

---

*“Equipping believers for **growth** and **service** by encountering God through his word.”*

## The Bible for Today

November 11, 2009



---

# Divisions of Ecclesiastes

- Introduction to the Theme (1:1-11)
- Attempts to Gain at Labor (1:12-2:26)
- A Time for Everything (3:1-22)
- The Individual and Success/ Oppression (4:1-16)
- On Approaching God (5:1-7)
- Wealth and Oppression (5:8-6:12)
- The Advantage of Wisdom (7:1-8:1)
- Dealing with the Unjust World (8:2-17)
- Living in the Face of Death (9:1-12)
- The Way of Wisdom (9:13-10:20)
- On Not Understanding God's Ways (11:1-8)
- A Final Word to the Young (11:9-12:8)
- Epilogue: Qohelet as a Wise Man (12:9-14)

---

# Wealth and Oppression (5:8-6:12)

## 5:8-13: Love of Money

Seeking after money as a love is meaningless; The more gained, the more wanted. When is enough enough?

Those at the top are the ones who benefit; hierarchy makes oppression predictable; the complexity of hierarchy also allows oppression. [Work as unto God]

## 5:14-17: Loss of Wealth

Loss through misfortune (Proverbs reminds about foolish investments); cf. 1 Timothy 6:6-10—we will leave with nothing, just as we came.

---

# Wealth and Oppression con't (5:8-6:12)

## 5:18-20: Live with Contentment

If you receive some prosperity, it is a gift of God (be good stewards of it); focusing on the gift God gives brings contentment.

## 6:1-2: A problem/ people cannot live contented

God gives the gift of prosperity, but people also lack the ability to live contented (God did not give both prosperity and contentment); a grievous evil-hard to understand

---

# Wealth and Oppression con't (5:8-6:12)

## 6:3-7: Ongoing statement of living without contentment

Israelite culture: offspring, long life, and prosperity = success; life is not worth living if one cannot enjoy the prosperity given to them as a gift of God

## 6:8-12: Summary of first half of Qohelet

Qohelet now questions wisdom; only God knows what is good—God is the “stronger one;” is all predetermined/ is all fate?

---

# The Advantage of Wisdom (7:1-8:1)

## 7:1-29: The Value of Wisdom

A collection of sayings— wisdom is better than folly; even if wisdom is elusive/ temporary, it is still worth learning from it; we have all gone astray, even though we were not created so.

Some things are better than others—So, what is good? Wisdom preserves life. Vs 11-12

---

# The Advantage of Wisdom con't (7:1-8:1)

## 7:13-14: Good and Bad

God is responsible for both; we cannot know the future  
(a sense of this in Job 2:10 & Isa. 45:6-7)

## 7:15-22: Righteousness/ wisdom against wickedness/ folly

A rejection of traditional wisdom; sees fault in over  
righteousness and over wickedness; “fear of God”  
keeps one centered— in reality, no one is righteous,  
no one can be perfect (Rom. 3:10-20)

---

# The Advantage of Wisdom con't (7:1-8:1)

## 7:23-29: Does life add up?

Tried to use wisdom to understand, but elusive.  
Nothing is absolute, not even wisdom. Nothing seems to add up– “sums.”

Conclusion: vs 29– God made people in a straightforward “upright” way, but they have gone searching after their own schemes.

Thus, who is really wise? Wisdom gives some comfort to life/ decisions made in wisdom give some satisfaction.

---

# Dealing with the Unjust World (8:2-17)

## 8:2-9: Royal and Personal Power

A ruler will do as they decide, even if one gives good advice; yet in the end, they will all die and will be judged.

## 8:10-15: Wickedness not punished

The wicked are not always punished; the righteous not always rewarded— thus enjoy the life given to you.

Vs. 16-17: The sole consolation is to enjoy life daily and be humble in that one cannot know everything about life or the future.

---

# The Bible for Today

- Money is seductive; can lure us into all manner of unwise decisions/ evil.
- What we have is a gift from God; be good stewards of it.
- Seeking to live wisely is beneficial, even if one cannot know/ predict the future.
  
- We all are in need of a savior— no one is righteous or good enough.