

=SMALL BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 4  
Ecclesiastes

AUTHOR: Solomon

THEME: “Solomon’s Summary of His Wasted Life”

INTRODUCTION: Solomon is an old man. He has had everything in life that one normally thinks will bring happiness. He has found, however, that his life has been wasted and that he never found happiness. He gathers all of his family, his relatives, his kinfolk, employees and servants and speaks to them the book of Ecclesiastes. He is advising them not to follow in his footsteps. He is telling them of all the things he had in life and all the successes he made in life, and yet he explains to them that he had never found happiness, and he advises them not to take the same road that he had taken. There are several key phrases in the book. One is “under the sun.” Another is “I perceive.” Another is “I said in my heart.” In other words, Solomon is telling them the folly of the self life.

- I. THINGS “UNDER THE SUN.” Solomon reminds the people that he has had everything “under the sun.” Then he tells them that happiness does not come “under the sun”; it comes from “above the sun.” Notice some of the things that Solomon had “under the sun.”
1. Labor. Ecclesiastes 1:3.
  2. Things. Ecclesiastes 1:9.
  3. Works. Ecclesiastes 1:14.
  4. Profits. Ecclesiastes 2:11.
  5. Wisdom. Ecclesiastes 2:19.
  6. A job and salary. Ecclesiastes 2:20, 22.

These are just a few of the things that Solomon sought “under the sun,” but no one ever finds happiness there. There is something in man that craves for something eternal, and man will never be happy until he finds that something to fill the spot that is empty. This spot may be filled only by Jesus Christ!

II. THE THINGS THAT SOLOMON HAD.

1. He was the richest man in all the East.
2. He was humanly the wisest man in all the world.
3. He had any woman that he wanted; in fact, he had a thousand wives and concubines.
4. He was an author, having written over 3,000 proverbs.
5. He had hundreds and thousands of servants.
6. He was a king of Israel.
7. He had the nicest, biggest houses in the world.
8. He was the most famous man in his country.
9. He built for himself parks, zoos, farms, etc.
10. He was highly educated.
11. He had all the hobbies that one could want.

In fact, he said that whatever he set his heart on, he got. He withheld nothing from himself; he got anything he wanted.

III. SOLOMON’S SAGE. In Ecclesiastes 12:2-7, Solomon lists the conditions under which he is speaking.

1. His eyes were bad. In Ecclesiastes 12:2a, notice the words, “While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened.” In other words, he could not see well at this age.
2. His hands trembled. In Ecclesiastes 12:3a, notice the words, “In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble.”
3. His back was bent. In Ecclesiastes 12:3b, notice the words, “and the strong men shall bow themselves.”

4. His teeth had caused him trouble, and many of them had been removed. In Ecclesiastes 12:3c, notice the words, “and the grinders cease because they are few.”
5. He wore glasses. In Ecclesiastes 12:3d, notice the words, “and those that look out of the windows be darkened.”
6. His hearing was bad. In Ecclesiastes 12:4b, notice the words, “when the sound of the grinding is low.”
7. He was nervous. In Ecclesiastes 12:4c, notice the words, “he shall rise up at the voice of the bird.”
8. He was fearful. In Ecclesiastes 12:5a, notice the words, “they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way.”
9. He was jumpy. In Ecclesiastes 12:5c, notice the words, “and the grasshopper shall be a burden.”
10. His appetites were failing. In Ecclesiastes 12:5d, notice the words, “and desire shall fail.”

In other words, he was facing the last years of his life. That which was “under the sun” could no longer be enjoyed. His body was unable to enjoy that which was “under the sun.” He is now left with that which is “above the sun” or nothing, and he is a miserable old man.

#### IV. SOLOMON’S CONCLUSIONS.

1. “All is vanity and vexation of spirit,” Ecclesiastes 1:14b. Vanity is a word which means “beating at the wind,” “shadowboxing,” “swinging at the wind,” “reaching for something that isn’t there.”
2. He advises all those that come after him to remember the Creator, so that when they get old, they will have happy memories and can live in joy because they have invested their lives “above the sun,” not “under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 12:1, “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.”