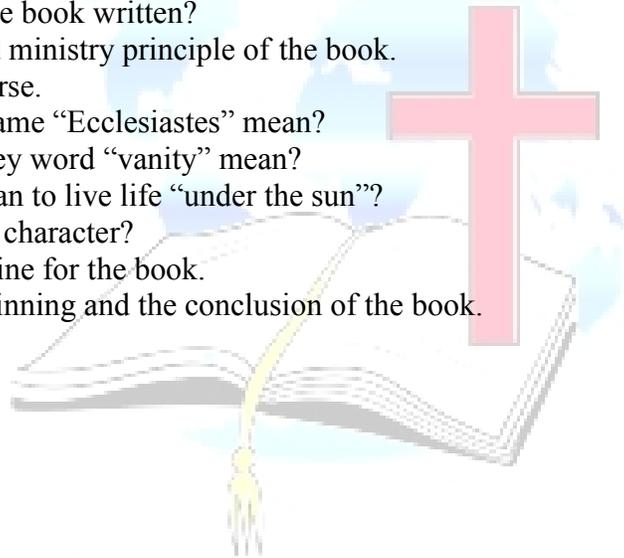
A BRIEF OUTLINE:

The Search for Meaning In Life

- I. The search for meaning by personal experience: 1:1-2:26
- II. The search for meaning through general observation: 3:1-5:20
- III. The search for meaning by observing society: 6:1-8:17
- IV. The search reviewed: 9:1-12:12
- V. The search concluded: 12:13-14

QUESTIONS ON THE INTRODUCTION:

1. Who was the author of the book of Ecclesiastes? What are some evidences in the book that identify the writer?
2. State the purposes for the book.
3. To whom was the book written?
4. State the life and ministry principle of the book.
5. Write the key verse.
6. What does the name "Ecclesiastes" mean?
7. What does the key word "vanity" mean?
8. What does it mean to live life "under the sun"?
9. Who is the main character?
10. Give a brief outline for the book.
11. Contrast the beginning and the conclusion of the book.



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OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes 1

- 1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.
- 2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
- 3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?
- 4 One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.
- 5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.
- 6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.
- 7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.
- 8 All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.
- 9 The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.
- 10 Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.
- 11 There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.
- 12 I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.
- 13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.
- 14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.
- 15 That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.
- 16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.
- 17 And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.
- 18 For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

Outline 1:

- I. The words of: (1, 12)
 - A. The Preacher.
 - B. The son of David.
 - C. The king in Jerusalem.
- II. Basic premise: All is vanity. (2)
(The word vanity means futile, empty, without meaning, like a vapour of steam.)
- III. What profit has a man of all his labour which he takes under the sun? (3)
(This is the perspective of this book: Life is meaningless under the sun—when you have a worldly view, apart from God. There is nothing significant to show for a lifetime of work when it is done under the sun without God.)
- IV. Reasons he views all as vanity. (4-18)
 - A. Nothing changes. The same cycles occur repeatedly. (4-7)
 1. Generations come and go.
 - a. One generation passes away.
 - b. Another generation comes.
 - c. The earth remains the same.
 2. The natural order of things remains the same.
 - a. The sun: It rises, goes down, and returns to the place where it arose.
 - b. The wind: It goes toward the south and turns about unto the north; it whirls about continually and then returns according to its circuits.
 - c. The waters: All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; the rivers return again from where they came.
 - B. Nothing satisfies. (8)
 1. Man continues to labour and is not satisfied.
 2. All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it (*words are insufficient to describe it*).
 3. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. (*All he hears and sees seems boring.*)
 - C. Nothing is new. (9-11)
 1. The thing that has been shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun (*both current and future things really are not new*).
 2. Is there anything whereof it may be said, “See, this is new?” It has been already of old time, which was before us. (*History repeats itself.*)
 3. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after. (*We don’t remember the past and current and future generations won’t remember the present.*)
 - D. Nothing is understood. (12-18)
 1. The author of Ecclesiastes—the Preacher and king over Israel in Jerusalem--

- gave his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven.
- a. He saw the difficult travail (*labour*) God has given to the sons of man to accomplish.
 - b. He saw all the works that are done under the sun.
 - c. He decided that all is vanity and vexation of spirit.
2. He determined that some things can't be changed.
 - a. That which is crooked cannot be made straight.
 - b. That which is wanting (*lacking*) cannot be numbered (*meaning a minus won't add up to a plus*).
 3. He communed with his own heart (*entered into counsel with his own mind*), saying, "I am come to great estate, and have more wisdom than all who have been before me in Jerusalem: my heart has great experience with wisdom and knowledge."
 4. He gave his heart (*his very essence*) to know and understand (*human*) wisdom, madness, and folly and perceived that they are vexation of spirit.
 5. He declared that:
 - a. In much (*human*) wisdom is much grief.
 - b. Increased knowledge (*apart from God*) increases sorrow.

Note: *The declarations in this chapter are true only if you look at life apart from God. For example, nature isn't a closed, predictable cycle as the Preacher describes it in this chapter. God held the sun in place for Joshua (Joshua 10:6-14); moved the sun back as a sign to King Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:1-8); opened the Red Sea and the Jordan River for Israel (Exodus 14 and Joshua 3-4); stopped and started the rain for Elijah (1 Kings 17; James 4:17-18); and calmed the wind and waves (Mark 4:35-41). Read through your Bible and mark each time the word "new" is used in relation to God and you will see that He is continually doing new things. Wisdom and knowledge are not vain, but are profitable when based upon His Word (Proverbs 2:6).*

Study questions on chapter 1:

1. Who wrote Ecclesiastes? (1,12)
2. What do you learn about the purpose of the book in verse 13? See also Ecclesiastes 12:9-10.
3. What does the Preacher view as vanity in verse 2?
4. What question is asked in verse 3? How would you answer it?
5. "Under the sun" in verse 3 summarizes the viewpoint of Ecclesiastes. What does this mean? How is this viewpoint limited? What does the phrase "under the sun" reveal about the perspective of this book?
6. What examples observed in the cycles of nature are used to illustrate the vanity of life? (4-7)
7. What problem is described in verse 8?
8. Why do we think something is new when in reality there is nothing new under the sun? (10-11)
9. What is the theme of verses 9-11? What is the conclusion?
10. Where had the Preacher searched for wisdom? (13-14,16)

11. What declaration did the Preacher make in verses 15 and 17?
12. To what did the Preacher devote himself as recorded in verses 16-17?
13. Much wisdom = much _____. Increased knowledge = increased_____ (18).
14. Jesus was the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, yet He was called a “man of sorrows.” Why does wisdom and knowledge increase sorrow?
15. List ten reasons given by the Preacher in this chapter as to why he views life under the sun as vanity.
16. The Preacher is speaking of human wisdom in verses 16-18. How does he describe it?
17. Read James 3:17 and list the qualities of Godly wisdom. Contrast these with ungodly wisdom in James 3:13-16.
18. What did the Preacher determine to know? (17)
19. Why do you think the Preacher is so unfulfilled with what the world would call success?
20. What does the Preacher say about grief and knowledge in verse 18?
21. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 2

- 1 **I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.**
- 2 **I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?**
- 3 **I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.**
- 4 **I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:**
- 5 **I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits:**
- 6 **I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:**
- 7 **I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:**
- 8 **I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.**
- 9 **So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.**
- 10 **And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.**
- 11 **Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.**
- 12 **And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.**
- 13 **Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.**
- 14 **The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.**
- 15 **Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and**

- why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.
- 16 For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.
- 17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.
- 18 Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.
- 19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? Yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.
- 20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.
- 21 For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.
- 22 For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?
- 23 For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.
- 24 There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.
- 25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I?
- 26 For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

Outline 2:

- I. The search for meaning. (1-10)
- A. He sought meaning in pleasure.
1. Mirth: The Preacher said in his heart, "Go to now, I will prove you with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity."
 2. Laughter: He said of laughter and mirth, "It is mad" and "What good does it do?"
 3. Wine: He gave himself to wine, while yet acquainting his heart with wisdom.
 4. Folly: He experienced the pleasure of folly to try to see what was good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.
- B. He sought meaning in projects:
1. Houses.
 2. Vineyards.
 3. Gardens.
 4. Orchards with all kinds of fruit trees.

5. Pools to water the trees.
- C. He sought meaning in possessions:
 1. Servants: Men, maidens, and servants born in his house.
 2. Cattle: Great possessions of cattle above all that were in Jerusalem.
 3. Gold, silver, treasures.
 4. Singers: Both men and women.
 5. Musical instruments of all sorts.
- D. He sought meaning in power: He was great and increased more than all before him in Jerusalem, yet his wisdom remained with him.
- E. He sought meaning in passion (*unrestrained desires*):
 1. Whatsoever his eyes desired he kept not from them.
 2. He withheld not his heart from any joy.
 3. His heart rejoiced in all his labour.
- II. His analysis of this search. (11) He looked on all the works that his hands had wrought, and on the labour that he had done and all was vanity and vexation of spirit (*like chasing the wind*), There was no profit under the sun.
- III. The Preacher compared wisdom, madness, and folly. (12-16) (*Note in verse 12 that "he" caused his heart to despair. Negative thoughts will do that.*) His comments after this comparison:
 - A. What can a man do that comes after the king? Even that which hath been already done.
 - B. Wisdom excels folly, as far as light excels darkness.
 - C. The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness.
 - D. One event happens to all (*death*).
 1. The Preacher said in his heart, "As it happens to the fool, so it happens even to me. Why was I then more wise? This also is vanity."
 2. In death, there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool.
 3. All that is will be forgotten.
 4. The wise man dies as the fool does.

After the Preacher lists all of his experiences, he says in verses 11-15:

-I looked: Take a look at your life, where you are today. Are you happy? Fulfilled? Successful? If not, could it be because you are living life "under the sun"?

-I turned: Examining your spiritual condition before God should bring changes in your life.

-I saw: There is a difference between looking and seeing. When you turn away from the old life, God will give you new vision and a new life. He began to see the vanity of life for what it was.

-Then I said in my heart: Looking, turning, and seeing results in heart knowledge, not just head knowledge. True change comes from the inside out.

- IV. The results of his search. (17-23)
 - A. He hated life because:
 1. The work that is wrought under the sun is grievous.
 2. All is vanity and vexation of spirit.

- B. He hated his labour under the sun because he would leave it unto a man that would be after him.
 - 1. Who knows whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?
 - 2. Yet he shall rule over all the labour wherein the Preacher laboured, and wherein he showed himself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.
 - 3. The Preacher despaired of all the labour which he undertook under the sun.
 - 4. There is a man whose labour is in wisdom, knowledge, and equity; yet to a man that has not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.
 - 5. For what has man of all his labour and of the vexation of his heart wherein he has laboured under the sun?
 - a. For all his days are sorrows and his travail grief.
 - b. His heart takes not rest in the night. This is also vanity.
- V. His conclusions. (24-26)

(This is the first of six tentative conclusions in Ecclesiastes, each of which emphasize the importance of accepting and enjoying life as God's gift. Conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is in 12:13-24.)

- A. There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat, drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labour.
- B. There is purpose in life when God is in the picture.
 - 1. To a man that is good in His sight, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy.
 - 2. To the sinner, God gives travail:
 - a. To gather and to heap up (*resources*).
 - b. That he may give to him that is good before God.

Study questions on chapter 2:

1. List everything the Preacher did in search of pleasure. (1-10)
2. How did Solomon try to cheer himself? (3)
3. In what ways did Solomon indulge himself? (10)
4. What was his opinion at the conclusion of his search? (11)
5. Summarize the comparison of wisdom, madness, and folly in verses 12-16. What did the Preacher see that disturbed him? What were his observations?
6. What is the observation in verse 14?
7. What did the Preacher say would be the fates of the fool and the wise? (15-16)
8. Why did the Preacher hate life? (17)
9. Why did the Preacher despair of labour? (17-23)
10. In verse 24, the Preacher presents the truth that there is purpose in life when God is in the picture. Who is the source of true enjoyment?
11. What does God give to those who please Him? (26)
12. What does the sinner receive and for what purpose? (26)
13. What are the questions asked in verses 2, 12, 15, 19, 22, and 25? How would you answer these?
14. Read Psalm 49. David faced some of the same issues as Solomon. What were his

conclusions?

15. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 3

- 1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:**
2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;
4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.
9 What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?
10 I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.
11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.
12 I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.
13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.
14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.
15 That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.
16 And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.
17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.
18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.
19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.
20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.
21 Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?
22 Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

Outline 3:

- I. *(In this chapter the Preacher explains that things happen at times appointed by God. He is not advocating that we should do these things. We all experience things in life we can't explain, such as injustice, tragedy, etc. Our faith rests on promises, not explanations.)*
To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. (1-9)
- A. A time to be born, and a time to die.
 - B. A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.
 - C. A time to kill, and a time to heal *(end some relationships, heal others)*.
 - D. A time to break down, and a time to build up.
 - E. A time to weep, and a time to laugh.
 - F. A time to mourn, and a time to dance.
 - G. A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together.
 - H. A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.
(In the Middle East, people embrace when they meet. This possibly means that there is a time to say hello and a time to say goodbye.)
 - I. A time to get, and a time to lose.
 - J. A time to keep, and a time to cast away
 - K. A time to rend, and a time to sew. *(Rend speaks of the biblical custom of tearing one's garment when in mourning or distress.)*
 - L. A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.
 - M. A time to love, and a time to hate.
 - N. A time of war, and a time of peace.
- II. What profit has a man that works in that wherein he labours? Travail, which God has given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. *(He saw no enduring profit in work, only endless travail.)* (9-10)
- III. What God has done. (11-15)

(This is the second of six tentative conclusions in Ecclesiastes, each of which emphasize the importance of accepting and enjoying life as God's gift. Conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is in 12:13-14.)

- A. God has made everything beautiful in His time:
 - 1. He has set the world in their heart *(meaning eternity)*.
 - 2. No man can find out the work of God from the beginning to the end *(because we don't have the total picture)*.
- B. The gift of God is that we:
 - 1. Rejoice.
 - 2. Do good in life.
 - 3. Eat, drink, and enjoy the good of our labour.
- C. Whatever God does:
 - 1. Shall be forever.
 - 2. Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it.
 - 3. Is done so men should fear before Him.
- D. God's perspective is eternal:
 - 1. That which has been is now.

2. That which is to be has already been. History repeats itself.

3. God requires an account of that which is past.

(Note in verse 11: God has set eternity in men's hearts and they will never really be satisfied by things "under the sun" apart from Christ. Also observe that all things—even the bad—are made beautiful in God's timing.)

IV. There is no moral order "under the sun"—life without God. (16-17)

A. In the place of judgment, there is wickedness.

B. In the place of righteousness, there is iniquity.

C. God shall judge the righteous and the wicked in due season. *(There is a time for every purpose and for every work, including judgment of the wicked.)*

V. Concerning the estate of men "under the sun". (18-21)

A. They themselves are like beasts.

B. He believes the same things that befall the sons of men befalls beasts:

1. As one dies, so dies the other.

2. They all have one breath.

3. A man has no pre-eminence above a beast.

4. All go unto one place: All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

5. He questions, Who knows if the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes downward to the earth?

(Remember: The Preacher is describing life without God, "under the sun". These questions are answered in the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection.)

VI. His analysis based on these observations. (22)

A. There is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion. *(Enjoy what you have now.)*

B. For who shall enable him to see what shall be after him?
(Who knows what will happen in the future?)

Study questions on chapter 3:

1. What is the Preacher emphasizing by the contrasts in verses 1-8? See verse 14 for help with your answer.
2. What are the questions in verses 9, 21, and 22? How would you answer them?
3. What is the Preacher's opinion regarding labour in verses 9-10?
4. What is the burden (travail) God has laid on man? (10)
5. What do you learn about God in verses 11-15?
6. What is set in peoples' hearts by God? (11)
7. What is described as a gift from God? (13)
8. What does the Preacher say about everything God does? (14)
9. What do you learn about God's perspective in verses 14-15?
10. What did the Preacher observe in the place of judgment? (16)
11. Who will be brought to judgment? (17)
12. Why does God test us? (18)
13. Summarize the main points in 18-21. With whom is man compared? Is the comparison true? What is there about man that makes him appear beastly?
14. What observations are drawn in verses 12, 13, and 22? What is the best way we can spend

- the days of our lives? What is described as a gift of God? What should we enjoy?
15. With whom is man compared in verses 19-21? What is the difference?
 16. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 4

- 1 **So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.**
- 2 **Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.**
- 3 **Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.**
- 4 **Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.**
- 5 **The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.**
- 6 **Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.**
- 7 **Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.**
- 8 **There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.**
- 9 **Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.**
- 10 **For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.**
- 11 **Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?**
- 12 **And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.**
- 13 **Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.**
- 14 **For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.**
- 15 **I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.**
- 16 **There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.**

Outline 4:

(In this chapter, the Preacher continues his analysis of "life under the sun" by examining the place of justice, the marketplace, relationships, in the palace, and in the general population.)

- I. In the place of justice, he found oppression. (1-3)
 - A. He considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun.
 1. He observed the tears of those who were oppressed.

2. He saw that they had no comforter.
 3. He noted that on the side of their oppressors there was power.
(*He witnessed oppression where justice was expected, the sorrow resulting in the lives of innocent people, and the unconcern of those who could have comforted them.*)
- B. Because of these observations, he praised the dead more than the living and those unborn who have not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.
- II. In the marketplace, he studied travail (*toil*). He considered: (4-6)
- A. The overachieving man: He considered his travail and right works and noted that for this he is envied of his neighbour. He viewed this as vanity and vexation of spirit.
 - B. The idle man: The fool folds his hands together and eats his own flesh.
 - C. The satisfied man: Better is an handful with quietness than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.
- III. He saw vanity under the sun in isolation which he contrasted with healthy relationships. (7-12)
- A. There is one alone, and there is not a second; he has neither child nor brother.
 1. Yet there is no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches.
 2. Neither does he say, "For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good?"
 3. This is also vanity and sore travail.
 - B. Two are better than one.
 1. In their work: They have a good reward for their labour.
 2. In their walk: If one falls, the other will lift him up. Woe to him that is alone when he falls; for he doesn't have another to help him up.
 3. In their warmth: If two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? (*This speaks of warmth of relationships also.*)
 4. In their warfare: If one prevails, two shall withstand him.
 5. In their worth. A threefold cord is not easily broken (*it is more enduring than isolation or a relationship of only two*).
- IV. In the palace, he contrasted a poor wise child with an old foolish king. (13-14)
- A. A poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king who will no longer be admonished (*he no longer accepts good advice*).
 - B. Out of prison the poor wise child comes to reign.
 - C. The foolish king (*born into his kingdom*) becomes poor (*because he no longer accepts wise counsel*).
- V. The general population. (15-16)
- A. He considered the living who walk under the sun who have a child that shall stand in their stead.
 - B. There is no end of all the people (*presently alive*) and of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him.
 - C. He views this also as vanity and vexation of spirit.

Study questions on chapter 4:

1. Who are the oppressed and oppressors in verse 1? What is the main problem?

2. Why does the Preacher praise the dead and unborn in verses 2-3?
3. Summarize the proverbs in verses 4-6.
4. Summarize the thoughts on travail (toil) in verses 4-5.
5. What does the Preacher describe as vanity in verses 7-8?
6. What are the questions in verses 8 and 11? How would you answer them?
7. What is the problem when one is alone? (8)
8. Why are two better than one? (9-12)
9. What is the three-fold cord of which the Preacher speaks and why is it important? (12)
10. Why is the wise child better than the old king? (13-14)
11. What was the Preacher's observation when he considered the living and those who follow after them? (15-16)
12. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

The Remnant Church

Ecclesiastes 5

- 1 **Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.**
- 2 **Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.**
- 3 **For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.**
- 4 **When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.**
- 5 **Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.**
- 6 **Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?**
- 7 **For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.**
- 8 **If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.**
- 9 **Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field.**
- 10 **He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.**
- 11 **When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?**
- 12 **The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.**
- 13 **There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.**
- 14 **But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.**
- 15 **As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.**

- 16 **And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?**
- 17 **All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.**
- 18 **Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.**
- 19 **Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.**
- 20 **For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.**

Outline 5:

(In this chapter, the Preacher continues his analysis of “life under the sun” by examining religion, righteous judgment, and riches.)

- I. Religion. (1-7)
- A. Keep your foot (*watch what you are doing*) when you go to the house of God.
 - 1. Be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.
 - 2. Fools do not consider that they do evil.
(It is foolish to think that sacrifices are substitutes for obedience.)
 - B. Be not rash with your mouth.
 - 1. Do not utter hasty words: Do not let your heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for He is in heaven, and you are upon earth.
 - 2. Do not utter too many words: Let your words be few.
 - C. Recognize God is in charge, not you. You do not have the complete picture.
 - 1. Dreams come through a multitude of business.
 - 2. A fool's voice is known by a multitude of words.
 - D. When you vow a vow unto God, defer not to pay it.
 - 1. He has no pleasure in fools (*those who vow and do not keep it*).
 - 2. Pay that which you have vowed.
 - 3. It is better that you should not vow, than that you should vow and not pay.
 - E. Do not permit your mouth to cause your flesh to sin.
 - 1. Do not say before the angel that it was an error.
 - 2. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands?
 - F. Don't just be a dreamer: In a multitude of dreams and many words (*only*) there are also divers (*various*) vanities. (*Dreaming instead of doing is not profitable.*)
 - G. Fear God.
- II. Righteous judgment. (8-9)
- A. If you see the oppression of the poor and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, don't be surprised.
 - 1. He that is higher than the highest regards it.
 - 2. There be higher than they.
(God's justice will prevail. All accounts are not settled here on earth.)

- B. The profit of the earth is for all: The king himself is served by the field.
(*Unjust judgment exists because evil leaders want to prosper.*)
- III. Riches. (10-17)
- A. He that loves silver shall not be satisfied with it; nor will he that loves abundance be satisfied with increase: This is also vanity.
- B. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, other than beholding them with their eyes?
- C. The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.
- D. This is a sore evil under the sun: Riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.
1. Those riches perish by evil travail.
 2. A man has a son, and there is nothing in his hand. (*He has no support for the child because he lost his money.*)
 3. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came. He shall take nothing of his labour to carry away in his hand.
 4. In all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?
 5. All his days he eats in darkness and he has much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.
- (*The Preacher is not advocating poverty or wealth, as there are problems associated with both: Proverbs 30:7-9. He is simply warning against the love of money: 1 Timothy 6:10.*)
- IV. Reflections: Observations based on this analysis. (18-20)
- A. Focus on the Giver, not the gifts: It is good for one to eat, drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour that he does under the sun all the days of his life, which God gives him: for it is his portion.
- B. Live each day joyously and use it to serve God.
1. Every man to whom God has given riches, wealth, power to eat thereof, to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.
 2. For he shall not remember much about the days of his life; because God answers him in the joy of his heart.

(This is the third of six tentative conclusions in Ecclesiastes, each of which emphasize the importance of accepting and enjoying life as God's gift. Conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is in 12:13-14.)

Study questions on chapter 5:

1. Why should you let your words be few? (1-2)
2. How should you conduct yourself in the house of God? (2-3)
3. What do you learn about vows in verses 4-6?
4. How are dreams (mere words without action) described in verse 7?
5. Why should we stand in awe of God? (7)
6. What reason behind oppression is noted in verse 8?
7. What is one reason for unjust judgment? (9)

8. Despite the problems described in verses 8 and 9, of what can we be assured?
9. Why do riches not satisfy? (10)
10. What causes a wrong focus on silver and abundance? (10-11)
11. What is the problem addressed in verse 11?
12. Why would riches cause you to lose sleep? (12)
13. What are the questions in verses 6, 11, and 16? How would you answer them?
14. What is the evil described in verses 13-14?
15. What do you learn about the temporal nature of wealth in verses 14-16?
16. What observations are drawn in verses 18-20?
17. What is described as man's portion from God in verse 18?
18. What did the Preacher describe as a gift from God? (19-20)
19. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Remnant Church

Ecclesiastes 6

- 1 **There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:**
- 2 **A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.**
- 3 **If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.**
- 4 **For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.**
- 5 **Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other.**
- 6 **Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?**
- 7 **All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.**
- 8 **For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?**
- 9 **Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.**
- 10 **That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.**
- 11 **Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?**
- 12 **For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?**

Outline 6:

(In this chapter, the Preacher examines evil under the sun that is common among men.)

- I. Riches without the ability to enjoy them. (1-2)
 - A. A man to whom God gives riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wants nothing for his soul of all that he desires:

1. Yet God does not give him power to eat (*partake*) of it, but a stranger eats it.
 2. This is vanity and an evil disease.
- II. Life without the hope of eternity: (3-6)
- A. If a man has an hundred children and lives many years, but his soul is not filled with good (*he is not content*) and he has no burial (*he lives forever*): An untimely birth (*a stillborn child*) is better than he because:
 1. He comes in with vanity, departs in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.
 2. He has not seen the sun, nor known anything.
 3. The stillborn child has more rest than the other man.
 - B. Though a man live 2,000 years, yet has he seen no good: do not all go to one place? (*In Old Testament times, the spirits of all the deceased went to one place, Sheol. There were two regions there: A place of torment for unbelievers: Psalm 9:17 and Deuteronomy 32:22; and a place of rest for believers: Job 3:11-19. Today, spirits of unbelievers go to Hades to await judgment: Luke 16:23-25. The spirits of believers go to paradise in the presence of Christ: Luke 23:43.*)
- III. Labour and appetites that are unfulfilling. (7)
- A. The labour of man is for his mouth.
 - B. Yet the appetite is not filled.
(*This speaks of one who lives and works only to satisfy fleshly appetites.*)
- IV. Lack of distinction: There is no differences between the wise and the fool, the poor and the living: (8)
- A. What has the wise more than the fool?
 - B. What has the poor, that knows to walk before the living?
- V. Vain sight and wandering desires. (9)
- A. Better is the sight of the eyes (*what one has*) than the wandering of desires (*what he wants*).
 - B. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.
- VI. Questions without answers. (10-12)
(*Remember that the Preacher is speaking from the perspective of worldly knowledge and life under the sun without God, not divine biblical revelation. There are legitimate answers to these questions in God's Word.*)
- A. Is there anything new?
 1. *The Preacher views all which has been as being named already and known to man.*
 2. *God is the God of new things. He continually declares, "I will do a new thing, make you a new creature", etc.*
 - B. Why bother to pray, if things are already predestined?
 1. *The Preacher declares that man cannot contend with Him that is mightier than he. He believes everything is pre-determined and can't be changed.*
 2. *The Bible teaches that prayer is effectual. God commands us to pray and He responds to prayer.*
 - C. Who knows what is good for us?
 1. *The Preacher declares that there are many things that increase vanity, so*

- how is a man better off?*
2. *God knows what is good for us and reveals it in His Word.*
- D. Can anyone know what is going to happen next?
1. *The Preacher asks, "For who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?"*
 2. *God's prophetic Word foretells what is ahead and prepares us for it.*

Study questions on chapter 6:

1. What common evil is described in verses 1-2?
2. Summarize the Preacher's concerns in verses 3-6.
3. What does the Preacher view as futile in 1-6? In 7-9? In 10-12?
4. What statement did the Preacher make about children? (3)
5. What is true about the fate of all people? (6)
6. What is never satisfied? (7)
7. What questions did the Preacher raise concerning the wise and the foolish? (8)
8. What did the Preacher consider to be better than a roving appetite?. (9)
9. What observations did the Preacher make about people in verses 10-11?
10. Put the proverbs in verses 7-9 in your own words.
11. What questions are asked in verses 6,8,11, and 12? How would you answer these?
12. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 7

- 1 **A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.**
- 2 **It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.**
- 3 **Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.**
- 4 **The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.**
- 5 **It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.**
- 6 **For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.**
- 7 **Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.**
- 8 **Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.**
- 9 **Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.**
- 10 **Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.**
- 11 **Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.**
- 12 **For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.**

- 13 **Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?**
- 14 **In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.**
- 15 **All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his wickedness.**
- 16 **Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?**
- 17 **Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?**
- 18 **It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.**
- 19 **Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.**
- 20 **For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.**
- 21 **Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:**
- 22 **For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.**
- 23 **All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.**
- 24 **That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?**
- 25 **I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:**
- 26 **And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.**
- 27 **Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account:**
- 28 **Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.**
- 29 **Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.**

Outline 7:

(This is a chapter of comparisons written in a proverbs-like style.)

- I. Death and birth. (1)
 - A. A good name is better than precious ointment.
(Ointment is representative of luxury and wealth.)
 - B. The day of death is better than the day of one's birth.
(The writer is not saying that death is better than life. He is talking about your reputation and your good name, which are not totally secured until death. Finishing is better than starting: Ecclesiastes 6:8.)
- II. Mourning and feasting. (2)
 - A. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting.

- (*You learn more in times of suffering.*)
- B. That is the end of all men and the living will lay it to heart.
(*We are all going to die and it is wise to realize this and prepare for it.*)
- III. Sorrow and laughter. Sorrow is better than laughter: (3-4)
- A. By sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.
- B. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning.
- C. The heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
(*Sorrow will come to all. Both joy and sorrow are part of life. You can never learn in the house of feasting what you can learn in the house of mourning.*)
- IV. Rebuke of the wise and the praise of fools. (5-6)
- A. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song
(*insincere praise*) of fools.
- B. As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool.
- C. This also is vanity.
(*The praise and laughter of fools are vain and compared to thorns which furnish little warmth and are soon consumed. They are vanity.*)
- V. Oppression and gifts. (7)
- A. Oppression makes a wise man mad.
(*Even the wisest man cannot understand it.*)
- B. A gift destroys the heart.
(*The KJV uses the word "gift" which means "a bribe."*)
- VI. The end and the beginning. Better is the end of a thing than the beginning. (8)
(*The end is only better when we live right. Sin ends in death: James 1:13-15. Begin with the end in mind.*)
- VII. The proud and the patient. (8-9)
- A. The patient in spirit are better than the proud in spirit.
- B. Be not hasty in spirit to be angry (*quick-tempered*).
- C. Anger rests in the bosom of fools.
- VIII. The former days and the present days. Do not say, "What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" For you do not inquire wisely concerning this. (10) (*Isn't the ultimate destiny to which God will bring you better than your past?*)
- IX. Wisdom and money. (11-12)
- A. Wisdom is good with an inheritance: By it there is profit to them that see the sun.
- B. Wisdom and money are a defense.
- C. The excellency of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to them that have it.
- X. Resignation and rebellion. Consider the work of God: Who can make straight that which He has made crooked? (13) (*Find out what God is doing and then get into harmony with Him instead of rebelling.*)
- XI. Prosperity and adversity. (14)
- A. In the day of prosperity be joyful.
- B. In the day of adversity consider:
1. God also hath set the one over against the other.
 2. To the end that man should find nothing after him.
(*You can't take things for granted. Nothing is certain in life.*)
- XII. The wicked and righteous. (15-17)

- A. There is a just man that perishes in his righteousness.
- B. There is a wicked man that prolongs his life in his wickedness.
(*This is the view under the sun. The eternal view reveals wickedness is punished and the wicked do not inherit eternal life.*)
- C. Be not righteous over much; neither make yourself overly wise: why should you destroy yourself? (*This is speaking of arrogant, proud self-righteousness.*)
- D. Be not over much wicked, neither be foolish: Why should you die before your time?
- XIII. The task at hand. It is good that you should take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not your hand: for he that fears God shall come forth of them all (*he will be blessed*). (18)
- XIV. The wise and the mighty. Wisdom strengthens the wise more than ten mighty men which are over a city. (19)
- XV. The just and the sinner. There is not a single just man upon earth that does good and never sins. (20)
- XVI. Those who curse and those who have been cursed. (21)
- A. Take no heed to all words that are spoken; lest you hear your servant curse you.
(*Don't pay attention to what others say about you.*)
- B. For your own heart knows that you likewise have cursed others.
- XVII. Wisdom and folly. (22-25)
- A. All this was proved by the Preacher's wisdom, yet (*he felt his wisdom*) remained far from him.
- B. That which is far off and exceeding deep, who can find it out?
(*There are some questions we cannot answer: Deuteronomy 29:29.*)
- C. The Preacher applied his heart:
1. To know.
 2. To search.
 3. To seek out wisdom and the reason of things.
 4. To know the wickedness of folly, foolishness, and madness.
- XVIII. Man and woman. (26-29)
- A. The Preacher found more bitter than death the woman whose heart is like snares and nets, and her hands as bands:
1. Whoever pleases God shall escape from her.
 2. The sinner shall be taken by her.
(*He is referring to ungodly, immoral women.*)
- B. The Preacher, counting one by one, declared:
1. One man among a thousand have I found.
 2. A woman among all those have I not found.
(*A godly woman was more rare than a man.*)
 3. This only have I found: That God has made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions (*schemes*).

Study questions on chapter 7:

1. A good name is better than what? (1)
2. Why is the day of death better than that of one's birth? How does this relate to a good name? (1)

3. Why is sorrow and mourning better than laughter? (2-4)
4. What are the questions in verses 10, 13, 16, 17, and 24? How would you answer them?
5. Why is it better to be rebuked by a wise man than to receive the “fool’s song”? (5-6)
6. Explain verse 7 in your own words. What is a wise man’s response to oppression?
7. What is better than the beginning? Why is it better? (8)
8. What rests in the bosom of fools? (9)
9. Why should we be patient and not easily angered? (9)
10. Why is it not good to look back to the “good old days”? (10)
11. State verses 11-12 in your own words. To what did the Preacher compare wisdom?
12. What should we do when times are difficult? (13-14)
13. What do you learn about prosperity and adversity in verse 14?
14. What advice is given in verses 15-17?
15. What do you learn about wisdom in verses 11,19,23-25?
16. What do you learn about man in verse 20?
17. What is the danger of listening to gossip? (21-22)
18. What two contrasts had the Preacher observed during his life? (15)
19. What did the Preacher find more bitter than death? (26)
20. What had the Preacher sought for, what had he found, and what had he not found? (27-29)
21. According to this chapter, which is best and why?
 - Death or birth.
 - Mourning or feasting.
 - Sorrow or laughter.
 - Rebuking the wise or praising fools.
 - End or the beginning.
 - Pride or patience.
 - Former times or present day.
22. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 8

- 1 **Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.**
- 2 **I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.**
- 3 **Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.**
- 4 **Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?**
- 5 **Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.**
- 6 **Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.**
- 7 **For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?**
- 8 **There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall**

- wickedness deliver those that are given to it.
- 9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.
- 10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.
- 11 Because 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.
- 12 Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:
- 13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.
- 14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity.
- 15 Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.
- 16 When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:)
- 17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea further; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

Outline 8:

(The Preacher continues his examination of life under the sun.)

- I. Who is as the wise man? Who knows the interpretation of a thing? (1)
 - A. A man's wisdom makes his face shine.
 - B. The boldness (*hardness*) of his face (*his countenance*) shall be changed.
- II. The king's command: Keep the king's commandment in regards to the oath of God. (2-5)
 - A. Don't desert him: Be not hasty to go out of his sight.
 - B. Don't debate with him: Stand not in an evil thing (*don't persist in a losing argument*), for he does whatever pleases him.
 - C. Don't defy him: Where the word of a king is, there is power: Who may question him saying, "What are you doing?"
 - D. Don't disobey him: Whoever keeps the commandments shall feel no evil thing (*Romans 13:3-4*).
 - E. Discern that there will be a time for righteous judgment: A wise man's heart discerns (*and waits for*) both time and judgment.
- III. The misery of man: Because to every purpose there is judgment and time, therefore the misery of man is great. (6-10)
 - A. He knows not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be? (*Who can tell the future?*)
 - B. There is no man:
 1. That has power over the spirit to retain it.

2. That has power in the day of death.
 3. That can give discharge in war (*in the battle with death*).
 4. That shall be delivered by wickedness.
- C. There is a time wherein one man rules over another to his own hurt.
- D. The wicked were buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had done so: this is also vanity.
- IV. Unfair judgment. (11-14)
- A. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set to do evil.
- B. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times and his days be prolonged, yet it shall be well with them (*it is better for them*) that fear God.
- C. It shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he does not fear God.
- D. There is a vanity which is done upon the earth:
1. There be just men, unto whom it happens according to the work of the wicked.
 2. There be wicked men, to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous.
 3. This also is vanity.
(*Bad things happen to the good, good things to the bad.*)
- V. Conclusion: Mirth is commended, because a man has no better thing under the sun, than to eat, drink, and be merry: for that shall abide with him all the days of his life, which God gives him under the sun. (15)

(This is the fourth of six tentative conclusions in Ecclesiastes, each of which emphasize the importance of accepting and enjoying life as God's gift. Conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is in 12:13-14.)

- VI. God's work under the sun: (16-17)
- A. The Preacher applied his heart to know wisdom and to observe the business that is done upon the earth: for there are those that neither day nor night sleep with their eyes (*some people don't even sleep they are so busy working*).
- B. He realized that a man cannot find out the work that God is doing under the sun:
1. Though a man labours to seek it out, yet he shall not find it.
 2. Though a wise man thinks he knows it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

Study questions on chapter 8:

1. What are the benefits of wisdom mentioned in verse 1?
2. Summarize the Preacher's advice regarding relationship with the king (those in authority over us). (2-5)
3. What reasons are given for obedience in verses 2-5?
4. What would normally happen to the person who obeyed the king's command? (5)
5. For what did the Preacher say there is a proper time and procedure? (6)
6. Summarize the Preacher's concerns in verses 6-10.
7. Over what does no one have power? (8)

8. What is the problem addressed in verse 11?
9. What questions are asked in verses 1,4,7? Does this chapter answer them? If so, how?
10. What promise is given to those who fear God? (12)
11. What is the ultimate destiny of the wicked? Why? (13)
12. What is the vanity discussed in verse 14? According to verse 15, what is the unbeliever's reaction to this?
13. Why is man unable to discover all the works of God? (16-17)
14. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 9

- 1 **For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.**
- 2 **All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.**
- 3 **This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.**
- 4 **For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.**
- 5 **For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.**
- 6 **Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.**
- 7 **Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.**
- 8 **Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.**
- 9 **Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.**
- 10 **Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.**
- 11 **I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.**
- 12 **For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.**
- 13 **This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me:**
- 14 **There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:**
- 15 **Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city;**

- yet no man remembered that same poor man.
- 16 Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.
- 17 The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.
- 18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.

Outline 9:

(The Preacher continues his examination of life under the sun.)

- I. All this and all things. (1-2)
- A. All this: The previous discussions led to the following opinions:
1. That the righteous, the wise, and their works are in the hands of God.
 2. That no man knows either love or hatred by all that is before them.
- B. All things: All things come alike to all:
1. To both the righteous and the wicked.
 2. To the good, to the clean, and to the unclean.
 3. To him that sacrifices, and to him that does not sacrifice.
 4. As is the good, so is the sinner.
 5. To him that swears, as (*to him*) he that fears an oath.
- II. The living and the dead. (3-6) This is an evil done under the sun, that there is one event unto all (*death*):
- A. The heart of the sons of men is full of evil and madness while they live and after that they go to the dead.
- B. There is hope to him that is joined to the living for a living dog is better than a dead lion.
- C. The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything, neither have they a reward anymore:
1. Their memory is forgotten.
 2. Their love is forgotten.
 3. Their hatred is forgotten.
 4. Their envy is forgotten.
 5. They no longer have a part of anything done under the sun.
- (*This does not support the doctrine of soul sleep. New Testament revelation teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with God. This passage reflects a viewpoint "under the sun"—from the perspective of a life lived apart from hope in God.*)
- III. In view of the preceding, the following observations are drawn. (7-10)
- A. Go your way, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God accepts your works. (*God takes pleasure in your pleasure.*)
- B. Let your garments be always white (*pure*); and let your head lack no ointment (*the oil of gladness*).
- C. Live joyfully with the wife whom you love and which He has given you all the days of your life: for that is your portion in this life and in your labour which you take under the sun.
- D. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor

device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave where you go. (Study the New Testament doctrine regarding these comments in 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 and Revelation 1:17-18.)

(This is the fifth of six tentative conclusions in Ecclesiastes, each of which emphasize the importance of accepting and enjoying life as God's gift. Conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is in 12:13-14.)

- IV. Running the race and fighting the battle: Nothing is assured. (11)
- A. The race is not to the swift.
 - B. The battle is not to the strong.
 - C. Neither yet bread (*food*) to the wise.
 - D. Nor riches to men of understanding.
 - E. Nor favor to men of skill.
 - F. Time and chance happens to all.
- V. Man does not know his time: As fish taken in an evil net and as birds caught in the snare; so is man when he is snared in an evil time, when it (*calamity*) falls suddenly upon them. (12)
- VI. Wisdom and foolishness. (13-18)
- A. A great king and a poor wise man:
 - 1. There was a little city and few men within it.
 - 2. There came a great king who besieged it and built great bulwarks against it.
 - 3. There was found in it a poor wise man who by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.
 - 4. Analyzing this, the Preacher declared: "Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard."
 - B. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry (*shout*) of him that rules among fools.
 - C. Wisdom is better than weapons of war.
 - D. One sinner destroys much good.

Study questions on chapter 9:

1. What observations about human destiny are shared in verses 1-3?
2. Who shares a common destiny? (2)
3. How did the Preacher describe human nature? (3)
4. Who has hope and why? (4)
5. What do you learn about death in verses 3-6? What perishes at death? Why is a living dog better than a dead lion?
6. Compare verses 5 and 12. Is there a conflict? Can you explain these differing statements?
7. What conclusions are drawn in verses 7-10? How does verse 10 reflect a pre-resurrection

- viewpoint? What happens now when a believer dies? (See 2 Corinthians 5:6-9.)
8. What did the Preacher say about marriage? (9)
 9. What is our portion in life under the sun? (9)
 10. What should be our attitude towards work and ministry? Why should we have this attitude? (10)
 11. Why should you use your time well? (12)
 12. What do you learn about the race and the battle of life in verses 11-12? Remember that this is life “under the sun”. Do you agree with these statements? Do other passages in God’s Word agree with these statements?
 13. Summarize verses 13-18. What is the Preacher trying to communicate with this story?
 14. According to verses 16 and 18, wisdom is better than what?
 15. Contrast the words of the wise and fools. (17)
 16. It only takes one sinner to do what? (18)
 17. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 10

- 1 Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.**
- 2 A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.**
- 3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.**
- 4 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacieth great offences.**
- 5 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler:**
- 6 Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.**
- 7 I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.**
- 8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.**
- 9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.**
- 10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.**
- 11 Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.**
- 12 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.**
- 13 The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.**
- 14 A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?**
- 15 The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.**
- 16 Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!**
- 17 Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in**

- due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!**
- 18 By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.**
- 19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.**
- 20 Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.**

Outline 10:

(The Preacher continues his examination of life under the sun by observing foolishness: Foolish folly; foolish rulers and leaders; foolish value systems, decisions, talking and cursing; foolish use of time; and foolish overindulgence).

- I. Foolish folly. Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor: so does a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor. (1)
(Folly outweighs wisdom and honor. Even a small mistake casts a shadow on a good reputation.)
- II. The wise versus the foolish. (2-3)
 - A. A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left *(in the wrong place. In ancient times, the right hand represented power and honor. See Matthew 25:33,41.)*
 - B. When a fool walks by the way, his wisdom fails him and he reveals to every one that he is a fool *(because he has no sense of direction).*
- III. Foolish rulers. If the spirit of a foolish ruler rises up against you: (4)
 - A. Do not leave your place.
 - B. Do not resist: Yield, because yielding pacifies great offences.
- IV. Foolish value systems: An evil under the sun. (5-7)
 - A. Folly is set in great dignity.
 - B. The rich sit in low place.
 - C. Servants ride upon horses.
 - D. Princes walk as servants upon the earth. *(In a foolish value system, immature, proud, and rich people are given prominence while mature, wise people are disregarded.)*
- V. Foolish decisions: (8-10)
 - A. What you give is what you get.
 - B. He that digs a pit shall fall into it.
 - C. Whoever breaks through a hedge, a serpent shall bite him.
 - D. Whoever removes stones *(legitimate landmarks)* shall be hurt therewith.
 - E. He that cleaves wood *(fells trees)* shall be endangered thereby.
 - F. If the iron be blunt, one must use more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct. *(A wise man would sharpen the iron and make the job easier. Work smarter, not harder. Deal with the root causes of difficulties, not just surface symptoms.)*
- VI. Foolish talking. (11-15)
 - A. Slandorous talk: The serpent will bite without enchantment; A babbler *(slanderer)* is no better. *(Meaning that if the serpent strikes before it is charmed, there is no*

- gain to the charmer. Likewise, people slander others to make themselves look good.)*
- B. Destructive talk: The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow him up (*consume him*).
- C. Uncontrolled talk: The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness (*a foolish premise*) and the end of his talk is mischievous madness (*he arrives at a faulty conclusion. He starts out talking nonsense and ends up talking about evil things.*)
- D. Meaningless talk: A fool is full of words (*many words without meaning*).
- E. Boastful talk:
1. A man cannot tell what shall be nor who can tell him what shall be after him?
 2. The labour of the foolish wearies every one because he boasts about future plans but can't even find his way into the city (*he has no direction*).
- VII. Foolish leaders: A good versus a bad king. (16-17)
- A. Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child (*immature*) and your princes eat in the morning (*concerned only about themselves*).
 - B. Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles (*prepared since birth*) and your princes eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkenness.
- VIII. Foolish use of time: Slothfulness and idleness. (18).
- A. Incompetence: By much slothfulness the building decays.
 - B. Indifference: Through idleness of the hands the house drops through (*collapses*).
- IX. Foolish overindulgence that makes one focus on: (19)
- A. Feasts and laughter.
 - B. Wine, hoping to make one merry.
 - C. Money as the answer for all things.
- X. Foolish cursing. (20)
- A. Curse not the king, not even in your thoughts.
 - B. Curse not the rich in your bedchamber.
 - C. The reason: A bird of the air shall carry your voice, and that with wings shall tell the matter. (*Watch what you say. Even if you do not respect the person in authority, you should respect the office. See Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17; and Exodus 22:28.*)

Study questions on chapter 10:

1. How does just a little folly affect the reputation of one known for wisdom and honor? What illustration is used? (1)
2. What do you learn about the foolish in verses 2,3,14, and 15.
3. What should you do if the spirit of the ruler rises up against you? Why should you respond this way? (4)
4. What is the evil addressed in verses 5-7? What illustrations are used?
5. What principle is taught in verses 8-9? What illustration is used?
6. Put verse 10 in your own words.
7. What do you learn about the wise and foolish in verses 11-15?
8. Contrast the two types of leaders described in verses 16-17.

9. How does decay occur in the spiritual world as in the natural world? (18)
10. What consequences of laziness did the Preacher describe? (18)
11. What does verse 19 mean?
12. What do you learn about cursing the king (those in leadership) in verse 20?
13. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 11

- 1 **Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.**
- 2 **Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.**
- 3 **If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.**
- 4 **He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.**
- 5 **As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.**
- 6 **In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.**
- 7 **Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:**
- 8 **But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity.**
- 9 **Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.**
- 10 **Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.**

Outline 11:

(This chapter shares life principles drawn from the Preacher's observations on giving and receiving, sowing and reaping, life and eternity, joy and sorrow.)

- I. Giving and receiving. (1-3)
 - A. Cast your bread upon the waters: for you shalt find it after many days. *(You receive what you give: Luke 6:38.)*
 - B. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for you know not what evil shall be upon the earth. *(Be generous. Don't hoard your resources.)*
- II. Sowing and reaping. (3-6)
 - A. If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth.
 - B. If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it shall be.
 - C. He that observes the wind shall not sow; and he that regards the clouds shall not reap. *(Don't wait for ideal circumstances to do something or you will never get*

- anything done. No time is ever ideal.)*
- D. As you do not know what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of a pregnant woman, even so you do not know not the works of God who makes all.
- E. In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening withhold not your hand: for you do not know which shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good. *(The Living Bible phrases this verse: “Be sure to stay busy and plant a variety of crops, for you never know which will grow—perhaps they all will.”)* (6)
- III. Life and eternity. (7-8)
- A. Truly light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun *(it is pleasant to be alive)*.
- B. If a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. *(Everyone will have difficulties. Remember what you learn in dark times.)*
- C. All that comes is vanity if you live life under the sun, without God.
- IV. Joy and sorrow. (9-10)

(This is the sixth of six tentative conclusions in Ecclesiastes, each of which emphasize the importance of accepting and enjoying life as God’s gift. Conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is in 12:13-14.)

- A. Rejoice, young man, in your youth:
1. Let your heart cheer you.
 2. Walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes.
 3. Know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.
- B. Therefore:
1. Remove sorrow from your heart.
(The word “sorrow” here means anxiety, pain. God wants you to have peace. See Philippians 4:6-9.)
 2. Put away evil from your flesh.
(See the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19.)
 3. Realize childhood and youth are vanity.
(Childhood and youth lay the foundation for your future. This is why the Preacher encourages you to remember the Creator in the days of your youth. One stupid act in childhood or youth can affect your entire future.)

Study questions on chapter 11:

1. What is the advice given in verses 1-2? What example is used?
2. Why should we be generous? (2)
3. What does verse 3 mean?
4. In verses 4-6, what is the Preacher encouraging us to do?
5. What sort of person did the Preacher criticize? (4)
6. What is the result of waiting for perfect conditions to sow (to give or to do a work for God)? (4 and 6)
7. What is beyond our understanding? What examples are used to illustrate this? (5)

8. Why did the Preacher encourage his readers to keep sowing? (6)
9. Why does the Preacher encourage us to remember the days of darkness rather than light? (7-8)
10. What is the advice given in verses 9-10? What caution is given?
11. Is there a conflict between verse 8 (remember the days of darkness) and verse 10 (remove sorrow from your heart)? If so, how can it be explained?
12. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?

Ecclesiastes 12

- 1 **Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;**
- 2 **While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:**
- 3 **In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,**
- 4 **And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;**
- 5 **Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:**
- 6 **Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.**
- 7 **Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.**
- 8 **Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity.**
- 9 **And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.**
- 10 **The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.**
- 11 **The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.**
- 12 **And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.**
- 13 **Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.**
- 14 **For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.**

Outline 12:

(Your body is described in Scripture as a dwelling. This passage depicts the house deteriorating and encourages you to remember you Creator before this happens.)

- I. Remember your creator in the days of your youth before: (1-6)
- A. The evil (*difficult*) days come not, nor the years draw near, when you shalt say, “I have no pleasure in them” (*the time when one no longer enjoys living*).
 - B. The sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain. (*Impaired sight*).
 - C. The day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves (*the arms and legs weaken*), and the grinders cease because they are few (*few teeth remain*), and those that look out of the windows be darkened (*vision problems—this could be both spiritually and physically*).
 - D. The doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low. (*A person is apt to become more fearful, have hearing issues, sleeping issues, and quavering voice.*)
 - E. They shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way (*fear of heights and falling*).
 - F. The almond tree shall flourish (*white hair like the white almond blossom*), and the grasshopper shall be a burden (*small things seem burdensome*).
 - G. Desire shall fail: because man goes to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets. (*Passion and desire fades. Mourners reflect that death is imminent.*)
 - H. The silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. (*These are all symbols of cessation of life. The Bible uses a dwelling place as a metaphor for the human body: Job 4:19; 2 Corinthians 5:1-2; 2 Peter 1:13. This passage presents several metaphors of the problems of old age, especially if life is lived apart from God, “under the sun”. Even if you have physical issues, you can choose to be like Caleb spiritually, who was still taking territory for God well into his eighties.*)
- II. The reason to remember your Creator in the days of your youth: (7-8)
- A. Eventually, the dust (*of your body*) will return to the earth as it was.
 - B. Your spirit shall return unto God who gave it.
- III. Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity. (*The Preacher ends the book where it began: Life lived apart from God, under the sun, is vanity.*)
- IV. The Preacher’s words. (9-12)
- A. Because the Preacher was wise, he taught the people knowledge; he gave good heed, sought out, and set in order many proverbs.
 - B. The Preacher sought acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.
 - C. The words of the wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. (*See Ezekiel 37:24. Goads were prods used to motivate live stock to move. The Word should motivate us to action. Nails are something to hang things on. Teachers of the Word should nail down biblical truth in such a way that students can securely hang their faith on them.*)
 - D. We may be admonished by Proverbs.
 - E. Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.
- V. **The final conclusion. (13-14)**

- A. What we should do.
 - 1. Fear God. (*For further study on the fear of the Lord, review Supplementary Study Two.*)
 - 2. Keep His commandments.
- B. Why we should do it.
 - 1. Because it is our duty: It is the whole duty of man.
 - 2. Because of our destiny: We will someday be judged on the basis of:
 - a. Secret things.
 - b. Good things.
 - c. Evil things.

(This is the final conclusion in Ecclesiastes. Six previous tentative conclusions are at 2:24-26; 3:11-15; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:9-10. The final conclusion is that a personal relationship with God is all that gives life meaning and assures our eternal destiny. The bottom line is: "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life": 1 John 5:12.)

Study questions on chapter 12:

1. What advice is given in verse 1?
2. What do verses 1-8 describe? What advice is given in view of this? Read verses 1-6 in the Amplified Version for better understanding:

Remember [earnestly] also your Creator [that you are not your own, but His property now] in the days of your youth, before the evil days come or the years draw near when you will say [of physical pleasures], I have no enjoyment in them. Before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened [sight is impaired], and the clouds [of depression] return after the rain [of tears]; In the day when the keepers of the house [the hands and the arms] tremble, and the strong men [the feet and the knees] bow themselves, and the grinders [the molar teeth] cease because they are few, and those who look out of the windows [the eyes] are darkened; When the doors [the lips] are shut in the streets and the sound of the grinding [of the teeth] is low, and one rises up at the voice of a bird and the crowing of a cock, and all the daughters of music [the voice and the ear] are brought low; Also when [the old] are afraid of danger from that which is high, and fears are in the way, and the almond tree [their white hair] blooms, and the grasshopper [a little thing] is a burden, and desire and appetite fail, because man goes to his everlasting home and the mourners go about the streets or marketplaces. [Remember your Creator earnestly now] before the silver cord [of life] is snapped apart, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern [the whole circulatory system of the blood ceases to function].
3. List and explain the metaphors of verses 2-5.
4. How is death described in verse 5?
5. What illustrations are used in verse 6 to describe an elderly body?
6. What occurs at the time of death according to verse 7?
7. What observation is made in verse 8?

8. What did the teacher do with his knowledge? (9)
9. How is the Preacher described in verse 9? What will he continue to do?
10. What purpose did the Preacher have in writing this book? (10)
11. How are the words of the wise described in verse 11? From where do they come?
12. What is the warning given in verse 12?
13. What is the final conclusion of verses 13-14? What should we do? Why should we do it?
Read verse 13 in the Amplified Version for better understanding;
All has been heard: the end of the matter is: Fear God (revere and worship Him, knowing that He is) and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man [the full, original purpose of his creation, the object of God's providence, the root of character, the foundation of all happiness, the adjustment to all inharmonious circumstances and conditions under the sun] and the whole [duty] for every man.
14. Record what you learn about each of the following subjects in verses 13-14: God, sin, judgment, man, salvation, immortality of the soul.
15. What did you learn in this chapter that can be applied to your life and ministry?



Bible Institute

Supplemental Study One

SOLOMON: A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

HIS BIRTH:

After David's adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah the Hittite, King David married Bathsheba. The child of their adulterous union died, but later on a son was born to them who would inherit the throne—Solomon.

HIS NAME:

The name "Solomon" is related to the Hebrew "shalom" meaning "peace." Shalom means the kind of peace that comes from being in harmony with God and with one's fellow man. Shalom implies wholeness. According to Samuel, Solomon's other name was "Jedidiah," meaning "Beloved of Yahweh" (2 Samuel 12:24-25).

HIS INAUGURATION AND REIGN:

Solomon's accession to the throne, his prayer to God for wisdom, his great wealth, his building of the temple, his prayer of dedication for the temple and God's response, his successes, as well as his later failures are recorded in 1 Kings 1-11 and 3:5-15; 1 Chronicles 29:23-25; 2 Chronicles 1-9; and Ecclesiastes 2:4-6.

Solomon was an author and composer of over 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:29-34); architect and administrator (1 Kings 4 and 6); scientist, writer, and musician (1 Kings 4:29-34); and a diplomat and businessman (1 Kings 4-5). A record of his achievements is found in 1 Kings 6,1,38; 7:1; and Ecclesiastes 2:4-6.

God gave Solomon:

- Riches and fame: 1 Kings 4:20-27; 10:14-22
- Wisdom and knowledge: 2 Chronicles 1:7-12; 9:1-8, 22-23
- Discernment and strength: 1 Kings 4:29-34
- Skill: 1 Kings 10:23-24

HIS VISITS FROM GOD:

The initial visits are recorded in 1 Kings 3:5-14 and 1 Chronicles 1:7-12:

- What three things are unique to the Chronicles account?
- What three things are unique to the Kings account?
- What things are similar in these two accounts?
- When did the second visit from God occur?
- Summarize God's message in this visit.

In 1 Kings 11:9-13, God appeared again to Solomon, but was not pleased with him. The remainder of the chapter tells how he was plagued by adversaries, internal rebellion, and frustration.

- Why was God angry with Solomon?
- What judgment did God pronounce upon him?
- Why was the judgment deferred to Solomon's son?

HIS SPIRITUAL DECLINE:

Solomon's early years were followed by a decline and an extended time when he was not walking with God. Solomon's decline resulted from compromises:

- Union with an unbeliever: 1 Kings 8:11
- Unaccountable for his actions: 1 Kings 9:19
- Uncontrolled desires: 1 Kings 9:1,10; 2 Chronicles 8:6
- Unwise alliances: 1 Kings 3:1
- Unresolved conflicts: 1 Kings 9:10-14
- Unrestrained preoccupation with sex: 1 Kings 11:1-8
- Unholy involvement with idolatry: 1 Kings 11:4-8

THE WRITINGS OF SOLOMON:

Solomon wrote the majority of the book of Proverbs. The Book of Kings says that Solomon also wrote 1005 songs. Of all his songs, only the Song of Solomon survives. Most commentators consider the Song of Solomon to have been written early in his life. Ecclesiastes seems to have been written later in life as a record of his searching for meaning in life. His conclusion is that life only makes sense when God is at the centre of all we undertake.

WHY WOULD GOD USE SOLOMON TO WRITE BOOKS IN THE BIBLE?

Solomon was called to be a lover of God but later in life he turned to the flesh. Why would God choose someone who multiplied wives and concubines and turned away from the Lord so dramatically during a portion of his life to write books of the Bible?

A key truth gleaned from Solomon's life is that no matter how much you love God, how deep your level of intimacy with Him, or how wise you are--compromise leads to spiritual decline. This is why the Apostle Paul said:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (1 Corinthians 9:27)

Another glorious truth is that no matter how deep your sin, God can restore and use you for His purposes. Towards the end of his life, Solomon apparently returned to close fellowship with God as reflected by the advice given in his declining years: 1 Kings 11:40-43 and Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:7.



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Supplemental Study Two

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE FEAR OF THE LORD:

Proverbs 2:1-5: My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

WHAT ECCLESIASTES SAYS ABOUT THE FEAR OF THE LORD:

Ecclesiastes 3:14: I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

Ecclesiastes 5:7: For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also diverse vanities: but fear thou God.

Ecclesiastes 8:12: Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him.

Ecclesiastes 12:13: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD DEFINED:

Job 28:28: And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Psalms 19:9: The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

Psalms 111:10: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

Proverbs 1:7: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 8:13: The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Proverbs 9:10: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Proverbs 15:33: The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

COMMANDS TO FEAR THE LORD:

2 Chronicles 19:7: Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

2 Chronicles 19:9: And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

Proverbs 23:17: Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.

Isaiah 2:10: Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.

Ecclesiastes 5:7: For in the multitude of dreams and many words there is also vanity. But fear God.

1 Peter 2:17: Honour all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Revelation 14:7: ...saying with a loud voice, " Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

Ecclesiastes 12:13: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all.

BENEFITS OF FEARING THE LORD:

Psalms 25:12-14: What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Psalm 34:7,9: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

Psalm 103:13,17: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.

Psalm 147:11: The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

Proverbs 10:27: The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

Proverbs 14:26: In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

Proverbs 14:27: The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

Proverbs 15:16: Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith.

Proverbs 16:6: By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.

Proverbs 19:23: The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

Proverbs 22:4: By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life.

Ecclesiastes 8:12: Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and his days are prolonged, yet I surely know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him.

Ecclesiastes 7:18: It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

Isaiah 33:6: And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.

Acts 9:31: Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

Acts 13:26: Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

EXAMPLES OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD DESCENDING UPON PEOPLE:

1 Samuel 11:7: And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

2 Chronicles 14:14: And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the Lord came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.

2 Chronicles 17:10: And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

THE RESPONSE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT FEAR THE LORD:

Isaiah 2:19: And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

Isaiah 2:21: To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE WHO FEARED GOD:

Abraham:

Genesis 22:12: And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

Joseph:

Genesis 42:18: Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God."

Amalek:

Deuteronomy 25:18: how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.

Job:

Job 1:1: There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Job 1:9: So Satan answered the Lord and said, Does Job fear God for nothing?

Job 1:8: And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Job 2:3: And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

The midwives:

Exodus 1:17: But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them,

but saved the men children alive.

Exodus 1:21: And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

Hanani and Hananiah:

Nehemiah 7:2: That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.

Cornelius:

Acts 10:2: A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

The Centurion:

Acts 10:22: And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

Jesus:

Isaiah 11:2: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.
Isaiah 11:3: And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.

Men of Israel:

Acts 13:16: Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen..."

Acts 13:26: "Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent."

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE WHO DID NOT FEAR GOD:

A certain judge:

Luke 18:2: There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.

Luke 18:4: And he would not for a while; but after awhile he said within himself, "Though I do not fear God nor regard man..."

The dying thief:

Luke 23:40: But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"

FEARING GOD SHOULD BE A QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP:

Exodus 18:21: Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds,

rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

FEARING THE LORD IS A CHOICE:

Proverbs 1:29: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD CAN AND SHOULD BE TAUGHT:

Psalms 34:11: Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Psalms 66:16: Come and hear, all you who fear God, And I will declare what He has done for my soul.

IF YOU ARE TO DEVELOP THE FEAR OF THE LORD, YOU MUST BE WILLING TO CHANGE:

Psalms 55:19: God will hear, and afflict them, Even He who abides from of old. Selah
Because they do not change, Therefore they do not fear God.



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Supplemental Study Three

MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES

1. Read the book of Ecclesiastes in a different translation like *The Living Bible*, *The Amplified Bible*, *The New International*, *The New King James*, or *The Message Bible*.
2. The word "heart" is used 40 times in Ecclesiastes in the King James Version. Mark each occurrence of the word in the book and write a summary of what you learn.
3. The Bible records that King Solomon tried many things in an attempt to give meaning to life. Record the results of each.

He tried...	Reference	Results
Human wisdom	Ecclesiastes 1:16-18	
Wealth	Ecclesiastes 2:7-8	
Alcohol	Ecclesiastes 2:3	
International reputation	1 Kings 10:6-7	
Pleasure	Ecclesiastes 2:1-3	
Music	Ecclesiastes 2:8	
Building projects	Ecclesiastes 2:4	
Literature	2 Kings 4:32	
Beautiful gardens and parks	Ecclesiastes 2:4-6	
Military power	1 Kings 4:26 and 9:26	
Personal indulgences	Ecclesiastes 2:7	
Natural science	1 Kings 4:33	
Sex	1 Kings 11:3	

4. Study the phrase "under the sun". List Solomon's conclusions about life apart from God, under the sun.

Reference

Ecclesiastes 1:3
 Ecclesiastes 1:9
 Ecclesiastes 1:14
 Ecclesiastes 2:11
 Ecclesiastes 2:17

Conclusion

Ecclesiastes 2:18
Ecclesiastes 2:19
Ecclesiastes 2:20
Ecclesiastes 2:22
Ecclesiastes 3:16

Reference

Ecclesiastes 4:1
Ecclesiastes 4:3
Ecclesiastes 4:7
Ecclesiastes 4:15
Ecclesiastes 5:13
Ecclesiastes 5:18
Ecclesiastes 6:1
Ecclesiastes 6:12
Ecclesiastes 8:9
Ecclesiastes 8:15
Ecclesiastes 8:17
Ecclesiastes 9:3
Ecclesiastes 9:6
Ecclesiastes 9:9
Ecclesiastes 9:11
Ecclesiastes 9:13
Ecclesiastes 10:5

Conclusion

*The
Remnant Church*

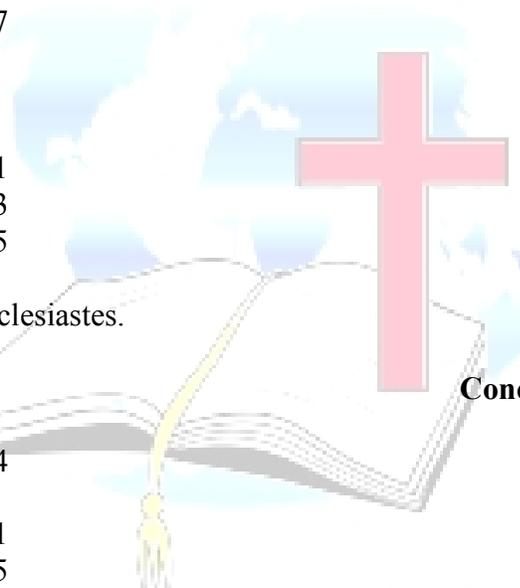
5. Study the vanities in Ecclesiastes.

Reference

Ecclesiastes 1:2
Ecclesiastes 1:14
Ecclesiastes 2:1
Ecclesiastes 2:11
Ecclesiastes 2:15
Ecclesiastes 2:19
Ecclesiastes 2:21
Ecclesiastes 2:23
Ecclesiastes 2:26
Ecclesiastes 3:19
Ecclesiastes 4:4
Ecclesiastes 4:7
Ecclesiastes 4:8
Ecclesiastes 4:16
Ecclesiastes 5:10
Ecclesiastes 6:2
Ecclesiastes 6:4

Conclusion

*The
Institute*



Ecclesiastes 6:9
Ecclesiastes 6:11
Ecclesiastes 7:6
Ecclesiastes 7:15
Ecclesiastes 8:10

Reference

Ecclesiastes 8:14
Ecclesiastes 9:9
Ecclesiastes 11:8
Ecclesiastes 11:10
Ecclesiastes 12:8
Ecclesiastes 4:7
Ecclesiastes 5:13
Ecclesiastes 5:18
Ecclesiastes 6:1
Ecclesiastes 6:12
Ecclesiastes 8:9
Ecclesiastes 8:15
Ecclesiastes 8:17

Conclusion

The Relevant Church

6. A list of the questions asked in the book of Ecclesiastes follows. How would you answer them as a believer?

Ecclesiastes 1

- 3 **What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?**
10 **Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.**

Ecclesiastes 2

- 2 **I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?**
12 **And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.**
15 **Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.**
16 **For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.**
19 **And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.**
22 **For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he**

- hath laboured under the sun?**
25 **For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I?**

Ecclesiastes 3

- 9 **What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?**
21 **Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?**
22 **Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?**

Ecclesiastes 4

- 8 **There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.**
11 **Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?**

Ecclesiastes 5

- 6 **Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?**
11 **When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?**
16 **And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?**

Ecclesiastes 6

- 6 **Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?**
8 **For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?**
11 **Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?**
12 **For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?**

Ecclesiastes 7

- 10** Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.
- 13** Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?
- 16** Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?
- 17** Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?
- 24** That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

Ecclesiastes 8

- 8:1** Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.
- 4** Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?
- 7** For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

Ecclesiastes 9

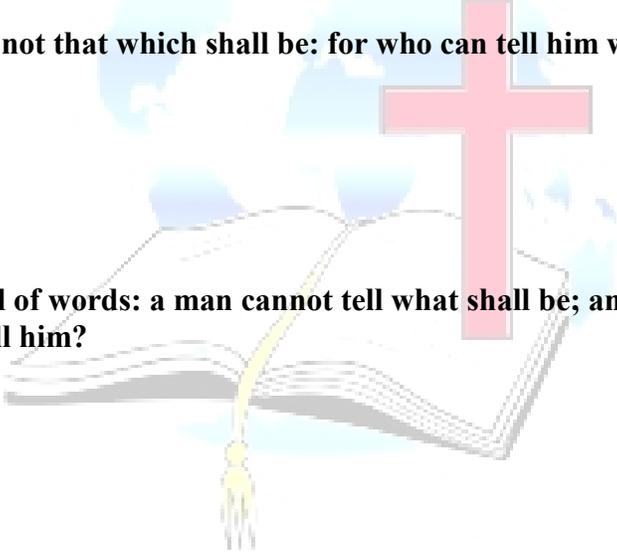
None

Ecclesiastes 10

- 14** A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?

Ecclesiastes 11-12

None



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