

When Solomon Was Old (c. 937t–932t BC)

1 Kings 11:1–13

Solomon's Many Wives

1 King Solomon loved many foreign women: the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, Hittite;

2 from the nations which Yahweh had said to the Israelites, "You shall not marry them, and they shall not marry you. They will certainly turn your heart after other gods." But Solomon clung to them to love. [[Deut 7:3–4](#); [17:17](#); [Exod 34:15–16](#)]

3 He had seven hundred princesses and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart.

4 It happened at the time of Solomon's old age that his wives guided his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully with Yahweh his God as the heart of David his father *had been*.

Solomon Worships Other Gods

5 Solomon went after Ashtoreth the god of *the* Sidonians and after Molech the abhorrence of the Ammonites.

6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of Yahweh and did not fully *follow* after Yahweh as David his father.

7 At that time, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, on the mountain which faces Jerusalem and for Molech, the abomination of the Ammonites.

8 Thus he did for all of his foreign wives, offering incense and sacrificing to their gods.

Solomon Refuses to Repent and Incurs God's Judgment

9 Yahweh was angry with Solomon, for he had turned his heart from Yahweh, the God of Israel who had appeared to him twice.

10 And he had commanded him concerning this matter not to go after other gods, but he did not keep that which Yahweh commanded.

11 So Yahweh said to Solomon, "Because this was with you, and you did not keep my covenant and my ordinances which I have commanded you, I will certainly tear the kingdom from you, and I will give it to your servant.

12 However, I will not do it in your days, for the sake of David your father; from the hand of your son I will tear it *away*.

13 Yet all of the kingdom I will not tear *away*. I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

Solomon's Enemies (c. 937t–932t BC)

1 Kings 11:14–40

Hadad the Edomite

14 Then Yahweh raised an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite, from the descendants of that king in Edom.

15 It had happened that when David was at Edom, Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the slain, and he killed every male in Edom.

16 For Joab and all Israel had stayed there six months until he exterminated every male in Edom.

17 But Hadad himself had fled, and some Edomite men from the servants of his father with him, to go to Egypt, when Hadad *was* a young boy.

18 They had set out from Midian until they came to Paran where they took men from Paran with them and came *to* Egypt, *to* Pharaoh king of Egypt. He gave to him a house and assigned food for him and gave him land.

19 Hadad found great favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, and he gave him the sister of his wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen, as wife.

20 The sister of Tahpenes bore Genubath his son for him, and Tahpenes weaned him in the middle of the house of Pharaoh.

Genubath *was in* the house of Pharaoh in the midst of the children of Pharaoh.

21 Now Hadad heard in Egypt that David had slept with his ancestors and that Joab the commander of the army was dead. Then Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Send me away that I may go to my land."

22 Pharaoh said to him, "What do you lack with me that you now *are* seeking to go to your land?" He said, "No, but you must surely send me away."

Rezon the Syrian

23 God had *also* raised Rezon the son of Eliada as an adversary against him, who had fled from Hadadezer the king of Zobah, his master.

24 He gathered men around him and he became the commander of bandits. When David killed *some of* them, they went to Damascus and settled there, and they reigned in Damascus.

25 He was an adversary for Israel all the days of Solomon, and *along with* the evil that Hadad *did*, he detested Israel *while* he reigned over Aram.

Jeroboam the Ephraimite

26 Now Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zeredah (now the name of his mother *was* Zeruah, a widow woman), a servant of Solomon rebelled against the king.

27 This *is* the reason that he rebelled against the king: *when* Solomon built the Millo, he closed the gap of the city of David his father.

28 Now the man Jeroboam *was* a man of ability, and Solomon saw that the young man was a diligent worker, so he appointed him over all of the forced labor for the house of Joseph.

29 It happened at that time that Jeroboam went out from Jerusalem, and he accidentally met Ahijah the Shilonite the prophet on the way. Now he had clothed himself with new clothing. While the two of them *were* alone in the field,

30 Ahijah took hold of the new cloak which *was* on him and tore it into twelve pieces.

31 Then he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I *am about* to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and I will give to you ten tribes,

32 but one tribe shall be for him, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel;

33 because he has forsaken me, and they bowed down to Ashtoreth, the god of *the* Sidonians, to Chemosh, the god of Moab, and to Molech, the god of the Ammonites. They did not walk in my ways to do right in my eyes, my ordinances, or my judgments, as *did* David his father.

34 But I will not take all of the kingdom from his hand, but I will make him a leader all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my ordinances.

35 But I will take the kingship from the hand of his son, and I will give ten tribes to you.

36 To his son I will give one tribe in order to be a lamp for my servant David, always before my face, in Jerusalem the city in which I have chosen to place my name.

37 You I will take, and you shall reign over all your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel.

38 It shall be that if you listen to all that I command you and you walk in my ways and you do right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, then I will be with you, and I will build an enduring house for you as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.

39 I will punish the offspring of David on account of this; however, not always.”

40 Then Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam got up and fled to Egypt, to Shishak the king of Egypt, and he remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

Ecclesiastes: The Teacher’s Reflections – Part 1 (c. 937t–932t BC)

Ecclesiastes 1–3

Introduction

- 1:1 The words of the Teacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.
- 2 “Vanity of vanities!” says the Teacher,
“Vanity of vanities! All *is* vanity!”
- 3 What does a person gain in all his toil
with which he toils under the sun?
- 4 A generation goes, and a generation comes,
but the earth stands forever.
- 5 The sun rises, and the sun goes down;
to its place it hurries, and there it rises again.
- 6 The wind goes to the south and goes around to the north;
around and around it goes, and on its circuit the wind returns.
- 7 All the streams flow to the sea,
but the sea is never full;
to the place where the streams flow,
there they continue to flow.
- 8 All things toil continuously;
no one can ever finish describing this.
The eye is never satisfied with seeing,
and the ear is never filled with hearing.
- 9 What has been—it is what will be;
what has been done—it is what will be done;
there is nothing new under the sun.
- 10 There is a thing *of* which it is said, “Look at this! This is new!”
But it already existed in ages past before us.
- 11 There is neither remembrance of former generations,
nor will there be remembrance of future generations.

On the Activities of Men

12 I, the Teacher, *was* king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 I applied my mind to seek and to search by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. It *is* a grievous task God has given to humans.

14 I saw all the works that are done under the sun. Look! Everything *is* vanity and chasing wind.

15 What is twisted cannot be straightened,
and what is lacking cannot be counted.

On the Benefits of Wisdom

16 I said to myself, “Look! I have become great and have increased *in* wisdom more than anyone who has preceded me over Jerusalem. I have acquired a great deal of wisdom and knowledge.”

17 So I dedicated myself to learn about wisdom and *to* learn about delusion and folly. However, I discovered that this also *is* chasing wind.

18 For in much wisdom *is* much frustration,
and whoever increases knowledge increases sorrow.

On Self-Indulgence

2:1 I said to myself, “Come! I will test pleasure to see whether it is worthwhile.” But look, “This also *is* vanity!”

2 I said of laughter, “*It is* folly!” and of pleasure, “What does it accomplish?”

3 I also explored the effects of indulging my flesh with wine. My mind guiding me with wisdom, I investigated folly so that I might discover what *is* good under heaven for humans to do during the days of their lives.

On Possessions and Personal Accomplishment

4 I accomplished great things. I built for myself houses; I planted for myself vineyards.

5 I made for myself gardens and parks, and I planted all *sorts of* fruit trees in them.

6 I made for myself pools of water from which to irrigate a grove of flourishing trees.

7 I acquired male slaves and female slaves, as well as children *born in my* house. I also had livestock, cattle, and flocks more than anyone who *was* before me in Jerusalem.

8 I also gathered to myself silver and gold—the royal and provincial treasuries. I acquired for myself male and female singers, as well as the delight of men, voluptuous concubines.

9 Thus, I accomplished far more than anyone who *was* before me in Jerusalem—indeed, my wisdom stood by me.

10 I neither withheld anything from my eyes that they desired, nor did I deprive any pleasure from my heart. My heart rejoiced in all my toil, for this was my reward from all my toil.

11 Yet when I considered all the effort which I expended and the toil with which I toiled to do, then behold, “Everything *is* vanity and chasing wind! There is nothing profitable under the sun!”

On the Difference Between Wisdom and Folly

12 Next, I considered wisdom, as well as delusion and folly. What can anyone *do* who will come after the king that has not already been done?

13 I realized that wisdom has an advantage over folly, just as light has an advantage over darkness.

14 The wise man can see where he is walking, but the fool walks in darkness. Yet I also realized that both of them suffer the same fate.

On the Transitory Nature of Life

15 So I said to myself, “If I also suffer the same fate as the fool, what advantage is my great wisdom?” So I said to myself, “This also *is* vanity!”

16 Certainly no one will remember the wise man or the fool in future generations. When *future* days come, both will have been forgotten already. How *is it that* the wise man dies the same as the fool?

17 So I hated life because the work done under the sun *is* grievous to me. For everything *is* vanity and chasing wind!

18 So I hated all my toil with which I have toiled under the sun, for I must leave it behind to someone who will be after me.

19 And who knows *whether* he will be wise or foolish? Yet he will exercise control of all *the fruit of* my toil with which I toiled wisely under the sun. This also *is* vanity!

20 So I began to despair of all the toil with which I toiled under the sun.

21 For although a person may toil with great wisdom and skill, he must leave his reward to someone who has not toiled for it. This also *is* vanity and a great calamity.

22 For what does a person receive for all his toil and in the longing of his heart with which he toils under the sun?

23 All his days *are* painful, his labor *brings* grief, and his heart cannot rest at night. This also *is* vanity!

On Finding Contentment in Pleasing God

24 There is nothing better for a person than to eat and drink and find delight in his toil. For I also realized that this *is* from the hand of God!

25 For who can eat *and drink*, and who can enjoy *life* apart from him?

26 For to the person who *is* good in his eyes, he gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy; but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and heaping up only to give *it* to *him who is* pleasing to him. This also *is* vanity and chasing wind!

On the Ebb and Flow of Human Activities

3:1 For everything there *is* an appointed time, a time for every matter under heaven:

- 2 a time to bear and a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to root up *what is* planted;
- 3 a time to kill and a time to heal;
a time to break down and a time to build up;
- 4 a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance;
- 5 a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones;
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
- 6 a time to seek and a time to lose;
a time to keep and a time to throw away;
- 7 a time to tear and a time to sew;
a time to be silent and a time to speak;
- 8 a time to love and a time to hate;
a time *for* war and a time *for* peace.

9 What does the worker gain in his toil?

On the Occupation of Men

10 I have seen the busyness God gives to humans to preoccupy them.

11 He has made everything suitable in its time. He also has put the past in their hearts, yet no one can grasp what God does from the beginning to the end.

12 So I realized that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and enjoy themselves during their lives.

13 And for anyone to eat and drink, that is, to enjoy the fruit of all his toil, this also is a gift of God.

14 I know everything God does endures forever;
nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it,
for God so acts that humans might stand in awe before him.

15 What is—it already was,
and what will be—it already is,
for God will do what he has done.

On Injustice and God's Final Judgment

16 I saw something else under the sun: instead of justice *there was* evil; instead of righteousness *there was* wickedness.

17 So I said to myself, "God will surely judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time *of judgment* for every deed and every work."

On the Fate of Men and Animals

18 I said to myself concerning humans, "God sifts them in order to show them that they are like beasts."

19 For the fate of humans and the fate of the beast is the same. The death of the one is like the death of the other, for both are mortal. Man has no advantage over the beast, for both are fleeting.

20 Both go to one place—both came from dust and both return to dust.

21 For no one knows *whether* the spirit of a human ascends *to heaven* and *whether* the spirit of the beast descends to the ground!

22 So I concluded that there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy *the fruit of* his labor, for this is his lot in life. For no one knows what will happen in the future.