



Ecclesiastes
Lesson 4
Chapter 4-5

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2

Four observations on realities of life:

1. They have no joy, only tears.
2. They have no one to comfort them; no one is on their side.
3. Their oppressors have all the power.
“from the hand of their oppressors is power”
4. For them, death may be preferable to life; even better to not have been born.

3

Eccl 2:22-24 “For what does a man get in all his labor...? Because all his days his task is painful...even at night his mind does not rest....”

Prv 15:16 “Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and turmoil with it.”

4

A negative example:
Eccl 4:8 “a certain man”

1. No dependent, no brother, no one to inherit all he worked for.
2. There was no end to his work.
3. Never considered “why am I doing this?”
4. He’s a lonely miser with only his money to comfort him; there’s no purpose for his hard work.

5

A positive example:
Eccl 4:9-12 the benefits of companionship

1. Work is easier if two are working together; increased productivity.
2. A companion can help you in times of need.
3. It's easier to keep warm if you have a companion; comfort in life's hardships.
4. There is safety in numbers; three is even better than two for safety; strength in dangerous times.

6

Summary of the parable in 4:13-16:

- (v.13) A foolish old king doesn't listen to advice or warning.
- (v.14) A younger, but wiser lad replaces him, even though he was poor and had been in prison.
- (v.15) This wise lad is later replaced by another, a more popular second lad.
- (v.16) The popular king's rule doesn't last forever as the cycle repeats itself.

7

Eccl 5:1-7 poetic structure:

- A: Positive: Go to the temple in humble silence; beware of the "sacrifice of fools." (v.1)
- B: Negative: Do not be quick to speak before God, for He is awesome. (v.2)
- C: Proverb: Big dreams are the mark of a fool. (v.3)
- A': Positive: If you make a vow, fulfill it. (v.4)
- B': Negative: Make no vow that you are not certain to keep, lest God punish you. (v.5-6)
- C': Proverb: Big dreams are the mark of a fool. (v.7a)
- Conclusion: Fear God. (v.7b)

8

Advice regarding worship:

1. Approach God with reverence. (v.1)

Is 1:11-13 "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings....When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this trampling of My courts? Bring your worthless offerings no longer...."

9

Advice regarding worship:

1. Approach God with reverence. (v.1)
2. Don't be hasty or impulsive in your prayer. (v.2)
3. If you make a vow to God, honor it! (v.4-7a)

10

Deut 23:21-23 "When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and the LORD your God will surely require it of you. However, if you refrain from vowing, it would not be sin in you. You shall be careful to perform what goes out from your lips, just as you have voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God, what you have promised."

11

Advice regarding worship:

1. Approach God with reverence. (v.1)
2. Don't be hasty or impulsive in your prayer. (v.2)
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4. Fear God! (v.7b)

12

"How much money is enough money?"

John D. Rockefeller: "just a little bit more"

At the peak of his wealth, Rockefeller had a net worth of about 1% of the entire US economy and owned 90% of all the oil & gas industry of his time.

"The poorest man I know is the man who has nothing but money."

13

5:18-20 His conclusions:

1. Enjoy the life God has given you "for this is His reward." v.18

14

"Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy." 1 Tim 6:17

15

5:18-20 His conclusions:

1. Enjoy the life God has given you "for this is His reward." v.18
2. God's gift to you is the ability to enjoy whatever He has given you. v.19

16

"Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..."

James 1:17

17

5:18-20 His conclusions:

1. Enjoy the life God has given you "for this is His reward." v.18
2. God's gift to you is the ability to enjoy whatever He has given you. v.19
3. Enjoying the gifts God has given you will take your focus off the passing of the years, because you will be too busy enjoying the moments of gladness God gives. v.20
4. A life focused on God's gifts will result in a life characterized by gratitude to Him.

18

Lessons from Eccl 4-5:

1. Be content, 4:6; wealth won't satisfy, 5:10.
2. Companionship: don't be a loner, 4:9-12.
3. The importance of being teachable, 4:13.
4. Come to God with an attitude of worship, ready to listen & obey, 5:1-7.
5. Be thankful for what God has given, 5:18-20.

19