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Ecclesiastes

by
Duane L. Anderson



Serve and Equip

Ecclesiastes

Detailed Bible Book Outline

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Updated July 2023

Ecclesiastes

The summary of the life of Solomon

1 Kings 1:3

“And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.”

1 Kings 11:4

“For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart to other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.”

A divided heart will always lead to vanity (emptiness)

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Ecclesiastes

I. God provided an introduction to Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes - 1:1-3

A. Solomon started his life with a godly father as an example - David - 1:1

**God gave these words of the Preacher (Solomon)
God said he was the son of David, king of Jerusalem**

B. Solomon experienced much emptiness later in his life - 1:2-3

**God said Solomon was filled with emptiness or meaningless (Vanity)
God said Solomon felt everything was emptiness
This was the result of sin in his heart - 1 Kings 11:4
God said that Solomon wanted to know what he had from all his labor
God said Solomon wondered what value there was in his work**

II. God showed the things that do not satisfy - 1:4-2:26

A. Solomon described the cycles of created things - 1:4-11

1. The emptiness of life means things come and go - 1:4-7

**Solomon said one generation dies and another one comes
Solomon said the earth abides forever; Christ said it will pass away
Solomon said the sun comes up and the sun goes down
Solomon said it hurries to the place where it will rise again
Solomon said the wind blows to the south and then to the north
Solomon said the wind goes in circles and then returns
Solomon said the rivers flow to the seas but the seas do not rise
Solomon said where the rivers flow they will flow again**

2. The emptiness of life makes one feel unsatisfied - 1:8-11

**Solomon said life is tiresome but people don't know why
This is one of the many consequences of sin - Genesis 3:17-19
Solomon said the eye is not satisfied by seeing or the ear by hearing
Solomon said what has happened will be that way
Solomon said that there is nothing new under the sun
Solomon said people say things are new and they do not know the past
Solomon said people do not remember earlier things or know the future
Solomon said people will not remember today in the future
This will be true whether a person is wise or a fool - Ecclesiastes 2:16**

B. Solomon said that wisdom does not satisfy - 1:12-18

1. Wisdom does not bring joy without the Lord - 1:12-14

**Solomon became the king in Jerusalem
Solomon set his heart to seek and search out wisdom
Solomon wanted to have wisdom about everything that happens
Solomon said that this search can become an unhappy task
Solomon had seen many different things that are done
Solomon said this also caused emptiness
Solomon said it was like trying to catch the wind
Solomon said what is morally wrong cannot be made straight
Solomon said when something is lacking it cannot be counted**

2. Wisdom can also bring grief when the heart is not right - 1:15-18

**Solomon had thoughts within his heart
Solomon knew he had gained great wisdom
Solomon knew he had more wisdom than any before him
Solomon knew he had more understanding than any before him
Solomon had a great desire to gain more wisdom
Solomon saw he received more delusion
Solomon said that some of his seeking was foolishness
We are to test everything by the Word of God - 1 Thessalonians 5:21
Solomon knew that was like trying to catch the wind
Solomon said much wisdom also brings more sadness
Solomon said to get such knowledge also brings more pain**

C. Solomon said that pleasure does not satisfy - 2:1-11

1. The search began with seeking pleasure - 2:1-3

**Solomon said next he would try pleasure
Solomon said he would just enjoy himself
Solomon said that search still left him with emptiness
Solomon said much laughter only lasted for a moment
Solomon said that laughter used rumors that hurt others
Solomon tried to please his body with wine
Solomon wanted to see if this would guide him wisely
A natural person cannot understand spiritual things - 1 Corinthians 2:14
Solomon tried to satisfy himself with foolishness
Solomon thought this might show him what was good for others
Solomon thought this might work for life on the earth**

2. The search continued with great works - 2:4-6

Solomon made great works for himself

Samuel warned Israel a king would focus on himself - 1 Samuel 8:10-17

Solomon built houses for himself

Solomon built a very expensive house for himself - 1 Kings 7:1-12

Solomon planted vineyards for himself

Solomon made gardens and parks for himself

Solomon planted all kinds of fruit trees

Solomon made ponds of water for himself

Solomon made these to water a forest of growing trees

3. The search included gathering great wealth - 2:7-9

Solomon bought male and female slaves

Solomon also had servants that had been born in his house

Solomon had greater herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before

Solomon gathered gold and silver for himself

Solomon gathered a large amount of gold - 1 Kings 9:28

Solomon received special treasures from other kings

The queen of Sheba gave him many kinds of treasures - 1 Kings 10:10

(These also included the rulers of the various provinces)

Solomon provided for himself male and female singers

Solomon had many concubines

These women turned his heart away from the Lord - 1 Kings 11:1-3

(These were the delight of the sons of men)

Solomon became greater than all who had been before him in Jerusalem

Solomon added more to what he collected than all before him

Solomon had all his wisdom remain with him

Solomon had wisdom but did not fully follow the Lord - 1 Kings 11:4

4. The search caused him to try to satisfy himself - 2:10-11

Solomon gathered anything his eyes desired

Solomon did not keep his heart from any pleasure

Solomon was pleased in his heart for all of his labor

However, Solomon failed to fully follow the Lord - 1 Kings 9:4-6, 11:4-8

Solomon said that these things were the reward for all his work

Solomon looked at all the works that he had done

Solomon saw it as the labor for which he worked hard

Solomon realized that all these things produced was emptiness

Solomon said it was like trying to catch the wind

Solomon said there was no benefit that he gained under the sun

D. Solomon said that riches do not satisfy - 2:12-26

1. Wisdom is better than folly - 2:12-14

Solomon turned himself to see wisdom, madness and folly
Solomon wondered what any future king would be able to do
Solomon thought that he had tried everything
A person will only do what had already been done - Ecclesiastes 1:9
Solomon saw that wisdom is greater than folly (foolishness)
He knew that madness and folly are like trying to catch the wind - Ecclesiastes 1:17
Solomon saw that it was like light compared to darkness
God has made both for His purposes - Ecclesiastes 7:14
Solomon saw that the wise man can know where he is going
Solomon saw that the fool walks in darkness
Solomon saw that the same thing will happen to all
Sooner or later all will die - Ecclesiastes 9:2-3

2. Wisdom is not remembered after a person is gone - 2:15-16

Solomon even thought about this in his heart
Solomon saw that he would die just like the fool
Solomon even wondered why he had been made extremely wise
Solomon decided that this was also emptiness
We will all reap one day what we have sown - Galatians 6:7-9
Solomon saw that the wise man or the fool is not remembered
Solomon saw that in the coming days the wise man is also forgotten
Solomon asked how the death of a wise man is different
Solomon said a wise man would die just like a fool

3. Wisdom gives no idea what those who follow will do - 2:17-19

Solomon said that was why he hated life
Solomon said that the works he had done were distressing to him
Solomon said that all is vanity and like chasing after wind
Solomon said that he hated the fruit of all his work
Solomon said that was what he had worked to gain
Solomon said he had to leave everything behind when he died
The rich will perish and leave their wealth to others - Psalm 49:10
Solomon said he would be leaving it to the man who came after him
Solomon had no idea whether he would be wise or a fool
Solomon said he would still be over all that Solomon had done
Solomon had shown that he worked hard to gain these things
Solomon said this was also vanity

4. Wisdom does not reward the person who worked hard - 2:20-22

Solomon said that this was why he despised all he had
Solomon said this was what he had worked to gain
Solomon said he had labored with wisdom, knowledge and skill
These became meaningless in his old age - 1 Kings 11:4
Solomon said he would leave it all to one who had not worked for it
This happened with the son of Solomon - 1 Kings 12:4-14
Solomon said this is vanity and a great evil
His son was an evil king because of the example of Solomon - Ecclesiastes 6:2
Solomon asked what a man had for all of his labor
Solomon has begun the book questioning this - Ecclesiastes 1:3
Solomon asked what did he have for all the striving of his heart
Solomon asked why he had worked to gain all these things
Solomon realized that these things did not satisfy - Ecclesiastes 3:9

5. Wisdom does not provide future rewards - 2:23-24

Solomon said all his days were filled with sorrow
Solomon said his work just brought grief
Solomon said that even at night his mind could not rest
Christ leads those who trust in Him to have His peace - John 14:27
We will not experience this peace when we trust in ourselves - Romans 7:14-25
Solomon said this also was vanity
Solomon said there is nothing better than to eat and drink
Solomon said then he could tell himself his labor is good
Solomon said that everything is in the hand of God

6. Wisdom does not benefit those lacking trust in God - 2:25-26

Solomon asked who can eat without God
Solomon asked who can have enjoyment without God
God will give this peace as we rejoice in Christ - Philippians 4:4-9
Solomon said that God gives a person what is good in His sight
Solomon said God is the One who has given wisdom
Solomon knew that God had given him great wisdom - 1 Kings 3:9-13
Solomon said God is the One who has given knowledge
Solomon said God is the One who has given joy
Solomon said God has given the sinner the task of gathering
Solomon said God has given the sinner the task of collecting
Solomon said that God will give it to one who is good in His sight
God will give this peace as we trust in Him - Proverbs 3:5-6
Solomon said this is vanity and striving after the wind for the sinner

III. God knew man needs guidance for life - 3:1-4:16

A. Solomon knew that God had a plan for life - 3:1-22

1. God has an appointed time for all that happens - 3:1-11

a. The Lord has an appointed time for everything - 3:1

Every single thing in creation has its appointed time
This may cause misery in the process - Ecclesiastes 8:6
Every purpose under heaven will be fulfilled in God's time
God will judge the righteous and the wicked in His appointed time - Ecclesiastes 3:17

b. The Lord gave many illustrations of this appointed time - 3:2-8

There is a time to be born and a time to die - Hebrews 9:27-28
There is a time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted
There is a time to kill and a time to heal
There is a time to tear down and a time to build up
There is a time to weep and a time to laugh - Romans 12:15
There is a time to mourn and a time to dance - Genesis 23:2
There is a time to throw stones and a time to gather stones
There is a time to embrace and a time to avoid embracing
There is a time to search and a time to give up what is lost
There is a time to keep and a time to throw away
There is a time to tear apart and a time to sew together
There is a time to be silent and a time to speak - Amos 5:3
There is a time to speak words fitly spoken - Proverbs 25:11
There is a time to love and a time to hate - Proverbs 13:5
There is a time for war and a time for peace

c. The Lord has put eternity in the hearts of man- 3:9-11

God was asked is there profit for a worker in his task in which he labors?
God has given a task for each person to do
God said Solomon did not completely follow His wisdom - 1 Kings 11:3-8
God did this so the sons of men have something to occupy themselves
God made everything beautiful when He created it
God made everything perfect at the time of creation - Genesis 1:31
God put eternity in the hearts of every person
Eternity is in the heart of every person beginning with Adam - Genesis 3:22
God said man will not fully understand His work
Job realized this even though he was a righteous man - Job 42:5-6
God said this is His work from the beginning even to the end

2. God will judge the righteous and the wicked - 3:12-15

Solomon knew that there was nothing better than to rejoice
Solomon knew that men ought to do good in their lives - Ecclesiastes 2:3
Solomon said every man who eats and drinks should see good in all his labor
Solomon said it is good for man to enjoy the results of his work - Ecclesiastes 2:24
Solomon said that was a gift from God
Solomon said he knew about the things God does
Solomon knew that His works will remain forever
Every good thing comes from above and there is no variation - James 1:17
Solomon said there is nothing to add to what God does
Solomon said there is nothing to take from what God does
Solomon said God has worked so men should fear before Him
Solomon said what has been has already been done - Ecclesiastes 1:9
Solomon said God seeks what has passed by

3. God tests the hearts of men - 3:16-22

a. Solomon looked at what was around him - 3:16-17

Solomon looked at what was going on around him
Everyone had someone higher watching over them - Ecclesiastes 5:8
Solomon saw there was wickedness in the place of justice - Jeremiah 17:9
Solomon saw that in the place of righteousness there was wickedness
Solomon said God will judge the righteous man and the wicked man
Solomon said there is a time for every purpose
Solomon said there is a time for every work

b. Solomon looked from his own heart - 3:18-22

Solomon looked at the men around him
Solomon said God had already tested these men
Solomon said that these men were like the animals
Solomon said men and animals both have the same thing happen to them
Solomon said that the way one dies is the same as the way the other dies
Solomon said there is no advantage for man over the animals
Solomon said that everything is vanity and they all go to the same place
Solomon said they all came from the dust and they all return to dust
God formed man from the dust of the ground - Genesis 2:7
Solomon asked who knows that the breath of man goes upward
The spirit will return to God who gave it - Ecclesiastes 12:7
Solomon asked who knows the breath of the animals goes down to the earth
Solomon had seen nothing is better than a man should rejoice in his activities
Solomon said that is his heritage
Solomon said no one knows what will happen after him

B. Solomon knew that man needs guidance from others - 4:1-12

1. There is oppression wherever people go - 4:1-3

Solomon looked at the acts of oppression that were being committed
Solomon saw the tears of the oppressed and they had no comforter
The rich are quick to take advantage of the poor - Proverbs 14:31
Solomon knew that on the side of their oppressors there was power
Christ will judge oppressors if they do not repent - Psalm 72:4
Solomon knew the oppressed and they had no one to comfort them
Solomon then praised the dead who were already dead
Solomon praised them more than the living who were still living
Solomon said better off than both of them was one who had never existed
Solomon said that person never sees the evil activity done under the sun

2. There is envy wherever there are people - 4:4-6

Solomon saw all toil and every skillful work of man is envied by his neighbor
(Solomon saw that every labor and skill can result in rivalry)
Solomon said this too is vanity and striving after wind
Solomon said the fool folds his hands and consumes his own flesh
Solomon said one hand full with rest is better than two fists of labor
Solomon said one hand full with rest is better than striving after wind

3. There is self-deception in the hearts of men - 4:7-8

Solomon returned and saw vanity under the sun
Solomon said there is one alone without a companion (no friends)
Solomon said he did not have a son or a brother (no family)
Solomon said there was no end to all of his labors to gain more riches
Solomon said yet his eye is not satisfied with riches
Solomon said he never asked for whom he was toiling
Solomon said the man never asked for whom he labored - Psalm 39:6; Ecclesiastes 2:18-21
Solomon said he never asked why he was depriving himself of good
Solomon said this was also vanity and a grave misfortune

4. The blessing when people work together - 4:9-10

Solomon said that two are better than one
Solomon said they have a good reward for their labor
Solomon said if one falls, there is another to lift him up
Solomon said woe to the one who is alone when he falls
Solomon said he has no one to lift him up

5. The benefits of teamwork in life - 4:11-12

Solomon said if two lie down together they keep warm
Solomon asked how can one be warm alone
Solomon said one can overpower him who is alone
Solomon said that two can resist such a person
Solomon said a cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart

C. Solomon knew that success is forgotten by future generations - 4:13-16

Solomon said a poor yet wise boy is better than an old and foolish king
Solomon said the foolish king no longer knows how to receive instruction
Solomon said he has come out of prison to become king
Solomon said this was even though he had been born poor in his kingdom
Solomon said all the living under the sun throng to his side
Solomon said this is the second lad who replaced the king
Solomon said then there is no end to all the people including those before him
Solomon said even the ones who come later will not be happy with him
Solomon said this was also vanity and striving after wind

IV. God knew the end of things that do not satisfy - 5:1-6:12

A. Solomon knew that false worship did not satisfy - 5:1-7

1. Religious activity can be vanity - 5:1-3

Solomon said to guard your steps when you go to the house of the Lord
Solomon said to go to listen and not to offer the sacrifice of fools
Solomon said those who do that do not know that they are doing evil
Solomon said not to be rash with your mouth
Solomon said do not let your heart say anything hastily before God
Solomon said God is in heaven and you are on earth so make your words few
Solomon said a dream comes through much activity
Solomon said a fool's voice is known by his many words

2. Religious vows that are not kept are also vanity - 5:4-7

Solomon said when you make a vow to God do not be late to pay it
Solomon said God takes no delight in fools so pay what you have vowed
Solomon said it is better not to make a vow than to vow and not pay
Solomon said not to let your mouth cause your flesh to sin
Solomon said not to say before the messenger of God that it was a mistake
Solomon said why should God be angry at your excuse
Solomon said God will destroy the work of your hands
Solomon said in many dreams and many words there is vanity, but fear God?

B. Solomon knew that riches would end at death - 5:8-20

1. Riches only lead to emptiness - 5:8-10

Solomon saw that riches lead to the oppression of the poor
God said we are not to put our hearts on the gain of oppression - Psalm 62:10
Solomon saw that riches lead to the denial of justice and righteousness
Solomon said we should not be surprised when we see this
Solomon said high official watches over high official
Solomon said higher officials watch over them
Solomon said there is benefit in a king cultivating the land
Solomon said this is to the advantage of the land
Solomon said those who love money will not be satisfied with money
Solomon said they will not be satisfied with the abundance that comes with it
Solomon said this also results in emptiness

2. Riches make it difficult to sleep - 5:11-12

Solomon said when things increase those who consume them also increase
Solomon said that the gathering of riches has little benefit
Solomon said the only benefit is to look at those riches with your eyes
Solomon said the sleep of a working man is pleasant
Solomon said this is true whether he eats little or much
Solomon said the abundance of the rich does not allow him to sleep

3. Riches gathered only last until death - 5:13-15

Solomon said that there was a severe evil which he had seen
Solomon said that riches that are hoarded hurt the person
If God gives riches we are to use them wisely and serve others - 1 Kings 10:23
Solomon said those riches may be lost through a bad investment
Those who trust in riches will fall - Proverbs 11:28
Solomon said that if he fathers a son
Solomon said then he will have nothing to give to him
Solomon said a man came naked from the womb of his mother
Solomon said that he will have no return when he dies
Job saw what God does as blessing so he had a different attitude - Job 1:21
Solomon said that he will take nothing from the fruit of his labor
We brought nothing in and we will take nothing out - 1 Timothy 6:7
Solomon said he will have nothing to carry in his hand

4. Riches do not benefit in the end - 5:16-17

Solomon said that this is a severe evil
Solomon said just as he was born he will die
Solomon said there is no advantage because he toiled for the wind
Solomon asked what a man gains by all of his toil - Ecclesiastes 1:3
The person who troubles their own household inherits the wind - Proverbs 11:29
Solomon said that throughout his life he eats in darkness
The Lord must build the house and work is just long hours - Psalm 127:1-2
Solomon said he still has much sorrow, sickness and anger

5. Riches make it possible to enjoy life for the good in it - 5:18-20

Solomon said that this is what he has learned
Solomon said it is good to eat and to drink
Solomon said it is important to enjoy the good of his labor
Solomon said he works hard during the few years that God gives him
Solomon said that his reward is only the years he has on this earth
Solomon said God is the One who has given riches and wealth
Solomon said God is the One who has given the power to eat from them
Solomon said to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor
Solomon said that is a gift from God
Solomon said he will not often think of the years of his life
Solomon said God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart

C. Solomon knew these things do not satisfy the soul - 6:1-12

1. Emptiness comes from riches because they do not satisfy - 6:1-2

Solomon saw that there is an evil which can be seen
Solomon said this evil is common
Solomon said a man may be given riches, wealth and honor
Solomon said that he may not lack anything he desires
Solomon said God may not give the power to eat from these things
Christ gave a similar parable about a rich man - Luke 12:16-21
Solomon said it may be a foreigner who enjoys these things
Solomon said this is vanity and a severe affliction

2. Emptiness is worse than a life not lived - 6:3-6

Solomon said a man may have a hundred children and live many years
Solomon says that the soul is not satisfied with these good things
The soul is the inner being and includes all that have life - Genesis 2:7
Solomon said that the person may not even have a proper burial
Solomon said it would have been better for his mother to have a miscarriage
Solomon said he comes in futility and goes into darkness
Solomon said it would be better if he never saw the sun
That would be a stillborn child that never saw the sun - Psalm 58:8
Solomon said it would be better if he never knew anything
Solomon realized that he would die just like an unsatisfied fool - Ecclesiastes 2:14-15

3. Emptiness does not satisfy the soul - 6:7-9

Solomon said all the labor of man is for his mouth
Solomon said those things do not satisfy the soul
These things do not prepare the soul for eternity - Ecclesiastes 3:11
Solomon asked what more does a wise man have than a fool
Solomon asked what advantage the poor man has
Solomon said if he knows how to walk before the living
Solomon said the sight of the eyes is better than wandering desire
Solomon realized a man faced judgement after he finished this life - Ecclesiastes 11:9
Solomon said this is also vanity and grasping for the wind

4. Emptiness causes life to pass like a shadow - 6:10-12

Solomon said whatever exists already has already been named
Solomon said it is known what man is
Solomon said he cannot contend with Him who is more powerful
Solomon said that there are many things that increase vanity
Solomon asked what advantage man has over other created things
Solomon asked who knows what is good for man in life
Solomon said this was during the few years of his empty life
Solomon said the life of man is like a shadow
Solomon said no man knows what will be after him

V. God had Solomon share some things he had learned from wisdom - 7:1-10:20

A. Solomon shared some of the things he learned from wisdom - 7:1-29

1. Wisdom can help you make wise decisions and help guide you - 7:1-4

Solomon said a good name is better than a good ointment
Solomon said the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth
Solomon said it is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting
Solomon said this is the end of every man
Solomon said that the living will take this to heart
Solomon said that sorrow is better than laughter
Solomon said when a face is sad a heart may be made better
Godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret - 2 Corinthians 7:10
Solomon said the mind of the wise is in the house of mourning
Solomon said the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure

2. Wisdom can help you to receive rebuke - 7:5-7

Solomon said that it is better to hear the rebuke of a wise man
The ear that listens to life-giving reproof lives with the wise - Proverbs 15:31-32
Solomon said this is better than listening to the song of fools
Solomon said the laughter of a fool is like the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot
Solomon said that this is also emptiness
Solomon said that oppression makes a wise man mad
Solomon said that a bribe corrupts the heart
The wicked accept a bribe in secret to pervert the ways of justice - Proverbs 17:23

3. Wisdom can help you to be more patient - 7:8-10

Solomon said the end of a matter is better than its beginning
Solomon said patience in spirit is better than being proud in spirit
We are called to walk with all humility and gentleness - Ephesians 4:2
Solomon said do not be eager in your heart to be angry
A man of quick temper acts foolishly - Proverbs 14:17
Solomon said that anger lodges in the heart of fools
Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger - James 1:19
Solomon said not to say that the former days were better than these
Solomon said it is not in your wisdom to ask about this

4. Wisdom gives life to those who have it - 7:11-12

Solomon said wisdom with an inheritance is good
Solomon said this is an advantage to those who see the sun
Solomon said wisdom is protection just as money is protection
Solomon said that the advantage of wisdom is that it gives life to those who have it
Wisdom... she is a tree of life to those who have it - Proverbs 3:13, 18

5. Wisdom causes one to realize God controls all things - 7:13-14

Solomon said to consider the work of God
Solomon asked who is able to straighten what He has bent
Solomon said to be happy in the day of prosperity
Solomon said in the day of adversity to consider why
Solomon said that God has made one as well as the other
Solomon said God does this so man will not discover anything that will be after him

6. Wisdom will help people escape many things - 7:15-18

Solomon said he had tried everything in his life of emptiness
Solomon said that a righteous man may perish in his righteousness
Solomon said he sees a wicked man who prolongs life in wickedness
The days of a wicked man are like a shadow that passes away - Ecclesiastes 8:12-13
Solomon said not to be overly righteous
Christ talked about a very self-righteous Pharisee - Luke 18:9-14
Solomon said not to be overly wise
Grace means we should not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think - Rom. 12:3
Solomon said why should you ruin yourself with these things
Solomon said not to be excessively wicked
Means to be evil and act in a wicked manner (requires repentance) - 1 Kings 8:47; Ps. 18:21-22
Solomon said not to be a fool
A fool shows he is a fool by what he does - Ecclesiastes 10:3
The lips of a fool begin with foolishness and he also multiplies his words - Eccl. 10:13-14
Solomon asked why a person should die before his time
Men who are wicked and foolish often do not live as long - Psalm 55:23
Solomon said it is good to pay attention to this
Solomon said it is also good not to let go of the other
The person who fears God will escape from these - Ecclesiastes 8:12-13
Solomon said the one who fears God will escape them
The person who fears God escapes from these and will endure forever - Ecclesiastes 3:14

7. Wisdom strengthens the wise - 7:19-20

Solomon said wisdom strengthens a man
Solomon said it makes him wiser than ten rulers who are in a city
God says a wise man scales the city of the mighty - Proverbs 21:22
Solomon said there is not a just man on earth
God says there is no one who is not guilty before Him - Romans 3:10-19
Solomon said no one does good and does not sin
God says, Who can say I have made my heart pure? - Proverbs 20:9
God said one who says he has no sin deceives himself - 1 John 1:8

8. Wisdom causes one not to believe everything others say - 7:21-22

Solomon said not to take to heart everything people say
Solomon knew that all have sinned - Romans 3:23
Solomon said you may hear your servant cursing you
Solomon said look at your own heart
Solomon said you may also have cursed others in your heart

9. Wisdom causes one to avoid those who are deceivers - 7:23-26

Solomon said he had tested all of these things with wisdom
Solomon said that he would be wise
Solomon knew there were times when wisdom was far from him
Men will feel far from God when they also bow down to idols - 1 Kings 11:4-8; Rom. 1:22-23
Solomon knew that the wisdom of God covers all time
Job learned that the wisdom of God is far beyond man - Job 42:3-6
Solomon knew that the wisdom of God is very deep
The ways of God are past finding out - Romans 11:33
Solomon knew that he could not find out much of God's wisdom
Solomon wanted to understand the reason of things - Ecclesiastes. 1:16-17
Solomon said he had directed his heart to search to know wisdom
The Lord wants shepherds (godly leaders) who are according to His heart - Jeremiah 3:15
Solomon had directed his heart to investigate and seek wisdom
Solomon could not find out all of these things
Solomon set his mind to know the wickedness of folly
Solomon set his mind to know the foolishness of madness
Solomon saw that the hearts of wicked men were full of madness - Ecclesiastes 9:3
Solomon found more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets
Solomon learned a harlot has a heart that is bitter as wormwood - Proverbs 5:3-6
Solomon said that her hands are chains
Samson learned this the hard way and told the reason for his strength - Judges 16:15-17
Solomon said the one who pleases God will escape from her
God says that the way of escape is to flee from her - 1 Corinthians 10:12-14
Solomon said the sinner will be captured by her
Samson lost his eyesight and was made a grinder in the prison - Judges 16:21

10. Wisdom said men have developed many schemes - 7:27-29

Solomon said this is what he had discovered
Solomon said he had to add one thing to another to find an explanation
Solomon said some things he was still seeking and could not find them
This is the continual process of being transformed - 2 Corinthians 3:17-18
Solomon said he had found one man among a thousand who was seeking answers
Solomon said he had not found a woman seeking answers among all these
Many of the women Solomon married served other gods - 1 Kings 11:3-7
Solomon said that he had learned many things
Solomon said that God had made man upright
God created man in His own image - Genesis 1:27
Solomon said that men have looked for many schemes
Adam and Eve were the first to do this - Genesis 3:6-7; Romans 5:12

B. Solomon shared some things he had learned about obeying rulers - 8:1-17

1. The importance of seeking wisdom - 8:1

Solomon asked who is a wise man
Solomon asked who knows the interpretation of a matter
Solomon said a man's wisdom makes his face shine
The face of Stephan glowed like the face of an angel - Acts 6:15
Solomon said a man's wisdom changes the sternness of his face

2. The importance of obeying kings (and all rulers) - 8:2-3

Solomon said it is important to keep the command of the king
Solomon says to do this for the sake of our oath to God
Any oath we take is before God - Romans 13:5
Solomon said not to be in a hurry to leave his presence
Solomon said not to join in an evil cause
Solomon said a king is able to do whatever pleases him

3. The importance of understanding the power of a ruler - 8:4-8

Solomon said with the word of the king there is power
Solomon asked who has the right to question what the king is doing
All of the people had submitted themselves to Solomon - 1 Chronicles 29:24
Solomon said the one who keeps a royal command does not experience trouble
Solomon said a wise heart knows the proper time
God has a season (time) for everything under heaven - Ecclesiastes 3:1, 17
Solomon said a wise heart knows the proper procedure
Mordecai much later asked if God made Esther the queen for such a time as this - Esther 4:14
Solomon said there is a proper time for every delight
Solomon said there is a proper time for every procedure
Solomon said this is true even when we go through times of trouble
Solomon said it is a problem if no one knows what will happen
A change in a person's life may be very sudden - Proverbs 24:21-22
Solomon said who is able to tell him what will happen
No one knows what will happen on the earth after death - Ecclesiastes 6:12
Solomon said no one has power over the spirit to retain the spirit
No one can give God the price for his life to live eternally - Psalm 49:6-9
Solomon said no one has authority over the day of his death
The only exception was Christ who had power to lay down His life - John 10:18
Solomon said there is no discharge in the time of war
Solomon said that evil will not deliver those who practice it

4. The importance of developing more understanding - 8:9

Solomon said that he had seen all of these things
Solomon said he had applied his heart to every work that is done under the sun
Solomon wanted to find out why each thing happened - Ecclesiastes 7:23-24
Solomon said this is even true for those who rule others
Solomon said rulers have exercised authority over another man to his own hurt
Solomon did not obey the Lord in his old age - 1 Kings 11:9-10

5. The importance of carrying out judgment quickly - 8:10-13

Solomon said he saw the wicked buried
Solomon said they had come and gone from the place of holiness
Solomon said they were soon forgotten in the city where they did this
The memory of people who have died is forgotten - Ecclesiastes 9:5
Solomon said that is also emptiness
Solomon warned this happens when the sentence for an evil deed is not punished
God will take vengeance on all who do not repent - Romans 12:19
Solomon said this encourages the hearts of others to be given to do evil
If favor is shown to the wicked they will not learn righteousness - Isaiah 26:10
Solomon said a sinner may do evil a hundred times
Solomon said he may have a long life
God will give to each person according to his works in judgment - Romans 2:5-8
Solomon said he knew it will be well for those who fear God
Solomon said they fear God openly
God says their heritage will remain forever - Psalm 37:18-19
Solomon said it will not be well for the evil man
Those who do not turn to the Lord will be judged for their sins for eternity - Rev. 20:11-15
Solomon said the evil man will not lengthen his days like a shadow
The ungodly are like the chaff and will then face judgment - Psalm 1:4-6
Solomon said this is because he does not fear God

6. The importance of understanding the uncertainty of life - 8:14-15

Solomon said there is a vanity that happens on the earth
Solomon said there are righteous men who have what happens to the wicked
Solomon said the opposite is also true
Solomon said there are evil men to whom it happens like the righteous
Solomon said that this is also emptiness
Solomon said that was why he commended pleasure
Solomon said there is nothing good for a man under the sun
Solomon said so he might as well eat, drink and be merry
Solomon began to try every form of pleasure to satisfy himself - Ecclesiastes 2:4
Solomon said this will remain with him all the days of his life
Solomon said that God has given him that many days under the sun

7. The importance of realizing we cannot understand all things - 8:16-17

Solomon applied his heart to know wisdom
Solomon said and to see the task which is done on the earth
Solomon said this was true even if a person never slept
Solomon said he saw all the work of God
Solomon said a man cannot find out all that is done under the sun
The wisdom and understanding of God is far beyond human understanding - Romans 11:33
Solomon said a man may even work hard to discover it
Solomon said still he will not find it
Man cannot understand what God has done from the beginning - Ecclesiastes 3:11
Solomon said a wise man may attempt to know it
Solomon said he will not find it

C. Solomon shared some things that he said can be good before death comes - 9:1-18

1. People will all eventually die - 9:1-2

Solomon shared some things he had considered in his heart
Solomon wanted to declare these things to the righteous and wise
When Israel was righteous everyone received the words of the Lord - Deuteronomy 33:3
Solomon said their works are in the hand of God
The righteous are in the hand of God and receive His words - Deuteronomy 33:3
Solomon said people do not know whether their works will be loved or hated
Solomon said all things will come alike to everyone
All have sinned and experience the consequences of sin - Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 3:23
Solomon said things happen to both the righteous and the wicked
Solomon said they happen to the good, the clean and the unclean
Solomon said they happen to those who sacrifice and those who do not
Solomon said they happen to those who take an oath and those who do not

2. People have hope as long as they are living - 9:3-4

Solomon said there is evil in all that is done under the sun
Solomon said this will happen both to the righteous and to the wicked
Solomon said the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil
In the days of Noah the thoughts of their hearts were evil continually - Genesis 6:5
Solomon said there is insanity in their hearts throughout their lives
Solomon said after that they will go to the dead
Solomon said there is hope as long as they are still living
Solomon said a live dog is better than a dead lion

3. People are soon forgotten by others after they die - 9:5-6

Solomon said that the living all know that they will die
Solomon said that the dead do not know anything
Solomon did not understand what happens to all unbelievers - Luke 16:22-28
Solomon said that the dead will no longer have any reward
Solomon said that their memory is forgotten
The works of people both past and future are quickly forgotten - Ecclesiastes 1:11
People do not remember and learn from the wise - Ecclesiastes 2:16
Solomon said their love, hate and zeal have already perished
Solomon said they will no longer have a share in all that is done under the sun

4. People should eat and drink with a happy heart - 9:7-8

Solomon said to go and eat your bread in happiness
The Lord will give us joy and peace as we develop a thankful attitude - Philippians 4:4-6
Solomon said to drink your wine with a cheerful heart
People without Christ live only for this life - Isaiah 22:13-14
Solomon said God has already accepted their works
The Lord says such an attitude leaves people to die in their sins - 1 Corinthians 15:32-34
Solomon said to let their clothes be white all of the time
Solomon said to not let oil be lacking on your head

5. People should give their whole heart for the things they do - 9:9-10

Solomon said to enjoy life with the woman you love
Solomon found only emptiness in trying to love many women - 1 Kings 11:3
Solomon said to do this all the days of your short life God has given you under the sun
Solomon said that this is your reward in life
Solomon thought many women would give him pleasure - Ecclesiastes 2:10
Solomon said this is the reward for the toil that you have done under the sun
Solomon learned this only produces vanity (emptiness) - Ecclesiastes 2:14-15
Solomon said to do whatever you do with all your might
A wise man does all to the glory of God - 1 Corinthians 10:31
Solomon said there is no work, planning, knowledge or wisdom in the grave
Solomon said this is where we are all going

6. People do not know the length of their time - 9:11-12

Solomon said he saw that the race is not to the swift
Solomon said that the battle is not to the strong (warriors)
Solomon said there is no bread to the wise
Solomon said there are no riches to men of understanding
Solomon said there is no favor to men who have skill
Solomon said that time and chance will happen to them all
Solomon said that man does not know his time
Solomon said they are like fish caught in an evil net
Solomon said they are like birds trapped in a snare
Man is trapped by his own evil desires - James 1:14-15
Solomon said the sons of men are snared in an evil time
Solomon said this will fall on them suddenly

7. People do not remember the poor who serve them - 9:13-15

Solomon said he came to see this as wisdom given under the sun
Solomon said that this seemed great to him
Solomon said there was a little city with few men in it
Solomon said there was a great king that came against it
Solomon said that this king surrounded the city
Solomon said he built large siege works against it
Solomon said that this poor man delivered the city
Solomon said that no one remembered that poor man
Christ offered life and his own town rejected him - Mark 6:2-3, 6

8. People should know that wisdom is better than weapons of war - 9:16-18

Solomon said wisdom is better than strength
Solomon said the wisdom of the poor man is despised
Solomon said that no one remembered his words
Solomon said that the words of the wise heard in quietness are better
Solomon said they are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools
A fool does not prepare for things that are eternal - Proverbs 1:7; Luke 12:20
Solomon said that wisdom is better than weapons of war
Solomon said that one sinner destroys much good

D. Solomon shared the dangers of foolishness - 10:1-20

1. The Lord had shown Solomon the danger of being foolish - 10:1-4

Solomon said that dead flies make a perfumer's ointment stink
Solomon said that a little foolishness outweighs wisdom
Solomon said a little foolishness outweighs honor
Solomon said the heart of a wise man guides him toward the right
Solomon said the heart of a fool guides him toward the left (wrong)
Solomon said that when a fool walks along a road
Solomon said even there his sense is lacking
Solomon said he shows everyone that he is a fool
A fool shows everyone his foolishness - Proverbs 13:16
Solomon said if the temper of a ruler arises against you
Solomon said not to stop doing what is right
Do not take your stand for an evil thing - Ecclesiastes 8:3
Solomon said that calmness brings healing to many offenses
With patience a ruler may be persuaded - Proverbs 25:15
David listened to Abigail and God stopped him from killing Nabal - 1 Samuel 25:21-27
God later judged Nabal (his name means fool) who refused to listen - 1 Samuel 25:38

2. The Lord had shown Solomon some consequences if one was foolish - 10:5-10

a. Foolish decisions can be made by a ruler - 10:5-7

Solomon said that he had seen an evil under the sun
Solomon said it is like an error that comes from a ruler
Error that comes from a ruler will affect many people - 1 Kings 11:4-8; Proverbs 25:28
Solomon said foolish people often sit in exalted places
Foolish people often have great power - Esther 3:1; Daniel 6:3-9
Solomon said rich people may sit in humble places
Moses went from the palace of Egypt and fled to the land of Midian - Exodus 2:11-15, 21
Moses tended the sheep flock of Jethro for 40 years - Exodus 3:1
Solomon said he had seen slaves riding on horses
It is not fitting for a servant to rule over princes - Proverbs 19:10
Solomon said he had seen princes walking on the ground like slaves

b. Foolish decisions can be made by a worker - 10:8-10

Solomon said that one who digs a pit may fall into it
Solomon had this happen in his own life - 1 Kings 11:4-8, 33-34
Solomon said a poisonous snake may bite one who breaks through a wall
Solomon said one who moves stones may be hurt by them
Solomon said one who cuts trees or splits logs will be endangered by them
This can even cause a person to be killed without intent - Numbers 35:10-15
Solomon told what would happen with a dull ax
Solomon said that would happen if the ax was not sharpened
Solomon said the person would have to use more strength
Solomon said wisdom will give more success
Wisdom will cause a person to speak with gracious words - Ecclesiastes 10:12
Wisdom will develop a wise and understanding people - Deuteronomy 4:6

3. The Lord had shown Solomon that the talk of the foolish would destroy them - 10:11-15

Solomon said a snake may bite before it is charmed

The Lord said that some snakes cannot be charmed - Psalm 58:4-5

Jeremiah warned that God would send Israel snakes that could not be charmed - Jeremiah 8:17

Solomon said a babbler will also bite with his words

Some people hurt others by the words that they speak - Psalm 140:3

Solomon said the words of a wise man are gracious

The Lord said that the words of a righteous person speak acceptable words - Proverbs 10:32

The people were amazed at the gracious words that Christ spoke - Luke 4:22

Solomon said the words of a fool will destroy him

The words of a fool show a lack of understanding - Ecclesiastes 7:5-6

Solomon said that his words begin with foolishness

Solomon said his words end with wicked madness

Solomon said a fool also multiplies his words (talks a lot)

The mouth of fools pour out foolishness - Proverbs 15:2

A fool's voice is known by his many foolish words - Ecclesiastes 5:3

Solomon says that then no one knows what will happen

No one can tell another person what will happen in the future - Ecclesiastes 8:7

Solomon said no one can tell what will be after him

Solomon said the work of a fool tires him so he does not know how to go to a city

4. The Lord had shown Solomon the danger of a lazy king - 10:16-19

Solomon said it is woe to a land that has a child for a king

The Lord said children would rule over and oppress Judah - Isaiah 3:4-5

Solomon said it is woe to a land whose princes feast in the morning

The princes would seek strong drink from morning until evening - Isaiah 5:11

Solomon then told what blessed a land

Solomon said the land was blessed when the king was the son of nobles

God said a blessed land would have leaders who avoided strong drink - Proverbs 31:4

Solomon said that this king will have princes that eat at the proper time

Solomon said they would eat for strength

Solomon said they do not eat for drunkenness

Solomon said that when there is laziness a building decays

Solomon said a house leaks as a result of idleness

Solomon said a feast is for enjoyment and happiness in life

Solomon said that money answers everything

The love of money becomes a root of all kinds of evil - 1 Timothy 6:10

5. The Lord had shown Solomon the danger of evil words - 10:20

Solomon said not to curse the king

The Lord said not to revile God or to curse a ruler of the people - Exodus 22:28

Paul quoted this verse when he spoke about the high priest - Acts 23:5

Solomon said do not even curse him in your thoughts

Solomon said not to curse the rich

Solomon said do not even curse them in your bedroom

Elisha told the king of Israel the words the king of Syria spoke in his bedroom - 2 Kings 6:12

Solomon said a bird of the air may carry your voice

Solomon said a bird in flight will make the matter known

VI. God showed what is needed to help man have a purpose in life - 11:1-12:14

A. Solomon shared the best that man can do without God - 11:1-10

1. Man can make wise decisions for this world - 11:1-2

Solomon said to cast your bread on the waters
Solomon said you will find the results after many days
After many days we will reap if we do not give up - Galatians 6:9-10
Solomon said to give a serving to seven or eight things
Solomon said you do not know what misfortune may happen on the earth
God said to use our time wisely because the days are evil - Ephesians 5:16

2. Man can sow crops regardless of the weather - 11:3-4

Solomon said when the clouds are full they pour out rain on the earth
Solomon said when a tree falls it can go any direction
Solomon said that after it falls it can only lie there
Solomon said the one who watches the wind will not sow
Solomon said one who looks at the clouds will not reap

3. Man can sow seed at different times - 11:5-6

Solomon said they did not know the path of the wind
God causes the wind to blow in the way that it blows - John 3:8
Solomon said they did not know how bones were formed in the womb
God is the One who forms the bones in the womb - Psalm 139:14
Solomon said they did not know the activity of God
Solomon said that God is the One who makes all things
Solomon said to sow your seed both in the morning and in the evening
Solomon said you do not know if morning or evening sowing will succeed
Solomon said that all of the seed may grow

4. Man can rejoice while he is alive - 11:7-8

Solomon said the light is sweet and it is pleasant to see the sun
Solomon said a man may live for many years and enjoy them all
Solomon said to remember the days of darkness for they will be many
Solomon said that all that is coming is useless or empty

5. Man can make wise decisions while he is young - 11:9-10

Solomon told the young men to enjoy the days of their childhood
Solomon said to let your heart be pleasant during your young manhood
Solomon said to follow the impulses of the heart and the desires of the eyes
Solomon said God will bring you to judgment for those things
Solomon told them to remove grief and anger from their heart
Youth are to flee youthful passions and call on the Lord from a pure heart - 2 Timothy 2:22
Solomon said to put away pain from your body
Solomon said that childhood and youth still have emptiness
These days come and go quickly and even they can result in emptiness - Ecclesiastes 12:1

B. Solomon realized he was getting old - 12:1-8

1. The writer said to remember the Creator while you are young - 12:1

Solomon said to remember our Creator in the days of our youth

This happens when we train by both example and word - Proverbs 22:6

Josiah illustrated this from the time that he was a boy - 2 Chronicles 34:1-5

Solomon said that evil days will come

(The illustrations in the following verses show this is talking about the older years of life)

Solomon said that people do not enjoy those evil days

(The physical difficulties that come with older age)

Barzillai listed some of the problems of old age - 2 Samuel 19:34-35

2. The writer said the days will come when you have no pleasure in them - 12:2-3

Solomon said to remember the Creator before the sun and it's light are darkened

Solomon said the clouds will return after the rain

Solomon said the watchmen of the house will tremble (the jaws start to shake)

Solomon said the strong men will bow down (see their backs gradually bend over)

Solomon said the grinding ones (teeth) will be idle because they are few

Solomon said the windows (eyes) will grow dim

Isaac and Jacob are examples of many who become blind in their old age - Genesis 27:1, 48:10

3. The writer said the body will start to fail - 12:4-5

Solomon said the doors will be shut along the streets

Solomon said the sound of the grinding mill (a large stone) becomes low

Solomon said the person will get up at the sound of the bird (early in the morning)

Solomon said all the daughters of song will sing softly (losing hearing)

Solomon said a person (older) becomes fearful of heights

Solomon said they begin to feel terrors (uneven places) on the road or path

Solomon said the almond tree (hair) turns white

4. The writer said the day of death will soon come - 12:6-8

Solomon said to remember Him before the silver cord is broken (life ends)

Solomon said to remember Him before the golden bowl is crushed (discouraged)

Solomon said before the pitcher is shattered at the fountain (broken bones)

Illustrated with animals not to be offered for sacrifices - Leviticus 22:22

Solomon said to remember Him before the wheel at the cistern is crushed (life ends)

Jacob knew that he would soon be dying - Genesis 48:21

The death of Jacob also brought sorrow to his sons - Genesis 50:7-10

Solomon said then the dust will return to the earth as it was (the grave)

Adam was told that he would return to the ground and dust - Genesis 3:19

Solomon said then the spirit (human spirit) will return to God who gave it

No person on earth can avoid death - Ecclesiastes 8:8; Job 14:1-6

Solomon said this is emptiness of emptiness

Solomon experienced this emptiness as the result of choices he made - 1 Kings 11:4-8

Solomon said that all is emptiness

Solomon could see life falling apart for him before he died - 1 Kings 11:31-34

Even the earth experiences this emptiness and futility - Romans 8:20-22

C. Solomon realized his need to fear God and obey Him - 12:9-14

1. The writer had taught knowledge and had written many proverbs - 12:9

Solomon realized that God had made him wise and given him wisdom
Solomon continued to teach knowledge to the people
Solomon pondered over those proverbs
Solomon searched out all of those proverbs
Solomon said in order many of those proverbs
Solomon spoke 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs

2. The writer tried to write proverbs that were good and profitable - 12:10

Solomon wanted to find right and delightful words as he gave the proverbs
Solomon wanted to speak proverbs that taught righteousness
Solomon wanted to write out the words of truth correctly
Solomon spoke a total of 3,000 proverbs during his life - 1 Kings 4:32-34

3. The writer said that these are all given by one Shepherd - 12:11-12

Solomon said that the words of wise men are like goads
(a goad was a stick with a point on it to encourage oxen to pull their load)
Saul (who became Paul) was kicking against the goads - Acts 9:1-6
Solomon said masters of these proverbs are like well-driven nails
The words of the wise cause people to think and act - James 1:22
Solomon said these proverbs are given by one Shepherd
The Lord is the source of all that are included in Proverbs - 2 Timothy 3:16-17
Solomon wanted to give his son a warning
Solomon said the writing of books is endless
Solomon said too much study of books wearies the body
Most books that are written have no eternal purpose - Ecclesiastes. 1:18

4. The writer then explained the things that are good for every person - 12:13-14

Solomon said that this is the conclusion to all he had heard
Solomon said this included two things:
fear God (have a true faith) - Micah 6:8; Romans 10:9-10; 13
obey His commandments - 1 John 2:3
Solomon said the first thing we need to do is fear God
We are saved by grace through faith received as a gift - Ephesians 2:8-9
Solomon said that this included keeping God's commandments
We have been created for good works (obedience) - Ephesians 2:10
Solomon said God will bring every work to judgment
Believers will have their works judged for rewards - 1 Corinthians 3:12-16
Nonbelievers will each be judged for their own personal sins - Revelation 20:11-15
Solomon said this included every secret thing
Believers will all be judged at the judgment seat of Christ - 2 Corinthians 5:10
Solomon said this included the good things
These works will be like gold, silver and precious stones (eternal) - 1 Corinthians 3:12-14
Solomon said this included every evil thing
These works are like wood, hay and straw (only for this world) - 1 Corinthians 3:12, 15