

# Ecclesiastes – Outline of the Book

## **Section #1 – Ecclesiastes 1:1-12:8 – Almost 12 chapters of vain searching.**

A very long list of the foolishness and futility of living apart from an eternal perspective and a fear of the Lord.

Solomon openly stated his AIM in life in this book...

Solomon stated what he was aiming at in Ecclesiastes 1:13 & 1:17.

Ecclesiastes 1:13 says, “<sup>13</sup> And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; this burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised.”

Ecclesiastes 1:17a says, “<sup>17</sup> And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly.”

So, Solomon pursued things as a result as stated in Ecclesiastes 2:1a, “<sup>1</sup> I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure”;

Solomon also openly reaffirmed his CONCLUSIONS that resulted from his aim...

Solomon’s conclusions are in 1:2 & 12:8...but are reaffirmed here...

Ecclesiastes 1:14 says, “<sup>14</sup> I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.”

Ecclesiastes 1:17b says, “I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind.”

## **Section #2 – Ecclesiastes 12:9-14 – The answer to all the frustration.**

Solomon did end up coming to the correct aim and conclusion in life at the end of the book in Ecclesiastes 12:13 (his mountain top experience).

But, he gave us 4 peaks or glimpses into the proper answer through the book in Ecclesiastes 3:14, 5:7, 7:18, 8:12-13 & 12:13.

# Ecclesiastes – Keyword or phrases

## **#1 – Wisdom or wise (52 times).**

This word means “wise” or “wisdom” or “wits”.

Wisdom (27 times) or wisdom (25)...this after Proverbs used them 90 times.  
So, Solomon stated he aimed to see and search out **BY WISDOM** and to **KNOW WISDOM** (Ecclesiastes 1:13 & 17).

## **#2 – Vanity or vanities or vain (38 times).**

This word speaks of “vain” or “empty” or “meaningless”.

Vanity (28 times), vanities (8), vain (2).

Solomon’s searching for wisdom apart from God brought him to this conclusion.

## **#3 – Labor or labors or labored or toil or toiled (33 times).**

A picturesque way of describing working or toiling.

## **#4 – “Under the sun” or “under heaven” (32 times).**

This speaks of life on earth as opposed to heaven.

Under the sun (29 times), under heaven (3).

## **#5 – “Heart” (38 times), which includes “my heart” (18 times).**

“Heart” us used 38 times and “my heart”, 18 (included in the 38 for “heart”).

This in light of the Lord telling us how wicked our hearts are (Jeremiah 17:9).

## **#6 – “Evil” (17 times).**

He sure sees evil “under the sun”.

## **#7 – “Grasping for the wind” (9 times).**

A picturesque way of describing vanity or frustration.

## **#8 – Satisfied (5 times).**

This will be used in the frustrating sense of not finding it.

# **The Need for “The Fear of the Lord”**

## **The Fear of the Lord in the book of Proverbs...**

- #1 – Proverbs 1:7 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”
- #2 – Proverbs 2:5 – “Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.”
- #3 – Proverbs 8:13 – “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil.”
- #4 – Proverbs 9:10 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.”
- #5 – Proverbs 10:27 – “The fear of the LORD prolongs days...”
- #6 – Proverbs 14:26 – “In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence...”
- #7 – Proverbs 14:27 – “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life.”
- #8 – Proverbs 15:33 – “The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom”
- #9 – Proverbs 16:6b – “...by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.
- #10 – Proverbs 19:23 – “The fear of the LORD leads to life”
- #11 – Proverbs 22:4 – “By...the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life.”

## **The ultimate conclusion & closing statement of Ecclesiastes...**

Solomon gave 4 glimpses to his ultimate conclusion in Ecclesiastes 3:14, 5:7, 7:18, 8:12-13. And, he gave us his ultimate conclusion in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 – “13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.”  
Almost 12 chapters of frustration end with this conclusion.