

Let me help you reengage your minds from what we learned last week:

Remember that Solomon is writing Ecclesiastes as a man who is looking back on his life to all of what he had discovered (by wisdom) and what he concluded concerning all of man's labors under the sun: (1:13-14):

I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit

So, first, Solomon beheld all of man's sore travail and labor under heaven, and he said; I HAVE SEEN IT ALL! I have seen all of the things that man labors and wearies himself for in his search, and in his quest for happiness and fulfillment in his life under heaven.

It's vanity and vexation of spirit; it's like chasing the wind

Remember that Solomon was DETERMINED to find out the value/profit (if there was any) of all of man's labors under the sun.

So, he set out to PROVE/TEST (by wisdom) for himself, all of man's labors!

I have seen it all, saith Solomon, but, now, in my personal investigation of these things, I will WHOLEHEARTEDLY give MYSELF to labor and work for things under the sun; so, I wearied myself to see if there was any real profit to my soul from all of these things and for this life. (2:1-11)

His conclusions after he gave himself to wine and laughter, (even foolishness); after he built great houses and parks and orchards and fountains and pools; after he got servants and wives/princesses; after he put together a great orchestra/musical instruments for the kingdom with singers. On top of all of all these things, after he gathered riches from every province in the kingdom, and after he had finished all his labor; AFTER he had it all, he declared: (2:9-11)

His results were that none of these things could bring lasting happiness or fulfillment to our lives. (GET THAT)

So, the Preacher turned his attention to evaluate and behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: (2:12): And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? Even that which hath already been done

(2:1-11) is Solomon's answer to (1:13) READ; and (2:12-26) is Solomon's answer to what he said in (1:17) .

So, get that; Solomon is NOW giving his FULL ATTENTION to understand wisdom, and madness, and folly or foolishness. What do they do for your life? Or, how do they hurt you in your life? What are their advantages and disadvantages? What is their value, worth, or worthlessness? These things seemed to be things that Solomon long searched after.

Ecclesiastes 7:25

Remember, Solomon was a learning machine; he was consistently taking in knowledge and learning from things that humans labor for in this life; evaluating either their value, or the worthlessness of those labors!

Note in the 2nd part of (V12), Solomon ADDS THIS: Who can come after me, (the king), I had unlimited resources and wisdom from God; so, WHO is going to come after me and find out more than what I have found?

Again, this is Solomon crying out and preaching to ALL of humanity and teaching us about LIFE in this world (under heaven), and how we SO OFTEN labor and weary ourselves, (we literally kill ourselves) for things UNDER the sun, which he likens to chasing after the wind, and for things which can never satisfy the soul.

If someone does come after me, (saith Solomon) they will find nothing new and nothing more; they will come to the same conclusions.

Listen to me; Christian, listen to Solomon; listen to the Word of God; hear it and obey it. You and I have the great advantage of having God's revealed will (the wisdom of God) right here in our laps so that we can be saved from our sins and from this present world; that we might lay hold on eternal life in Christ Jesus!

Ecclesiastes 2:13-16: Solomon begins his experiment by contrasting wisdom and foolishness; and to do this, of course, he beheld the wise man and the fool:

Wisdom, saith Solomon, is far better than madness and folly or foolishness! Why is this so? Well first and foremost, because of the source of Wisdom! It comes from God! Genesis 1:1: In the beginning = Genesis

Psalms 111:10: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom

The fear of the LORD is the GENESIS of wisdom! And so, first, understand WHY wisdom FAR excels foolishness and folly; because it is from God!

Proverbs 2:6, 4:7, 15:33, James 1:5, Ecclesiastes 2:26

Therefore, understand that if you would have true and genuine wisdom you must go to the source of wisdom, which is God! Next understand that wisdom gives those who have it a GREAT ADVANTAGE in this life! Wisdom far EXCELS madness and folly because those that possess wisdom are not arrogant and prideful, but they are humble listeners, they are teachable, and they are learners. Those that possess wisdom become wiser because of it!

Proverbs 1:5, 12:15, 15:5, 18:15

In contrast: One of the most obvious/conspicuous marks of the fool is, they are arrogant and unteachable, we call them know it all's.

Proverbs 23:9, 1:7b, 26:12, 12:15

wisdom far better than folly because it is given by God!

Next: (V14): The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool

walketh in darkness.

Solomon saw that wisdom helps those that have it to navigate through this life; someone who is wise is walking in the light; they walk in this life carefully and cautiously; in contrast, the fool walks carelessly; going through this life as one that is groping in darkness.

The lost in the world are in spiritual darkness at this moment; dangerously walking through this life on the precipice of eternity.

John 12:35-36, 1 John 2:9-11

Here is an ADVANTAGE of wisdom to those who have it, they can see where they're going; it keeps them from danger; even eternal danger.

Proverbs 22:3: A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple (or as it means, the naive or foolish) pass on and are punished

But even with the advantages that wisdom gives us in this life; it cannot save us from that one event that happens to us all; wisdom cannot prevent death; when it comes to death; the wise and the foolish are no different! Psalms 49:5-20, 39:4-11

Solomon's conclusion of wisdom and folly: Ecclesiastes 2:15-16: What good is my wisdom if it cannot save me from death? This is vanity!

What good is my wisdom if I will not be remembered any more than the fool will be remembered? Wise men and fools are forgotten in equal measure.

But at the end of the day, I don't think Solomon came to the conclusion that wisdom was useless; I do believe he understood the vanity using his wisdom to immerse himself in this life alone. But isn't that what so many people are doing EVEN TODAY? They live for today, and they could care less about tomorrow; or THAT day when God will call for their soul!

Understand brethren that the ultimate end of wisdom, which is given by God, is to focus our attention and labors on heavenly/eternal things; that we might KNOW GOD in the salvation of our souls! That we might know God's Son, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

i. To be made WISE unto salvation! 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Wisdom that is given by God should point us back to God.

i. John 17:3, 1 John 5:20

Solomon's conclusions concerning wisdom and folly: (V17): Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

I gave my heart and all my labor to things under the sun; and now, I hate this life! It brought be NO JOY and NO SATISFACTION! I believe he said this because he had immersed himself in the pleasures of this world and in this life as a believer, and now he had lost his joy. In all of his searching and seeking (by wisdom) to know why things are done under the sun, he had strayed from His God! Remember what David wrote after he had immersed himself in a sinful relationship and sinned against God:

Psalms 51:10-12, 16:11, 17:15, Ephesians 3:16-19

Some Applications:

If you're lost, Hear the gospel and LIVE; KNOW the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you WISE unto salvation! Turn from your sins to Christ in repentance and faith. The fear of the LORD is the Genesis of wisdom! If you lack wisdom, which we ALL DO; ask for it from God, for He is the source of it! But, understand that you won't get it if you're NOT in the Word and if you're NOT walking in obedience to God's revealed will. Wisdom is good, if you use it in this life to lay hold on eternal life; but wisdom cannot save you from death, only Christ can do that.

Luke 14:26: If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he CANNOT be my disciple. EXPLAIN!