

Ecclesiastes 6:1-12

- I. Futility:
- II. God's Immutable Plan for Life (3:1-22)
- III. The Futility of the Circumstances of Life (4:1-5:20)
- IV. The Futility of Life as a Whole (6:1-12)
 - A. Wealth And Children Cannot Satisfy (6:1-2)
 - 1 There is an evil (**RA'AH**) which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent (**RABH**) among men--
 - 2 a man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires, but God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is *vanity* and a severe affliction.
 - 3 If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, however many they be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things, and he does not even have a proper burial, then I say, "Better the miscarriage than he,
 - 4 for it comes in *futility* and goes into obscurity; and its (**the miscarriage**) name is covered in obscurity.
 - 5 "It never sees the sun and it never knows anything; it is better off than he.
 - 6 "Even if the other man lives a thousand years twice and does not enjoy good things-- do not all go to one place?"

Summary:

- 1. Solomon is describing a man who has been thoroughly blessed by God but has no _____ in his blessings.
 - 2. The lack of satisfaction can come because someone has _____ them from him.
 - 3. To add to his despair, some may be blessed by _____ with him and are enjoying God's blessings.
 - 4. Old age and children have been viewed by most cultures as being of the _____ blessings one could receive.
 - 5. Solomon teaches that one who is not _____ receives no real joy even from these societal blessings.
 - 6. From a _____ perspective it would have been better to not have been born, if one lacks contentment, because all will die.
 - 7. Also from a purely human perspective, the soul ceases to _____ at physical death, so what difference does it make?
- IV. The Futility of Life as a Whole (6:1-1)
- A. Wealth And Children Cannot Satisfy (6:1-2)

B. Labor Cannot Satisfy (6:7-12)

1. Needs Filled, Desires Not. 6:7-9

- 7 All a man's labor is for his mouth and yet the appetite (**NEPHESH**) is not satisfied.
- 8 For what advantage does the wise man have over the fool? What advantage does the poor man have, knowing how to walk before the living?
- 9 What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is **futility** and a striving after wind.

Summary:

1. While we may work to eat and have plenty, our "appetites" might never be _____.
2. This _____ to both the wise man and the fool.
3. Both have to come to an _____ of life.
4. Contentment with what one sees is far better than grasping for the wind of the _____ desires of the soul.

2. What Is New Under The Sun? 6:10-12

- 10 Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he (**man**) cannot dispute with him (**Him**) who is stronger than he is.
- 11 For there are many words which increase **futility**. What then is the advantage to a man?
- 12 For who knows what is good for a man during *his* lifetime, *during* the few years of his **futile** life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun?

Summary:

1. This is _____ to previous statements. Eccl 1:9; 3:15.
2. Solomon, like Job, says that a man cannot _____ with God, just to get his own desires. Job 9:32; 40:2
3. Seeking to fully describe God, even with a great _____, is grasping for wind.
4. We are but a _____ passing through time. Jas 4:14
5. Without God in a person's thought process, the answers to the questions are "no one," which leads to greater _____.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-29

- I. Futility:
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- III. The Futility of the Circumstances of Life (4:1-5:20)
- IV. The Futility of Life as a Whole (6:1-1)
- V. Counsel for Living With Vanity (7:1-12:8)

A. Counsel in View of Man's Wickedness (7:1-29)

1. Some Solomonic Proverbs. 7:1-14

- 1 A good name is **better (1)** than a good ointment, (**honor vs pleasure**)
And the day of one's death is **better (2)** than the day of one's birth.

Principle: It is _____ to pass from life than into life.

- 2 It is **better (3)** to go to a house of mourning
Than to go to a house of feasting,
Because that is the end of every man,
And the living takes it to heart.

Principle: Life is _____ so let us not forget that fact.

- 3 Sorrow is better than laughter,
For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.

Principle: Sorrow draws the heart _____ to God.

- 4 The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning,
While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.

Principle: Wisdom has _____ for the loss others experience while foolish people just want to party.

- 5 It is **better (4)** to listen to the rebuke of a wise man
Than for one to listen to the song of fools.

Principle: It is better for us to listen to _____ than to simply seek release from music.

- 6 For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot,
So is the laughter of the fool,
And this too is **futility**. (**breaks up the proverbs into a stanza**)

Principle: The laughter of a fool is often short-lived, spiritually hollow and senseless rather than the _____ and _____ words of a wise man.

- 7 For oppression makes a wise man mad,
And a bribe corrupts the heart.

Principle: A truly wise man does not rejoice in another's _____ and even the truly wise can be _____ by things.

8 The end of a matter is **better (5)** than its beginning;

Principle: Everyone likes to see a _____ task.

Patience of spirit is better **(6)** than haughtiness of spirit.

Principle: Patience is better for _____ than arrogance.

9 Do not be eager in your heart to be angry,
For anger resides in the bosom of fools.

Principle: Looking for something to get angry about is _____.

10 Do not say, "Why is it that the former days were better **(7)** than these?"
For it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.

Principle: Dwelling on _____ of the past will only cause problems for the present and future.

11 Wisdom along with an inheritance is good
And an advantage to those who see the sun.

Principle: It is nice to receive an inheritance if _____ enough to properly use it.

12 For wisdom is protection just as money is protection.
But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the lives of its possessors.

Principle: Wisdom is what preserves life, not _____.

13 Consider the work of God,
For who is able to straighten what He has bent?

Principle: Herein is wisdom. Why would anyone want to try to _____ the Almighty?

14 In the day of prosperity be happy,
But in the day of adversity consider—
God has made the one as well as the other
So that man may not discover anything that will be after him.

Summary:

1. **These proverbs are a test of godly versus human _____.**
2. **As with proverbial sayings, they are designed to make us _____ and ask questions.**

3. God has provided the opportunity to _____ both prosperity and adversity.
4. After we physically die, our earthly discoveries are _____.

2. Some Practical Applications. 7:15-18

- 15 I have seen everything during my lifetime of *futility*; there is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his wickedness.
- 16 Do not be excessively righteous, and do not be overly wise. Why should you ruin yourself?
- 17 Do not be excessively wicked, and do not be a fool. Why should you die before your time?
- 18 It is good that you grasp one thing, and also not let go of the other; for the one who fears God comes forth with both of them.

Summary:

1. Some things we just can't _____.
2. We should seek the wisdom necessary to _____ our lives.
3. We should also realize that our _____ at times are not just either-or, but maybe both, or neither.
4. _____ for God lets us come to see the balance in life.

3. Live In Grace. 7:19-22

- 19 Wisdom strengthens a wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city.
- 20 Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.
- 21 Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken, lest you hear your servant cursing you.
- 22 For you also have realized that you likewise have many times cursed others.

Summary:

1. Wisdom from God is better for life than the _____ power bases.
2. No one is always _____, except The One. Rom 3:9-12
3. The wise person is not overly _____ to what everyone says.
4. The wise person realizes that they too have _____, and probably in the same manner.

4. Be Truly Wise. 7:23-26

- 23 I tested all this with wisdom, and I said, "I will be wise," but it was far from me.
- 24 What has been is remote and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it?
- 25 I directed my mind to know, to investigate, and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know the evil of folly and the foolishness of madness.

26 And I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her, but the sinner will be captured by her.

Summary:

1. The truly wise man knows that he is not _____ wise.
2. The past does not contain all the _____ and the future is not known.
3. Solomon wanted to explore good and evil to the _____.
4. His discoveries should let the _____ wise keep from being ensnared by evil.

5. Realize We Are Flawed. 7:27-29

27 "Behold, I have discovered this," says the Preacher, "adding one thing to another to find an explanation,
28 which I am still seeking (lit: **yet my soul is seeking**) but have not found. I have (should be a "not" in here) found one man among a thousand, but I (nor) have (I) not found a woman among all these.
29 "Behold, I have found only this, that God made men (**The Man = Adam**) upright, but they (**the offspring of Adam**) have sought out many devices." (**CHISHABON = 2x; 2 Chr 26:15; a war engine**)

Summary:

1. The Preacher keeps _____ for that which is not vanity.
2. He has found very _____ people who were truly wise and upright.
3. His conclusion is that God made Adam perfect, but his offspring figured out a wide _____ of ways to hurl stones at one another.