

'SMOKE and MIRRORS'
(Seeing Through This World's Deceptive Fake Distractions)
Studies in Ecclesiastes

"WHEN THE VOW BREAKS"
(The Root Cause of Life Breakdown)

Promises, Promises, Promises
(Binding Life to Verbal Signatures)
Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Solomon is probably writing from personal experience. At the dedication of the temple in **1 Kings 8:22-61** (especially **vs. 57-61**), Solomon promised to fully follow the Lord. Later in the last decade of his life, Solomon broke his promises (700 wives and 300 concubines/ **11:4-6**). He also allowed his harem to introduce idolatry/**11:8**). God's response to his promise-breaking was severe (**11:9-11**). Adversaries from all directions attacked Israel and his chief servant, Jereboam, rebelled against him. Solomon's reign ended in sorrow and disappointment (**11:26-43**).

Point #1: *Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 is probably Solomon's recollection of why it all ended so sadly.*

- People today make and break promises all the time. What did Jesus teach about keeping promises (**Matthew 5:33-37**)?
- Discuss what promises God's people should make and keep no matter what (**Psalms 15:4b**).

Money, Money, Money
(Binding Life to Material Greed)
Ecclesiastes 5:8-17

As Solomon's morals and spiritual values declined, so did his government's (**vs. 8-11**). Solomon's simple lifestyle became complicated and sinful. His job as king became corrupted for money and bribes.

Point #2: *Solomon seems to envy the simple life and work of a godly man (v. 12) and disdain the futile life of a rich but corrupt man (vs. 12-16)*

- Discuss the folly of living for money (See **1 Timothy 6:6-10**).

Simple, Secure, Spiritual
(Simple Lifestyle, Good Job, Time for God)
Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

Solomon's conclusion: Don't be lured away from a simple lifestyle, a good job you enjoy and a close devotional life with God. Discuss how broken promises to gain more than God has given costs you now and in eternity (**Mark 8:34-38**).