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ECCLESIASTES  
A  
STUDY  
OF  
MAN  
UNDER THE SUN

BY PASTOR W. JACK CASEY

# ECCLESIASTES

## THE BOOK OF THE PREACHER

Intro: This is a book written by King Solomon, it one of three as he also wrote the book of Proverbs and the Song of Solomon. In the Rabbinic tradition of the Midrash, Shir Hashirim Rabba 1:1 this says Solomon wrote the Song of Solomon in his youth because of its emphasis on love, Proverbs in his maturity with its emphasis on wisdom and practical problems and then this book in his old age with its emphasis on the vanity of life.

It has also been said and probably rightly so that in Job we have "the unhappy man" in Psalm "the happy man" in Proverbs "the wise man" in Ecclesiastes "the worldly man" and in Song of Solomon "the heavenly man".

Solomon's theme in this book is "under the sun" as it occurs 29 times in 12 chapters the key word is "vanity" is used 37 times. The term "preacher occurs 7 times in this book 3 in the opening chapter, once in the middle in chapter 7 and 3 times at the end in chapter 12. the name Ecclesiastes comes from the word meaning one who address's an assembly. Our word for church comes from the "ecclesia" a called out assembly.

This book is written by Solomon as he spends time thinking like any modern intellectual or humanist trying to figure out life and death without divine revelation.

As part of our introduction I would like to give you some tools to help you rightly divide the word of God.

### How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5: 12

### How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
  2. The most important verse
  3. The most prominent word
  4. The teaching about Christ
  5. The command to obey
  6. The promise to claim
  7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18
- Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications
1. Past: this is the historical application
  2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
  3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

## Chapter One

Intro: We open this first chapter with Solomon announcing a problem he has discovered and it is this "all is vanity I this world" Solomon will then in this and the following chapters proceed with many experiments to see if his statement is true or not. Being the King he had the time and the resources to do it and I am reasonably certain he had the intelligence to do the test as we will find out. Solomon starts with science and tests areas that it took men 2,000 years to catch up to.

1: The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

This book opens with the declaration about who the writer is, this is abundantly clear to any one who has read the Old Testament. If you look at David's sons there was only one that ever ruled Israel and that was Solomon. So any one who would say that it was someone claiming to be that simply doesn't know what he is talking about.

He is here a speaker to the assembly as a preacher not of righteousness but as a philosopher one "under the sun". This preacher is not looking at life from close fellowship with God no he is looking at life away from God. His wisdom to rule has been turned in this direction t see if all is as he sees it in the next verse.

2: Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

The word "vanity" is used 5 times in this one verse. Now if we bring in the numbers meaning it fits this word pretty good as 5 means for the most of it's use "death" and the word "vanity" here means "empty or without purpose or goal" that describes death. It is to live as an animal lives in that an animal is alive but does not know any other thing but to survive and propagate that is all. They in essence have no goal nor can they create for themselves a higher purpose.

This is where the "nihilist" get their view of life which is all is useless so why care, just eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you die!

3: What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

As we go through these experiments it is not from God's point of view but man's. So he asks his first question which has an obvious answer implied and it is this "his labor doesn't profit him anything" and he uses verses 4 – 7 to reinforce this by showing us that everything is temporary. Solomon starts his experiment in the realm of science focusing on the laws of nature. Men still dedicate their lives to the study of these natural laws that Solomon answered 3,000 years ago.

4: One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

Solomon opens with the fact that one generation after the other comes and goes but the earth is still here... the earth is stable, man is not. We are little different than man in the past and if the Lord tarries we will be little different in the future. Oh yes there may be more gadgets and such but man himself will not have changed.

The Earth is about 6,000 years old and no one has seen more than a small fraction of that time. Notice the last two words "for ever" for us it seems forever but we are told in 2 Peter 3: 6-10 that the world is going to be totally "renovated by fire look here at Is. 24: 19,20 "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. 20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again."

5-7: The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. 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. 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.

There are three very interesting statements in these three verses.

1<sup>st</sup>: "The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down" Solomon discovered long before the renaissance or Christopher Columbus that the earth rotated around the Sun and that it was day time and dark at the same time. Jesus said it a little differently in Luke 17: 31-34 when He said that there would be women in the field and some at dinner and some asleep when he returns. Rest assured no one up to and into the 1500's knew this or would accept it.

No matter what the historians may say about the Bronze Age man Solomon knew the truth.

2<sup>nd</sup> "The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north". This is nothing but what we call Meteorology today. Solomon is talking about wind currents, the same thing you see on the evening news weather report. They talk about "H" and "L" and the "El NiNo" effect etc. this is the same thing Jesus talked to Nicodemus about in John 3 when He said "the wind bloweth where it listeth" or the wind blows where it wants as it is under God's control not man. Jesus added "thou hearest the sound thereof but cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth".

3<sup>rd</sup> "all the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full". Solomon is describing "Hydrology" without that big name it is simply the law of

evaporation and elevation of moisture into the air. Once there the wind carries the clouds full of water back to the starting point and it all happens again.

Other men in other cultures of that day had no clue as to why these things just mentioned happened, they laid most of it on the whim of a god.

Only in God's word do you find the truth and secure is still trying to catch up with this book.

8: All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

Here is a statement ready made for today, you see in Solomon's palace no one was full or ever satisfied. Sadly it has become true of every segment of society that no one is ever satisfied. The eye never sees enough the ear never hears enough. There is always a need for something "new". We have a half dozen or more 24 hour's a day "news" channels because we thrive on the new and most of what they throw at the viewer is neither news or new!

However we live on this marvelous planet wit vast beauty and wonders to behold for a life time and never take it all in. Only man can look out at the moon and grasp its distance, only ma can scan the universe and wonder at the size and complexity of God's creation.

9-10: 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. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

Now Solomon drops a bombshell on us. What was will be, and what will be; will be again and there is nothing new "under the sun". The Germans say "that which is new is not true; that which is true is not new".

There may be new gadgets, new technologies but it all boils down to "nothing new". The stage changes, environments change, but man stays the same. Here's how, he loves the same, he weeps the same, rejoices, faces illness, accident, death, war, and spiritual matters the same! Music isn't new just changed; transportation isn't new just changed and so on. No the computer isn't new God created the best one and man hasn't caught up to it yet!

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.

Now before you think it Solomon is only talking here of the fact that man tries to make himself important, tries to stay before the public but soon is gone from the scene and from people's minds. Think back and try to remember some of the important people of the past only a handful remains in your minds. Most of us cannot remember all the Presidents or other famous people, singers or such. They just are no longer remembered. Our generation once gone will also be forgotten in time.

Solomon has been making a powerful experiment in the test tube of life. In his day and with his position he could choose any field and he will look at all areas before he is done.

Next Solomon will takes up an experiment in wisdom and philosophy; now Philosophy is the "investigation of the nature, causes, or principles of reality, knowledge, or value, based on logical reasoning.

12-13: I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. 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.

Once again Solomon states his position as preacher and king of Israel. Here he talks of the study of "axiology" or the values of human life. Solomon is attempting to know all about God's dealing with men "under the sun". So much so we will see he will undo every thing he has done.

Sam Jones the great Methodist preacher asked about leaving his children money replied "of course not. If they are the right kind of children, they won't need a lot of money and if they are the wrong kind, it would only do them harm". This is Nineteenth century wisdom compared to today.

Solomon spent a great deal of time studying philosophy a thousand years before Christ. We live 2,000 years this side of Christ and man still knows little of philosophy and what is known does not satisfy the heart.

14: I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

Solomon lets us know that after all his study of philosophy he came away empty and still without the answer and troubled by it all. All systems of philosophy end in the same dead end blind ally. You could do the same study Solomon did and he did not find anything other than just emptiness and troubles.

There is no way to take man in his natural state alienated from God, and expect him to solve his problems. You see that person will find as Solomon did that Philosophy and Psychology cannot or ever will change man's nature only Jesus can do that!



15: That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

This first phrase is about man himself; look here at what Job says to us in his book chapter 14:4 "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." And 15:14 "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" no matter what modern preachers may say a man must be born again because his first birth is no good. Paul said that in him talking about the flesh "dwelleth no good thing".

The second thing about this phrase is it refers to the world's system as it also is crooked as we see in Is 27:1 and as we read here in 2 Cor. 4: 4 "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

No man or the United Nations or ever will straighten it out. Let me give you an illustration "a boy in grade school was told the world was round and he said no! That His dad taught him different, well said the teacher it was proven to be round not flat. At that the boy shook his head no and said "my daddy said it was crooked."

You see as the twig is bent so grows the tree; we start in life with an old nature and we do a lot to improve it but to no avail. Jesus said that which is born of the flesh is flesh" and always will be that is why we need a new nature. Jesus added "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The prophet Daniel said it this way "weighed in the balance and found wanting".

The world is full of wanting today just as much as they were in 1,000 b. c. and all the philosophy and man made gadgets will not change things the world is full of wanting and will continue to be so until Jesus establishes His kingdom on earth.

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.

I believe when you read this verse you have to see some outright arrogance and conceit because of his God given wisdom. Paul said knowledge puffs up, you see knowledge and experience must be tested by the word of God and not the other way around as some would have it today.

Here Solomon is talking with himself now a lot of us do that; a fellow was asked why he talked to himself here is his answer "Well sir! I enjoy talking with a smart man, and then again! I enjoy hearin a smart man talk!" If your experiences are contrary to the Bible then it is your experience, not the Word of God that is in error

17: And I gave my heart to know wisdom,  
and to know madness and folly: I perceived  
that this also is vexation of spirit.

One good look here reveals a truth that has not changed in 3,000 years and that is being as wise as Solomon and as foolish as Solomon we are nearly the same. This nation has produced a generation of people who consider themselves the intelligentsia and yet they play the fool with God, His word and with this nation created on both. They have made us the laughing stock of the world not the preeminent power of the former generation.

They like Solomon will end their careers with vanity and "vexation of spirit" or just not worth the effort and most will not even be remembered 10 years from now if the Lord tarries.

18: For in much wisdom is much grief: and  
he that increaseth knowledge increaseth  
sorrow.

The more knowledge you acquire does not mean an increase in joy or satisfaction of life. Solomon says it actually does the opposite, it actually brings more grief as seen in Daniel 12:4. Someone said that "when ignorance is bliss tis folly to be wise". There is some truth to that; someone else said "where much is known, much is required."

Our lives have become overrun with technology that at times is overwhelming and maddening if not outright scary. Dr. Reycraft said "To err is human and so is trying to avoid correcting it". Solomon was right then and now "knowledge increaseth sorrow".

## Chapter Two

Intro: Solomon has looked at science and found nothing to satisfy him. Now he will take up mans most common practice throughout history the pursuit of pleasure to find satisfaction in life. As a king he is in a good position to search this out as he has a lot of time on his hands.

1: I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will  
prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy  
pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.

He starts off here sometime after his first tests and he is talking to himself. You see talking to yourself is not a 20th or 21<sup>st</sup> century thing. It is obvious that it has been going on for a long time.

He starts his experience with "mirth" or to "celebrate" as seen also in Gen. 31:27 and Neh. 8:12. So Solomon is going to try throwing all types of parties, we might say he went the Las Vegas, Atlantic City, Broadway, Hollywood scene. He had it all at his place every night. With all of this he found in it no satisfaction only "vanity".

Speaking from my own personal experience with mirth it does not bring satisfaction only a deeper emptiness and a need for something more to try and bring that satisfaction that is always just out of reach only vanity.

Next he goes after "pleasure" to see if this can bring satisfaction. In this area Solomon was an expert as he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. We live in a world that has gone mad over the physical appetites in the last 20 to 30 years. As an example T.V went from Andy of Mayberry to Sex in the City. Solomon will try all these types of pleasure such as massages, steam baths, saunas, foods, sports, hunting, etc. this was at the end just more vanity.

2: I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth,  
What doeth it?

Now since these last two did not satisfy he no doubt calls for the entire company of court jester's, the comedians, impersonators, comedy singers, any one to make him laugh. He did and he laughed so much that he almost went mad.

Why is laughter "mad" well 1<sup>st</sup> it ends in catastrophe as seen in Ps. 2:4; 2 Chron. 30:10. 2<sup>nd</sup> It solves nothing at best it is only a temporary release. In 1927 Paul Baummer an SS Trooper said "WE joke to keep from going Mad". Even with all of this Solomon says "I found this to be a great waste time".

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.

Nest Solomon talked to himself into running an experiment in finding satisfaction in drinking. Notice he tells us he gave himself to it. Now he is not drinking to just be a drunkard no he is drinking to see if it can ever bring satisfaction or not. He was looking for knowledge and wisdom on drinking and he wasn't willing to get it from 1. guess work or 2. by some majority opinion or by 3 tradition no he did his own investigation by giving himself over to drinking. This proved to be empty and destructive so he moves on to foolishness or all those things we do for ourselves that really have no value and even these were useless or empty to him and by the way they are the same way for us.

Solomon was going to pursue this until he found something good for man "under the sun" so they could spend their life pursuing it.

4: I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

Solomon is a man looking at pleasure and hobbies we see here in this verse that he tried his hand at Architecture by conducting massive building programs. Today you can still see remains of some of his aqua ducts and his horse stables in Jerusalem and Megiddo and other places when you read through the law a King was forbidden to multiply horses. Solomon was reported to have had over 1,000 chariots of war.

Not just those types of structures but he built large palaces and homes in the kingdom and massive vineyards for his wineries.

5-6: 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:

Solomon had huge flower and herb and vegetable gardens around the palaces. He also planted huge orchards of fruit trees, etc.

Pools or Aqua duct basins of about 582 ft by 107 ft by 50 ft deep were built for irrigating his gardens and orchards.

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:

Solomon had a great number of slaves, also a large number that were born of slaves in his house. He also had more cattle of all kinds, sheep, goats, camels, donkeys, etc than all his predecessors before him. To gain some insight of the size of his herds one need only read of his yearly sacrifice the number is given in 1 Kings 8:63 "And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD".

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.

Solomon gathered gold and silver like dust from the four corners of the known worlds. Notice the "got" it is short for gather. Solomon brought into Jerusalem and the palace every singer he could find male or female. In our day he would have the Las Vegas strip in the palace of Jerusalem.

He gathered up every type of musical instrument and it's player from around the known world. Here is an example of the type of oddities in musical instruments "the smallest violin is only 5.5 inch's long and the longest guitar is 8' 10" and weighs 80 lbs, the largest Tuba is 7.5 ft. high and has 39 feet of tubing; Solomon was a collector of musical instruments Pr. 30:1. Notice the words "peculiar treasure" this would include art, statues, rugs, etc.

9-10: 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.

Solomon had more of everything than all of the Patriarchs, and King Saul and David put together, his kingdom was at its zenith and even now when he is in his old age his mind is still clear and his mental faculties had not dimmed in the least from his youth. He had what so many today strive for and cannot reach.

What Solomon wanted he got for instance, he had snow brought from Mt. Hermon to cool his drinks in the summer. Anything he saw or thought about he got. He did not hold back anything in his life. For instance today if he saw a yacht he would buy it; see a diamond mine take it. This was his life's work gathering those things that brought him joy and yet.

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.

What a statement from a man who had everything! A great many people will not take Solomon's word for it, they seem to think he really did not know what he talked about as they try the same things not to his extents. They still carries at his conclusion "life is vanity- empty and without profit under the sun.

Solomon's next experiment is with materialism or just plain living for now!

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.

After some time has passed Solomon looks back over his life and declares that no matter who comes after him there is nothing left for them to do except what he has already done. The next king would find life monotonous. It will be found to be right as Rehoboam makes a mess of the kingdom and squanders Solomon's gold.

13: Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

Solomon adds to his thoughts in 12 by stating that wisdom even if it does increase sorrow and grief is better than "folly". The reason is that sorrow and grief can work together to produce a sanctified life.

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.

David in Psalm 115:5 says "Eyes have they, but they see not". Now Solomon says the wise man can see or use his mind and eyes. The fool is blind to wisdom and knowledge yet both of them end in the same place the cemetery.

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.

Solomon considers the fact that with his wisdom he should have been able to find a way out of death. Man for all of our technologies and artificial body parts, new genome therapy and cloning; there has been only marginal increases in the average life span up to 10 years or so. Now put that beside of 1,000 years or eternity and it becomes puny in comparison!

Solomon realizes that this too is just empty thought as all die. Paul said that "it is appointed unto man once to die"; to watch some people today you would think that they were trying their hardest to live forever yet they still die!

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.

Whether you are a genius or not one may hold multiple degrees in many different fields; and be innately intelligent it will not help you when your time to die comes it will not even slow the hand of death down! On top of that all of the works will be forgotten that a man did. A king once asked a wise man to inscribe some motto on his palace walls that could be applied to every event that might occur in the future. The motto inscribed was just 5 words "this too, shall pass away".

When Ted Bundy the mass murderer was electrocuted he was laid in a grave just like JFK, or Reagan or any other notable person.

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.

Why did Solomon hate life, he had labored his life away building this kingdom and all its great works and now he is old and he realizes he will never be able to keep it. This is the same for every man "under the sun"; he believes with his eyes and he sees that at death he will take nothing with him. Every doctor, lawyer, president, scientist etc is included but there is one who can take something with him. The bible believing Preacher who is under the Son his work will go with him and go on here also in the men he has led to Christ ( 1John 5:11,20). Let me give you an illustration a Pastor named Hugh Pyle led a young man named Pete Ruckman to Christ who in turn led Cecil Ford to Christ who in turn led a Vietnam war buddy named Barney Iha to Christ who has since led well over 200 souls to Christ as a bus minister at 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist of Hammond of Indiana.

It is true we brought nothing into this world materially and we will certainly take nothing of that out of this world with us. Job said "naked came I into this world and naked I shall go out blessed be the name of the Lord"

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.

Solomon has come to regret building and gathering all this wealth and one of his sons was going to get it all. I believe Solomon already knew deep in his soul that Rehoboam was not going to worship God when he gained the throne.

Many is, the person who left a fortune to a Christian organization thinking it would always propagate the gospel. There have been so many Christian org. that have become apostate. For example Mr. Harvard, who founded Harvard University was Fundamentalist Believer, he left his money and University to continue on in the training of Preachers. Take a look at Harvard U. now you will not find any resemblance to what Mr. Harvard envisioned!

Here are a few more examples Richard DeHaan failed to maintain what his father Dr. M.R. DeHaan started at Radio Bible Class. Also Bob Jones jr. could not keep what Bob Jones Sr. started. One more Evangelist Charles Fuller's revival hour ministry was destroyed by his son David. There are many others but these should show you what can happen.

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 showed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

Solomon realized that to work so hard and give it to someone who will waste it. Then this too is just empty and useless!

20: Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

This is pessimism brought about by being man "under the sun". This is not man "in Christ in the Heavens" in Eph. 2:6. Man apart from God no matter the endeavor ends in pessimism!

21-22: 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?

Solomon is considering all of the mental effort he had put into his work and had gained profit from it. Yet he was leaving it to who had not labored in any way to earn it. To do this Solomon says is emptiness or an evil thing, and a vexing or troubling of the heart.

23: For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

Solomon had spent many a sleepless night over all of this even to the point of grieving however he finally came to it there really was nothing he could do about it; it was going to happen anyway.

24-26: 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. For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I? 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.

Now Solomon takes another 180 degree turn and says that some men do enjoy life and food and drink he had seen it and done it. How did he enjoy it when he was with God!

In verse 25 he became a bit of an egotist. His standard to him was the best so it should work for everybody. Now in 26 Solomon acknowledges that a man who is good in God's sight then God will supply the right kind of wisdom and knowledge. But to the one who lives under the sun a sinner there is continual grief. This is also empty, useless of no real value!

## Chapter Three

Intro: We start this chapter with one of the more well know passages from the Bible. The 60's rock group "the Byrds" made a song out of it, even though they had no idea what it was really saying.

1-8: To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

These eight verses at one time are fatalistic in their view. They also contain some great nuggets of truth and that's what I would like to look at. There are 28 different positive and negative statements in these 8 verses. This alone proves one important thing god is not wholly positive as some would have us believe.

Solomon starts by saying everything has a time and a purpose. You see there are no accidents or chances from God's point of view. From our point of view happenings may seem like something accidental or by chance; that is only by our limited view. Here is Solomon's view of his times.

1. A time to be born this one is pretty easy, 9 months after conception a baby is born. For the most part, occasionally they are early but the normal time is 9 months.
2. A time to die Paul said "it is appointed unto man once to die" modern medicine can do a lot, but man dies any way. Paul told the Corinthian church that in Adam all die.
3. A time to plant There are certain times to plant crops; to early and you do not get a good yield.
4. A time to pluck up that which was planted This can refer to nations as in Jer. 1:10 & 2 Chron. 7:20. This phrase works well with crops and is the negative of planting. There is a time of harvest for each crop and after that time passes the crop isn't much good.
5. A time to kill there is a time to in war, also when government carries out capital punishment; and when defending yourself or your home.

6. A time to heal there are times that nations need healed spiritually such as in Is. 1:5-6; also Jer. 14:19. There are times for people to be healed spiritually and times that God heals physical maladies.
7. A time to break down Examples of this are in 2 Chron. 26: 6, 36:19. Old buildings are torn down for new ones. Old cars, appliances are crushed to make new ones, etc.
8. A time to build up Ezra & Nehemiah demonstrate this. We are to build up our spiritual lives, and the body of Christ.
9. A time to weep The women of Bethlehem wept in Matt. 2:18; David wept in 2 Sam. 18:33; Paul wept in Rom. 12:15; James wept in James 4:9. We can see that it is ok to weep, however not as those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13). A dry eyed ministry is often a powerless ministry. Even Jesus wept.
10. A time to laugh when well when we are happy or someone says or does something to make us laugh.
11. A time to mourn Jeremiah mourns over Jerusalem's demise; Jesus does the same see Luke 19:41. We can mourn over backsliders, lost loved ones, and many other things.
12. A time to dance bible dancing is neither immoral nor immodest for example EX. 15:20; 2 Sam. 6:14; Luke 15:25. The Jewish feast dances are something to see as they sing and dance to glorify God. None of this has any resemblance to the carnal erotic moves people call dancing today.
13. A time to cast away stones tearing down of walls as in 2 Kings 3: 19 or clearing a field.
14. A time to gather stones such times as to build walls around fields or in building altars or memorials.
15. A time to embrace such as the birth of a child, or a person being saved, at a wedding and such other occasions.
16. A time to refrain from embracing there are times when we should not embrace others; read Pro. 5:20. one such example would be false religions.
17. A time to get well there is just a time to get such as food, rest, or married, a home, job, and especially saved. Paul calls this the "accepted time" in 2 Cor. 6: 2
18. A time to lose you can lose weight, a job, home, spouse, health and even children.
19. A time to keep the faith once delivered as stated in Jude 3, there is a time to keep money, there is a time to keep your mouth shut, a time to keep on, keeping on.
20. A time to cast away there is a time when you need to give stuff away.
21. A time to rend Old clothes torn into cleaning rags. Jews rent clothes in mourning 1 Sam. 4: 12 & they rent them in Propheying as in I Kings 11:30 and the veil rent in Matt. 27: 51
22. A time to sew or mend clothes, lives and relationships both family and friend.

23. A time to keep silence Jesus said to say yes or no after that do not say to much of anything Pro.17: 28; Pro. 1:28

24. A time to speak like Stephen, Paul in Acts 26, Jeremiah 26:15. One man said Speak up, out, on, for, and against what needs.

25. A time to love this is seen in Ez. 16:8, a love for hospitality, etc.

26. A time to hate this word along with Hell has almost completely disappeared from the church's vocabulary. However you cannot have love if there is not the negative of hate. The Bible says God hates sin, David hated sin with a perfect hatred in Ps. 139:21-22; Paul in Rom. 7:15; and Jesus in Rev. 2:6

27. A time of war: War has always been popular and good for business and lasting longer than any other occupation. In WW II 16,933,000 K; 11,000,000 Wounded; 34,300,000 Civilians killed in 5 years. There have been 58 wars since the U.N. came together "to Insure lasting peace".

28. A time of peace there has been less than 4 centuries of peace since man has kept records. One skeptic said "peace is a period of rearmament between wars".

9: What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

This is a bit of a restatement of 1:3, 13 and it is Solomon's way of saying "what's the use" why fight it? If you can't fight them join them.

This is the philosophy of godless men, who give in to get ahead. These types of people have no joy, except that momentarily lack of control that comes with alcohol. Then even that leaves a mark the next day.

10: I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

Basically Solomon has taken a fairly good look around at all of his friends and fellow countrymen when he makes this sad remark. Today we might say something like this "I see all of these people and their troubles on every hand; if I have managed to escape some through my position and wealth then I am just one of the luckier ones I guess".

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.

This first phrase reminds me of Ray Stevens singing "everything is beautiful in its own way". God has made all things beautiful; however when He did He placed "the world in men's heart. You may be wondering why a God who made all things beautiful would set it at work against a man finding God. Well He did so that all of us would realize this fact the world does not satisfy.

Some men's philosophy is that life is like an orange and they are going to squeeze it for all it's worth".

12: I know that there is no good in them,  
but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in  
his life.

Solomon says here a man can try to be a do gooder. However there is no good in a man as Paul makes very clear when he says "there is none good no not one". You see all of mans good is as filthy rags according to Isaiah.

13: And also that every man should eat and  
drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour,  
it is the gift of God.

Here is the fatalism of modern men today. Eat drink enjoy the pleasure of life tomorrow we die. They are so deluded by this they think their riotous living is a gift from God to be enjoyed.

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.

Here a man with a fatalistic view says "if it's not God's will to be saved, I won't be saved" this view leaves no place for His great mercy and grace. Fatalism has God turning a deaf to prayer.

15: That which hath been is now; and that  
which is to be hath already been; and God  
requireth that which is past.

This goes back to 1:9; the recorded events of scripture show the past, describe the present and predict the future. Solomon says the past is necessary and I agree; how can you know where you've been with out the past or who you are, or where you are headed. The past reveals a great deal to us!

We move now from fatalism to Egoism or an excessive love of self. An individual self interest is the sunnum bonum of life.

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.

Solomon says that in the courts of his day there was nothing but evil there. We think that our courts have suddenly gone bad; Solomon indicates courts of man under the sun in his day were just as bad. In the second phrase this is a reference to David a man after God's own heart according to 2 Sam. 14:17 sitting on the throne had iniquity.

17-18: 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. 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.

Solomon says there is a time to die and I time to be judged. Paul said "as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"

Now "Darwin" was so taken by verse 18 that he used it to connect men and beast by blood and heredity. This started actually long before Darwin around 600b.c. and is called Naturalism; which produces Nihilism where you go from nothing to nothing. Darwin added the evolution part to try and explain all of the nothings.

19-20: 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. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

One must keep in mind this is man thinking apart from God. So the way he sees it men die animals die the physical bodies both return to dust; so all is useless. If men can make themselves like animals with out God's accountability then they are just animals to live as they please until they die and then that's it.

21: Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

The big difference between man and animal is right here. Man has a spirit that recognizes God where an animal only has an emotional reactive soul that cannot recognize god.

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?

Solomon says while you are here you should at least have joy in what you are doing as this is your only go round. There is no one who can show you what the outcome of all your labors will be after you are gone

## Chapter Four

Solomon continues his experiment in egotism.

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.

Solomon saw how the rich and powerful nations oppressed people through slavery. Slavery or oppression of the poor has been around for a long time and still exists today around the world and in some forms even here in America. For example there is still human trafficking going on here. There is also government control of the poor through medicine, food, and money. Solomon says the oppressors have comfort but the oppressed seem never to have one.

2: Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

Solomon says that looking from the oppressed person's view he would rather be dead than continue living in oppression. Everyone has heard the expression "I wish I were dead". It would seem Solomon had no fear of death. Notice that both Job in chapter 3:3-11 and Jeremiah in chapter 20:18 both wished they had not been born.

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.

Solomon goes one step further that succeeding generations would not be born. That way they would not see the evil in the world.

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.

Solomon is now adding notes to what he has recorded in 1-3. He considered all the problems and also everyone who was trying to do something about it a "right work". His conclusion was this it's just useless for a man to try and break the chains of oppression.

5: The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

Look at Isaiah 9:20 and Amos 4:6; Solomon is saying if a man doesn't do something for his bread, he will end up eating his own flesh. It is this

man is not willing to do anything for himself choosing for others to hand it to him. This describes America pretty well today.

6: Better is an handful with quietness, than  
both the hands full with travail and  
vexation of spirit.

There are two different types of people here. Let's look at the second one first. This man works with both hands, he is the workaholic; he can never make enough or have enough. Solomon is here condemning overwork as bringing trouble and emptiness.

The first one here has a handful and is satisfied he works enough to take care of himself and his family; he is as happy as he can be. So we can draw from this that no work is condemned, and overwork is condemned; only sufficient work is filled with satisfaction and quietness.

7: Then I returned, and I saw vanity under  
the sun.

Solomon says any way you go there is no way out this too is empty. It is no wonder that our most self centered colleges also have a high rate of suicide. They all teach the same philosophy "all comes to naught so what's the point of living".

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.

Solomon takes up the single person who is living to support and do for himself. He still can find no satisfaction in what he obtains in life or takes out. It is even more vanity if he works for others and they reap a greater bounty from his labor.

9: Two are better than one; because they  
have a good reward for their labour.

If one can make a good living then two can certainly make more of a living.

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.

Trying to live for self doesn't mean you cannot team up with someone to make more and if you fall into some problem you will have someone to help get you up and on your feet. If you are going it alone then when you are down well you are just out of luck.



11: Again, if two lie together, then they  
have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

Now this is just a very practical thought that when it is cold and you are alone you will be cold. Well if there is someone to be close to then you can share body heat and have less chance of freezing.

12: And if one prevail against him, two shall  
withstand him; and a threefold cord is not  
quickly broken.

If someone is going to attack you he might well prevail. If there are two then the chances are that you will prevail and if there are three then there is a certainly to overcoming your opponent!

Today it is the wisest decision one can make to always have someone with you when you are in a parking garage or a mall, etc. it used to be that in this area you did not really need to worry about this but violent crime is raging in our country and no area is safe!

13: Better is a poor and a wise child than an  
old and foolish king, who will no more be  
admonished.

Solomon lived both of these he was a wise child and he is at this time a very foolish old king.

14: For out of prison he cometh to reign;  
whereas also he that is born in his kingdom  
becometh poor.

What happens in our state and federal legislatures should be of real interest to all of us. What they do or have done has destroyed business, wrecked the elderly ability to live and put most of what used to be middle class into the poor bracket while the rich become richer.

15-16: I considered all the living which walk  
under the sun, with the second child that  
shall stand up in his stead. 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.

Solomon was a second child of Bathsheba. Solomon had looked back through history and noticed that Isaac wasn't first, Jacob wasn't, Seth wasn't first and so on, it is obvious that God prefers the second over the first. So when you feel second class you are first class with God!

Everyone that was born before us we have taken their place when a President leaves office and his media people no longer are building him up, he becomes less than he was. This is just empty trouble of the spirit to think about!

## Chapter Five

Solomon now starts another experiment after these others have failed to bring any lasting satisfaction. This new experiment will be with religion. Solomon wants to know can religion bring that elusive satisfaction he has wanted so much.

There is a vast array of religions in the world today. The one I suppose we hear the most about is Islam or the Moslem religion. This is the fastest growing religion in America today. For all the Moslem Clerics talk there religion is one of oppression and violence. Rome has kept South America poor and filled with superstition

If you or someone you know has a religion I would encourage you to share Christ the living God. You see Christianity is not a religion despite what the media might say by calling it one of the 3 great religions of the world in truth it is a relationship with a person. Religion is full of rote and ritual that really doesn't help any of its followers.

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.

Solomon is saying be careful to which type of church building you go into. In some cases it is out right wrong for a believer to sit under a liberal pulpit. Solomon tried to be religious he went to the temple sat down and then left. He cautions that no one should support religion with the Lord's money.

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.

Solomon says the one should not make any rash statements under emotional stress. Some preachers are very good at playing on emotions to collect big offerings. Do not speak too quickly or with too many words. Now this doesn't say to not serve the Lord, no only do not do this with religion.

3: For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.

Sometimes people have a bad dream and think that they have received a new revelation and start spouting off with stuff that contradicts the clear word of God! One ole preacher said that when we think we are having a vision in our sleep it would be good to check what you had to eat before you went to sleep!

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.

When you make a vow to God for whatever, then you had better carry it out. You may not have been overly serious but God is deadly serious (Lev. 27). Many is the Missionary, Pastor, and others put on the shelf for failing to carry out their vow!

5-6: Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. 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?

You cannot just suddenly say oh I didn't really mean that it was an error of judgment. You would have been better off to not have vowed at all.

You should not let your words get your body into sin let me illustrate with Herod in Mark 6: 26 when he swore on oath to a belly dancer" god will destroy the work you were doing right before your eyes.

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

Solomon says pretty plainly dreams and a lot of talking are just different means to emptiness. There is absolutely no substitute for a close personal relationship with God the Father.

There are those who say "I have had a dream" or "an experience" and trust in that instead of God's word. John in 1 John 4:1 says test the spirits to see if they are from God. You do not test or try them by your experience but by the Word.

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.

There are 3 things here in the first part that happen on a regular basis all over the world 1 there is oppression of the poor 2 there is violent perverting of judgment and 3 there is violent justice.

1<sup>st</sup> of the poor we would say the rich get richer and the poor get poorer! You see money is power and with out it men are powerless. When the rich control everything then judgment and justice is what they want it to be!

God watches all of this and keeps track there will be a time when he will execute true judgment and justice on those nations who were cruel and oppressive.

9: Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field.

Solomon is referring to the bounty of Earth from the poor to the king. Solomon again moves to another experiment looking for satisfaction this time it is pursuing wealth.

10: He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.

Our corporate C.E.O.'s when they see large profits at the end of a year they are not satisfied. They begin looking at how they can make more profit the coming year.

Wealth is not wrong in itself, but the love of it is the root of all evil 1 Tim. 6:10. For example Cornelius Vanderbilt 1794-1877 called his wife and Dr. both strong Christians to his death bed to hold his hands and sing "come ye sinner, poor and needy, weak and wounded sick and sore". He left 100 million dollars. Some of the last words of John Rockefeller 1839-1937 "I have enjoyed handling 20,000 more than Vanderbilt.

There is nothing wrong with capitalism in America other than gov't interference itself. What is wrong in some is the heart of greed. Greed is the pursuit of making money for money's sake.

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?

Gaining goods for the sake of having a larger food store chain; or a large restaurant chain; or even growing a large church full of people; just so you can have the largest congregation in town all of that is wrong.

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.

The person who works for what he has sleeps at night the rich with all their wealth never seem to find any kind of rest or peace. For example one woman at a hotel in Hawaii for vacation was watched by a pastor and he observed her fretting constantly over her jewels she had brought and never did enjoy her trip.

13: There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

Solomon said for some wealth was a painful evil that brings more pain than its worth

14: But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.

This should be painfully obvious a man gathers us a good deal of savings and leaves it to his son it will not be long until it's all gone. There are other ways for it to disappear like a stock collapse or robbery etc.

15-16: 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. 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?

Solomon has found out that you are born with out even one piece of clothing only the diaper provided by the hospital and you will go out with funeral clothes on 1 Tim. 6:9. You will take nothing with you unlike the idea of the Pharaoh's who thought they would and even had it buried with them for the other side.

17: All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

Compare this with Job 6:6-7 the rich are noted for private doctors and nurses to treat chronic illness. They live sheltered lives (Elvis, Howard Hughes) read about Ahab in 1 Kings 21:1-4

18-20: 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. 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. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

Solomon has reached another conclusion. He is still looking for that supreme goal that all the Greek philosophers tried to make people think they had found.

Solomon concludes that whatever your station in life be it rich, poor or some where in between enjoy life because it's from God. If God blesses you with wealth you can enjoy life here are 4 men who did 1<sup>st</sup> R.G. LeTourneau who tithes 90% of his income. 2<sup>nd</sup> J. C. Penny; 3<sup>rd</sup> the Welch family and 4<sup>th</sup> Tom Landry.

Time is fleeting everyday should be lived to its fullest because you will forget most of them in time. Paul said "Forgetting those things which are behind". The present is what is real when you are I fellowship with God again Paul adds "Press Forward".

## Chapter Six

Solomon will use this chapter to conclude his experiment with wealth to see if it will bring satisfaction.

1-2: There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: 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.

Solomon makes plain and simple that all the money in the world isn't any good if you cannot even enjoy a good meal. Let me illustrate with two men who by surface appearance should have had it all. First is John D. Rockefeller who was in a hotel in Florida eating a very slim meal of what one might say was health food across from him was an employee of the hotel eating a huge steak only because he worked there. The moral is the one who could afford the steak couldn't eat it and the one who couldn't was! Second is Frank Sinatra, it is reported that his last 10 years of life in Las Vegas was with a glass in his hand mumbling to himself; he had annual revenues of 15 million dollars but he wasn't enjoying it.

The true ability to enjoy life comes from God as Paul states in 1 Tim. 6: 17.

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.

Solomon says here nothing is right on the outside if a man is not right on the inside (Jer. 22:19). We see that not even long life guarantee neither happiness nor does having a large number of children.

Two items are evident; first if he is a wicked man then his status amounts to nothing and second if his "soul" cannot enjoy what God has provided his status still amounts to nothing. So Solomon compares him to an untimely birth.

4-8: For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other. Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place? All the labour of man is for

his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.  
For what hath the wise more than the fool?  
what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk  
before the living?

The he in verse 4 is the untimely birth of verse 3 compare this with Job 3: 16-20. The dead baby does not see the sun, does he "know anything". In verse 5 we have this so he has "more rest than the other" or the man in verses 2&3. William James coined the term "soul sickness" to describe verse 3.

In verse 6 Solomon continues with his analogy of the "he" by saying even if he were to live a 1,000 years and many more on top of that if his soul is not good then it is all for naught for in the end he will die like the rest. In 7 this is just one of those basic facts for all of us; that is the mouth is where we take in sustenance. Man's trouble's started with it in Gen. 3, Eve's trouble starts with it. In Gen. 3 the word eat or eaten is used 17 times.

Your mouth and your tongue (James 3: 5&6) are the means by which you live (Ro. 10:9-10) or die. You die because everything you put in your mouth comes from the ground and in Gen 3 God curses the ground! This is an absolute truth that has stood for 6,000 years. Still the appetite is never satisfied. In verse 8 when it comes to eating and satisfying the appetite no one has the upper hand they all eat and they all die.

9-12: Better is the sight of the eyes than  
the wandering of the desire: this is also  
vanity and vexation of spirit. 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. Seeing there  
be many things that increase vanity, what  
is man the better? 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?

Solomon had in chapter 5:11 said some disparaging things about eyesight now he recommends it to the point it is better than day dreaming or coveting what you do not have this is rationalism. A saying a little more closely to us is "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" which derived from the German "a sparrow in the hand is better than one on the roof".

The phrase in verse 9 "wandering of desire" has been magnified hundreds of times since 1950 with the introduction of the T.V. which aggravates, stimulates, and promotes covetousness that is how it supports itself financially. In verse 10 it is named and known (1:9) it is "man" the Hebrew for man here is "Adam". It is well known that the only thing men ever learn from history is that men never learn from history. Man's name Adam fixes the truth of human nature. Originally he was the

crown of creation (Heb. 2:7-8) but, even then he is the measure of nothing. In verse 11 the phrase "many things" they are 1. The inability to enjoy riches after obtaining them. 2. Death which brings a man back to the dirt (vs. 6). 3. A physical appetite that cannot be permanently satisfied. 4. The wandering of the mind, coveting what a man to successfully contend with his maker, who made him out of dust. In verse 12 God knows what is best for man in this life just read Micah 6:8. it is also good in the New Testament for a man to fear God read Phil. 2:12. Life is like a shadow here and gone on an empty life and who will know what will follow him under the sun!



## Chapter Seven

Intro: This chapter marks Solomon's last experiment on life under the sun. This experiment will be in morality or being a do gooder. This man is the one who is trying to live the best life now.

1: A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

This first clause is a true statement and stands by itself. For the best example is found in the gospel account of Mary anointing Jesus with the spikenard she gave precious ointment He gave her a good name that has stood for 2,000 years. You cannot out give God oh if His people could just grasp that!

"Day of Death" this is a phrase that new thinking disallows because it is negative; it is true but negative.

"better than birth" the part of Christ life we are to commemorate is His death (Lord's Supper). Paul's good name was a death sentence to him see 2 Cor. 2:16 to the Pharisees, Judaizers and to Nero.

There are two lists of good names in history men's which includes all of the news media gods of the last century. Then the other is God's which the world never had any good thing to say about them.

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.

A life of morality is lived in a very dignified way. These men belong to numerous social clubs and attend the luncheons to listen to a boring speech on a subject that no one will do anything about but talk more about it.

When one then dies the rest will attend a very quiet boring funeral where someone will say some pleasant words which will move no one and the deceased will be little missed!

3: Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

It there is one thing society doesn't want it is sorrow some try and arrange their lives to laugh all the way to the grave! Even the funeral's of these people has soft music and a soft spoken preacher and everyone goes home saying "it was a nice funeral" and forget death as soon as possible!

4: The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

Solomon brings a sobering truth, these people can leave the grave side and not go far until they are telling jokes and laughing. It seems to never

occur to them that they to are heading in the same direction. They even forget to make sure of their eternal destination.

5-6: It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.

Solomon says it is better for one to hear "the rebuke of the wise" compare this with 2tim. 4:2; Tit.1:3 and 2:15. Anyone can learn more that is truly good for them in an hour of good Bible preaching than an entire night of singing by modern rockers!

As one preacher put "one good Bible thumping sin condemning, pulpit pounding, bark ripping, hide tearing sermon is worth any ten gold records that any dope head Grammy winner ever produced".

These produce a hollow, high, high pitched snapping sound that will burn the fool (2 Sam. 23:6). Up to this point Solomon has tried fourteen different experiments and all of them end in vanity!

7-8: Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart. Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Solomon again says if you see it and understand oppression it should make you mad. Jesus got mad look at Mark 3:15; John 2:15 yet He did not sin. There are times we should become angry at what we see and hear going on yet not sin.

The "gift" is a reference to a bribe compare this to Pro. 15:27 & 29:4. But these destroy the "heart" because "as he thinketh in his heart. So is he".

In verse 8 we see this lived out in Paul and Christ's life and that of a sold out believer Phil. 1:21 & 2 Cor. 5:1-10. Murphy's Law says "anything that begins bad gets worse". The second phrase is well illustrated in Ro. 2:7-8 & 12:12.

9: Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

The do gooder in this chapter is the man who lives like the devil on Saturday night and then goes into church on Sunday and tries to pass himself off as one of righteous character!

10: Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.

This is the basis of a philosophy called "Phenomenalism which teaches that no past experience is any good to learn from, because things change too fast. So each person must discover truth or rather their alibi for their

sin on their own. This saying that experience doesn't count because it isn't YOUR experience.

11: Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

Wisdom is a defense against mental and emotional attacks and even physical. Proverbs 25: 28 shows a man with no wisdom (self control) to a city that can be broken down.

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.

Money can buy defense against a number of issues. But real knowledge knows that wisdom gives life. Solomon said "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The richest man can have his soul required of him in one night if he was truly wise he would be sure of this soul's destiny!

13: Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

Only God can straighten out the lost and crooked man Isaiah 42:16; 27:1

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.

This verse has two applications first to the lost man it is advice so he can take a philosophical view of adversity. Second to the saved man who needs the same view; however the saint can go beyond this and thank God for the adversity.

There are 4 things to learn from this adversity

1. All events are controlled by the Father Ro. 8:28
2. The adversity is dished out in mercy Job 1:12
3. It will be limited 1 Peter 5:10
4. It is purifying Phil. 3:10

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.

Solomon says in his life time that the just or righteousness man dies and the wicked man seems to live longer by being wicked. To him and us it would seem so but not to God, He looks in a different way at one's life!

16-17: Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?

The Pharisees were over righteous (Romans 10:1-4 & 9:30-33). This destroyed them if you are so right you can not tolerate anyone's opinion but your own such as "he is a terrible sinner; he commits sins I would not commit" then you are in trouble. Real righteousness is being ashamed of your own self righteous attitude job knew it read Job 9:21. a sinless life is what god wants from every Christian, sinlessness is not limited to getting rid of Cig's. beer, drugs, ling hair, excess jewelry, etc. it would include the following nine items.

1. A constant attitude of prayer
2. Forgiving spirit toward enemies.
3. A careful guarding of the mouth against gossip and slander
4. a deep sense of God's presence
5. A deep sympathy for those suffering
6. An ability to rejoice with a brother when he is blessed and you are not!
7. Giving cheerfully above the tithe
8. Praying for your Pastor of you have one
9. Speaking boldly for Christ

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.

Solomon in all that he has said and all those he has talked about has had someone in the back of his mind. "He that feareth God" or the one who will come out ahead is a man who fears God.

19-20: Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city. For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

God's wisdom brings greater strength than 10 men's notice 1 Kings 20:16 or Daniel 5 and Belshazzar; or the men in the city of Abel in 2 Sam. 20. Solomon puts down a truth that is carried through to Romans 3:12. Noah, Moses, David, Simon, Thomas and the list goes on and on.

21-22: Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

This is pretty simple do not check too closely o other peoples sins you might find yours while your at it Ro. 2:3; Pr. 30:10; Mark 12:36.

23: All this have I proved by wisdom: I said,  
I will be wise; but it was far from me.

Solomon says to all of us it is good to pursue wisdom, however as he admitted we also must admit we fall short of what we want to be. In our finite state man cannot plumb the depths of what the sovereign god is doing.

24: That which is far off, and exceeding  
deep, who can find it out?

Though the wisdom of our salvation may well be learned by letting the Holy Spirit teach us. Yet there are extents and depths which none can reach or fathom.

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:

Solomon's intensity in knowing and gaining wisdom is seen here in 3 words 1. know, 2 explore, 3 seek. Solomon marked out his area and is using these 3 words to find wisdom. What he learned was the wickedness of folly!

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.

Solomon in seeking wisdom found that to become entangled with cunning or sly women resulted in ruin. Those that follow closely after the Lord will have no problem staying out of her clutches. But the sinner will be captured as a hunter captures his prey.

27-28: Behold, this have I found, saith the  
preacher, counting one by one, to find out  
the account: 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.

Solomon is saying he has made a thorough comparison and out of 1,000 men he only found one upright person. And out of 1,000 women not a single one. This is a sad account of the moral state of Israel

29: Lo, this only have I found, that God  
hath made man upright; but they have  
sought out many inventions.

God is the one who makes man right; man on his own is always seeking after some new gadget!

## Chapter Eight

This chapter will be an expose of the lukewarm man. A continues look at the moralist or do gooders. Here Solomon makes the observation that there is not much difference between the wicked and the righteous.

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.

Who is the truly wise man the one who can interpret something and talk about it with confidence and boldness? This is a great description of Christ and as we grow and learn we should be better able to speak boldly about Christ!

2-3: I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

Solomon is telling his immediate readers to obey the King and whatever you hear in the Kings chambers keep it to yourself or you will pay for it because the King can do whatever he wants including taking your life. Shimei in 1 Kings 2 learned it and Zedekiah in 2 Chron. 36:13 learned it the hard way.

4: Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?

The king can take a stand on what he knows to be right and he has the power to back it up. His authority is absolute and he cannot be questioned. God is King of the universe and it is amazing the people who challenge him.

5: Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

It is of some importance to know when and how to speak to a king. To know this and act accordingly is a good lesson for a philosopher and a study for a Christian.

6-7: Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him. For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

For every action an evil man takes there is coming a time of judgment and he lives in misery because he doesn't know when it will be and no one he asks can tell him so he lives in fear and turmoil!

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.

No one has the ability to stop death and the previous time of judgment. The moral man cannot stop it and neither can doctors or preists. Solomon likens life to going to war and that no one can leave or be sent home. You stay until you die. Even being the meanest you can be will not relieve you from 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.

Solomon saw all of this he studied it and accepted it. He also realized that there are those rulers who are oppressive to their own ruin. They fleece the flock instead of feeding and caring for it. Despots usually do not last long as there is always another despot lurking to take over!

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.

The despotic ruler dies in one way or other and his office of state is left empty. Soon after he is gone he is forgotten this to is emptiness

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.

Because judgment of evil often does not fall swiftly men think they can get away with every thing. When men sin against the remedy of their salvation, how can they escape perdition

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:

If God in His longsuffering bears with a sinner to repent surely He will show more loving kindness to one that fears Him and walks uprightly



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.

Solomon warns his readers to not let God's long suffering toward a sinner presume that he has escaped judgment and patience that keeps His hand from falling.

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.

This goes back to 7: 15; Solomon has continued his seeking of wisdom and come with this extra thought. First it doesn't always go well for the Godly and second it doesn't always go bad for the wicked. But it is all emptiness to Him.

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.

Since life is full of both good and bad circumstances then Solomon says of the moral man. Eat, drink and be merry for at some point you'll die and its vanity.

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:)

One can study day and night until your brain becomes numb and you still will not figure out why God moves the way He does. The only conclusion you can draw is this; what he does will always be right and just.

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  
farther; though a wise man think to know  
it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

The work of God is two things one a man cannot discover it and second the hardest he can work he still cannot discover the infinite wisdom and dealings of God.

## Chapter 9

Solomon will continue looking at man under the sun and this must be kept in mind as he will now make even more statements that ring of socialism.

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.

We are in God's hand and in His control if we are not then this world is a mad house with no purpose at all. This is so distasteful to the atheist and the agnostic who cannot explain the universe or themselves and refuse to admit to the God they hate.

Solomon says there are certain acts that cannot be determined as love or hate while it is still out in front of you.,

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.

This could be the ultimate in pessimism if one thinks or believes that everything mentioned is equal. To the sinner this may well seem so but to God it certain isn't so.

What Solomon is saying is that the same bad circumstances for the sinner can also occur in the lives of the just as well.

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.

The one event is this; the heart of men is evil and mad. Jeremiah said "the heart is deceitfully wicked". If they are not changed by God they die lost!

4: For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

Here is a truth that a sinner should note as long as you have breath there is hope for salvation; do not waste it!

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.

This verse and verse ten are the two taken out of context to form the false teaching of "soul sleep". All one needs is to remember it is Solomon looking at life as the man under the sun or the natural man. The body is planted and from our perspective knows nothing. The soul goes to be with the Lord. Paul in 2 Cor. 5: 6-8 says "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord". He likens the body to a tent we live in and then we fold it and put it away!

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.

Solomon continues his sad lament; the evolutionist tries to tell us that man was once an animal and Solomon is saying as man under the sun that man is like an animal now.

How much sweeter is it for those of us who know Christ as Saviour that we come from God and are going back to God!

7: Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and  
drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God  
now accepteth thy works.

This moral man who considers death to be the end of all can only find his joy in a bar during Happy Hour. To him this is the only way to find happiness in a monotonous world.

8: Let thy garments be always white; and let  
thy head lack no ointment.

The moral man always makes sure the outside is dressed up and ready to go even though the inside is dead. Jesus described the Pharisees this way "whited sepulchres". These are graves that have been white washed on the outside full of dead men's bones!

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.

He is encouraged to enjoy every day of his marriage and to not let it be dull or tiresome. There are many couples who are sinners who are trying to make the best of their marriages.

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.

Solomon says work hard while you are here; once this body is planted in the ground there is no more labor for it. Solomon is speaking solely of the physical body. Notice he says "hand" in his description.

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.

The moral man under the sun considers these acts and concludes it is just by chance that they work out or not. He considers everything in life is just a gamble. What a tragedy that this man cannot understand the moving and working of God in their lives!

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.

Solomon compares this man's view of life that is that all is chance to fish which are caught or birds that are trapped.. So to chance would be the reason something bad happened! This persons phrase is " if my numbers up, there is nothing I can do about it".

13-14: This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me: 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:

This is a change from the above as Solomon will give this illustration of the power of wisdom over strength. When men let down their guard to spend all their time and money on fixing social problems; they will soon be conquered. After 6,000 years man should know that he that is man will never solve social problems. Socialism nearly destroyed Russia, Italy Germany, etc.

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.

Who is this "wisdom" the only true wisdom is Jesus Christ. He came from glory to walk and live on this earth in relative poverty. When He said "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of hath not where to lay His head" was a true statement.

16-17: Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

It is better to be wise than just work on brute strength. It is only when one is quiet will one gain the true wisdom.

Jesus and His words are rejected just as they were in Solomon's day. Today there are so many perversions on the market it is like a bunch of babbling people it causes confusion.

18: Wisdom is better than weapons of war:  
but one sinner destroyeth much good.

Christ and His wisdom are better than all the weapons of war. The man under the sun cannot see this but we as believers can.

The last phrase emphasizes the fact that one life has a great impact on a large number of others around them. For example Adam's affected the whole of the human race; Achan sinned and the nation of Israel suffered. Lot's sin destroyed his family and witness. Rehoboam split the kingdom. Ananias and Sapphira brought the first defect into the early church.

Paul says in Romans 14:7 "for none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself". Everyone's life is a preacher whether for good or for bad.

## Chapter 10

Solomon starts this chapter with a series of sentences disconnected in thought except for the wisdom they impart.

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.

The first thing to notice is the basis for the old saying "there's a fly in the ointment". Now for the practical wisdom in this verse is revealed thru two illustrations. One night out on the town doing what you want can end in a lifetime of disease or maybe even death. The other is this "Mothers spend 18-21 years teaching her son to live right, be wise and some girl will make a fool out of him in 5 minutes. So a little folly a little foolishness can take a good sweet life and turn it into a stench in God's nostrils.

2: A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.

Now in the Bible the right hand is the hand of strength so wisdom lies in strength. A wise man does what he does with all his heart. The fool's heart is in the left hand and is in weakness and half hearted in what he does.

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.

A man that is living the fool's life will not have to hang some sign that says I'm a fool around his neck. No his mouth will tell it well enough in his language. Some are so foolish they do not even need their mouth!

4: If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.

This type will join the crowd instead of fighting for a cause.

5-6: There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.

In our day we have seen sin replace dignity, immorality used to be kept off the main avenues and across the tracks it was vile and distasteful. But now it lives on Main Street and on the right side of the tracks and is glorified in every area of life.

7: I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

Sometimes life reversals will put the little guy on top and the rich guy ends up on the bottom. There have been news stories of men and women with PhD's who have ended up flipping burgers and even one holding a sign that said "will work for food".

8: He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

Here is one for you, to put it into modern language "If you think you can sin and get away with it, especially a Christian you are very foolish indeed." It may appear for years that God has forgotten or looked over you but think again!

9: Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

This refers to moving property lines and doing so will get you hurt! What is this for us trying to cheat men or God this is a sin and will get you hurt read Malachi 3.

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.

If your garden tool loses its edge you will certainly sharpen it as no one wants to work with a dull instrument. The duller the hoe or axe the harder you have to exert yourself.

To apply this if you are going to live and serve the Lord one needs to use the whetstone of wisdom to sharpen ones mind. Ill. a young man came to an old Pastor to announce his call to preach and that he was only going to take a short course of study so he could jump right in. the old preacher admonished him to not be foolish rather take his time and sharpen his mind with wisdom.

11: Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.

First we need to read Ps. 58: 45 and Jeremiah 8:17. In India they have those fellows playing their horns causing the cobras to do their little dance while being mesmerized.

You can play that for a long time however the cobra will only stay entranced so long after that you can be struck and surely die.

Now the serpent here is the babbler the deceiver the Judas. He may pass as a close friend but bite you like an adder. For example this is how David felt when Ahitophel turned on him, read Psalm 55. In this day and time one needs to be careful because the ones you count on may well take your words and twist them as they tell them to others.

12: The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

A wise person speaks words to help and encourage. The words of a fool will destroy that person and most of the time those around them. One must be very careful in choosing friends, guard yourself or you may pay a steep price.

13-14: The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness. A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?

This is easily proven as true, gather a group of people and throw out an open question and just listen to some of the answers. Some examples from history are Socrates, Aristotle, Marx, Freud, and Voltaire. There are programs such as our own "what's your opinion" which proves every one has one and few know what they are talking about.

The fool doesn't listen when he is told the truth even if from God. One writer said "such people as those whose brain starts their mouth working and then the brain goes off and leaves it".

15: The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.

To put this in simple terms, a fool doesn't know when to get out of the rain and wears every one around them out trying to look after them.

16: Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!

They needed to be on guard when the leader is young and the family parties all night long. They give themselves over to pleasure instead of ruling the people properly and being a blessing or help to the land.

This is well proven in the kings that followed Solomon and when one takes a careful look at history it is born out time and again!

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!

Drugs and alcohol are out of control in this country and far too many decisions are made at drinking parties in the Capital instead of the way Solomon says here over a meal for strength.

18: By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.



Our failing infrastructure and inner cities are proof enough of this. If one does not keep working on their property it will collapse. Let me give you an illustration there is a wealthy man in our town whose mother died and he left her house as it was with clothes and all still in it until it was a heap upon the ground a couple of years ago before doing anything.

19: A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

Many of the rich live like this and they are trying to be both liberal and conservative at the same time and that is a recipe for failure.

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.

To disagree with a leader is one thing to curse a leader is something else read 1 Peter 2:17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. What you say might be brought to their attention by a little birdie and then you will pay for it.

## Chapter Eleven

Solomon is going to give the moral man the best course to follow. The one who wants to go down the middle of the road neither hot nor cold!

1: Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

Solomon starts by telling the moral person to go ahead and do good as you may not receive an immediate reward but later on you will!

2: Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

Help as many people as you can while you can because sometime in the future you may need help and the more people you have helped the better chance you'll have of one or more helping you. The parable of the "unjust" steward in Luke 16 covers this pretty well.

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.

If it's calling for rain you should be prepared so you will not be caught unprepared and get wet! When a large tree falls to the ground it is hard to move.

The application of these proverbial statements is this before you start a really big project know what you are doing it may be too difficult to change once started! Jesus said we are to count the cost of a project before start.

4: He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

Common sense or acting wisely one does not throw seed out in the wind as it will not land where it is supposed to. Neither can you reap much in the rain.

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.

David said "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" the growth of a baby in the womb still contains mysteries today. Being born again of the Spirit is an even greater mystery. Neither you nor I know how the Spirit will move at any given moments. Jesus Himself said so in John 3:8. in reality for as much as man knows there is even more he doesn't know.

Solomon is saying to the moral man do not allow what you do not know to disturb you to much.

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.

You are to cast away, to give out, or sow and be generous without knowing or caring what will happen whether you will be blessed or not this morning or this evening. Since you do not know what the end result of your doing good will be then always do good!

7-8: Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: 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.

There is a saying out there "It is good to be alive" 1 Tim. 6:17. Life is dear to each, as much as the sun rise to ones eyes especially as one grows old and the eyes dim. The phrase "days of darkness" is a term referring to times of affliction, weakness, and perhaps old age.

If one does not die a sudden violent death then there is the long pain filled lingering death in either case one must be prepared to meet God!

9-10: 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. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.

Young people need to make the right choices in all areas of life. Instead of wanting ones youth only to find you in middle or old age having wasted an entire life. Youthful days not lived right is a waste of days. Every life is a gift from God and is given one day at a time even one second at a time that is to be used for God's glory!

## Chapter Twelve

Solomon now brings his experiments to a close by placing his closing thought to young and old in this final chapter.

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;

After all of his experiments Solomon starts here by saying that both young and old need to get back to God. For the young it is this make your decision for him at the earliest age. For the old it is get back to God and stay close to Him.

Youth is heat without light and old age is light without heat. With advancing years comes a loss of enjoyment in life read here the words of Bazilli the servant of David from 2 Samuel 19:35 I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Sometimes old age even brings bitterness. No one enjoys increased doctor visits and medicines and decrease of youthful activities.

2: While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

How we once viewed things in our youth we no longer see them the same way. For instance when I was young I riding coasters was an exciting thought now not so much. The same could be said for a great number of other things also.

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,

The "keepers" here are the legs that hold this ole tent up as it is the legs that generally are the first to go on an athlete. Now the "strong men" is a picture of the back as it bows from years of toil and the "grinders" are the teeth as we age the real become false. Next he mentions the "windows" this is failing eyesight as we age the eyes lose the ability to focus.

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 music shall be brought low;

The "doors shut" is an allusion to the hearing failing even street noise is not as loud as age advances. Even women working in the kitchen isn't as noisy.

He shall rise up- when we are young thunder could barely wake us, but now it takes just a little noise and we wake up. "Daughters of music" the voice becomes weaker and less able to carry the tune!

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:

When I was young there was little fear of height or working on the edge of a roof, which is not quite so today. I can still go up but the edge is not mine anymore I have a fear of it now.

There are more concerns as we age where health, travel and other parts of life are concerned where once there was none!

Desire is gone that is romance is gone and death comes along as he says "long home" lastly he mentions "grasshoppers" this is the ability to carry heavy objects weakens.

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.

Now Solomon narrows his focus to some organs of the body. First he mentions the "silver cord" this is a reference to the spinal cord. Next is the "golden bowl" and is the skull and brain the functioning of which decreases with age.

Then there is the "pitcher" or the lungs as ones lung capacity diminishes with age. Then comes the "wheel" or the heart with age loses some of its pumping ability. Life does not function at all without these.

7: Then shall the dust return to the earth as  
it was: and the spirit shall return unto God  
who gave it.

The physical body is planted in the ground and decays. At the graveside it is said "from dust thou were to dust thou shalt return" speaking of the body.

Solomon is quite clear here that the spirit the real you will return to the Lord. To this Paul agrees in 2 Cor. 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Here is President John Adams quote as an old man "oh, I'm doing fine but this house I live in is growing very feeble and I think I'll be moving out of it before long" he died shortly after.

8: Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

To the young person life is empty if you are just living for here and now as so many are today. One day you will see that you really only had a handful of ashes. Hear here David's words in Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

9-11: 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. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

Solomon the preacher in his old age had still his wisdom and had used it to write Proverbs and this book to instruct people. Wise words are as the sharpened stick used to prod oxen along and as truth they are like nails holding wood.

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.

Solomon adds a quick note that all the education and the biggest library will not solve the problems of life and now he gives the only real answer.

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

Solomon says that the end of all of this experimenting is "fear God". That is the answer both here and in the book of Proverbs. We need to worship and obey Him in all things. The next phrase is about meeting god's condition of Salvation in any age "faith". For Abel it was a lamb, Abraham it was believing in a promise, for Israel sacrificing at the tabernacle. For us it is found in Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house

14: For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

There is nothing cloudy here god is going to cause everyone to be called into account. Friend ones sin is either on Christ by faith or one still carries them and there penalty of death.

The tenderness of heart is better for salvation at a young age and lessens as one ages! The other thing of claiming Christ at a young age is more time to serve! Jesus is the only solution for man! John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.