

/We will begin our 1<sup>st</sup> lecture on the book of Ecclesiastes. /The introduction. /1. The Writer of the Book: /King Solomon. /2. The time in which it was written: /During the last year of King Solomon's reign, /about 940 B.C. /3. The place where it was written: /Jerusalem.

/4. /The purpose of the book. /It records the king's failures in life during his reign. /It writes of the joy of obtaining truth. /It is Solomon's written confession.

/Ecclesiastes 1. /The title of the chapter is "Vanity." /There are five main points of the book. /First, /the words of the preacher. Verse 1. /Second, the vanity of the world. /Verses 2-7. /Third, /all things are full of weariness. Verse 8. /Fourth, no change is new. /Verses 9-11. /Fifth, /the limit and vanity of man's wisdom. /Verses 12-18.

/First, the words of the preacher.

/Verse 1. Let us read. /The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

/The verse says, "The words of the Preacher, /the son of David, king in Jerusalem. /Solomon does not reveal his own name, but he lifts up the name of his father. /The reason for this is: /first, /He is blameless in that /he became king /after his father.

/This means that he has a sense of pride /in continuing the kingship /in the faith. /Solomon did not /inherit the throne, /nor was the power transferred to him-- /it happened because it was /the will of God.

/When we look at /1 Chronicles 22:6-16, /we see that God /prophesied /that Solomon would become king. /God's words were fulfilled. /Therefore, Solomon is blameless in that sense, and he writes the book of Ecclesiastes /with self-esteem. /As he does, he confesses that he is the son of David.

/Second, /he has a heart that yearns for the faith of his father. /Solomon loved — is father. /It says, "The son of David, king in Jerusalem. / "The preacher." /The Biblical evidence of this is found in /1 Kings 3:6.

/When Solomon /prayed in the presence of God, /he prayed that he would learn from David's faith. /When we see this, we can see that /Solomon /yearned for/ his father's faith. /David also /did not leave an inheritance of fame or glory, /but he gave his son /the faith /that God gave him. /Therefore we too /must leave an inheritance of faith.

/If our children /love their fathers /and serve their mothers for money, /that is not faith. /Instead of teaching his son fame, /David taught his son about God, /and he taught Solomon the ways of loving God.

/Because of this /Solomon, /even when he became old, /wanted to follow after /his father's faith. /Proverbs 22:6 says, / "Train a child /in the way he should go; /even when he is old / he will not /depart from it."

/David taught Solomon /the way he should go. /Therefore, although Solomon was sinful and corrupt, /Solomon in his old age /was taken hold of by the word of God, as his father had taught him. /He recorded Ecclesiastes, /where it says, / “The son of David, /Solomon.”

/We too, /like David, /need to teach our children the way to go. /Then, our children’s faith /will not leave them when they are old, /and they will live according to /the will of God.

/What is the point of leaving our children a sum of money? /What is the point of handing down fame? /Everything in this world /disappears. /Like David, /we must teach them /the way they should go.

/Then, the child will not lose his faith when he is old. /Deuteronomy 28:1 says that /those who hear the word of God /and obey it, /he will set us high above the nations of the world. /This is why the Jews /teach the Bible.

/For this reason, today, /there are many globally wealthy Jews. /Israel is a small country, /but it is very powerful. /They are wise. /This appears in the Bible. /The word of God is /the only guide to eternal life.

/Therefore King Solomon /wanted to learn the faith of his father. /We too need to /work so that our children /can learn from our faith. /We need to leave an inheritance of faith, /just like David did.

/Solomon’s humbleness is the reason he says / “The son of David, king in Jerusalem.” /Normally, people want their names to be honored. /When people write books, /they write their names and biographies on the front of the book.

/Everyone in the world likes to be lifted up. /However, Solomon’s /humbleness /brings him to write “The son of David, king in Jerusalem.” /He honored the name of David /because he was humble. /This is learning from Jesus.

/Matthew 11:28 says /Jesus’s heart is /gentle and lowly. /This is the fruition of our faith. /It is the fruit of faith. /We believers in Jesus must be /humble.

/If we look into the fields in the summer, /we see the grains stiffly raising their heads, /shaking their heads in pride. /But when fall comes, /they bow their heads. /It means that I am lacking. /They bow their heads because they are ashamed.

/This is because they have bore their fruit. /We need to learn from the heart of Jesus. /Look at the colors of the grains. /Don’t we harvest them when they are yellow? /This is the light of the sun. /It is the spiritual light of Jesus. /Those who have bore fruit /are humble.

/Solomon did a lot of things. /However, everything is in vain. /Now that he is old, he makes his confession. /He is confessing that he is “the son of David, king in Jerusalem.” /This comes from his humility.

/Therefore we too need to be humble. /God gives his grace to those who are humble. /For this reason, the believer must always be humble. /Then what is humility? /Humility /is obeying the truth. /It is obeying the word of God.

/If we obey the word of God, /we realize our shortcomings, /and we automatically bow our heads. /We must be humble before all people. /In the time of the apostles, /young people were very proud.

/1 Peter 5:5-6 says it like this. / “Likewise, you who are younger, /be subject to the elders. /Clothe yourselves, all of you, /with humility toward one another, /for “God opposes the proud /but gives grace to the humble.”

/Humble yourselves, /therefore, under the mighty hand of God /so that at the proper time /he may exalt you.” /The young people did not respect their elders. /For this reason, the apostle Peter wants them to be humble.

/When the time comes, God will exalt them. /Being exalted by people results in us falling to the ground. /However, when God exalts us, we are lifted up forever. /God exalts us /and he humbles us; /he takes away /and he gives us life.

/Therefore we must be humble before God. /Here, King Solomon /does not reveal his name, but he honors his father’s name because he is blameless in succeeding the kingship of David.

/Second, he longed for the faith of his father. /This also comes from a humble heart. /We too need to bear the fruits of our faith.

/Verse 1. Let us read it again. /The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

/The word “Preacher” appears in this verse. /The original word in Hebrew is / “Qehelathah.” /This word means “to assemble.” /It means wisdom. /It means “to receive and collect wisdom.” /The person who receives wisdom is bound to share wisdom.

/Wisdom is the Gospel. /Wisdom is Jesus Christ. /In him is hidden knowledge, wisdom, and every treasure. /Therefore, Jesus, who is wisdom, is our treasure map. /Dear believers! /We have found an unexpected lump of gold.

/What are we to do with this news? Will we hide it? Will we tell the news to our brothers? /We will tell it to our wives. /We will gather our neighbors and throw a feast. /How happy must we be to have found this treasure?

/The Preacher gained wisdom. /Because he found wisdom, there was no way he could not record the book of Ecclesiastes. /That is why Solomon assembled all the people and preached this message.

/Colossians 2:3 says, / “In whom are hidden /all the treasures of wisdom /and knowledge.” /Within Jesus, there is hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge. /Will we not preach this amazing news?

/Beloved believers! /All of you have discovered the treasure who is Jesus. /Then are you going to keep this to yourself? /We must actively spread the news. /I too have come here today. /The reason I stand here talking to you is /I have discovered Jesus, our treasure.

/My heart is burning. /My heart makes great effort to share this treasure I have found. /I hope that you hear this lecture, /and discover the treasure that is Jesus Christ. /I also pray that you do all you can in your strength to spread this treasure.

/In this way, the Preacher gained wisdom, /and he spread wisdom. /Solomon told the message of God’s amazing grace that saved him from his sins. /We too were living in sin in the past.

/We must come out from the past, /discover our treasure Jesus Christ, /and do what we can to share the news. /Jesus was travelling. /He was passing by Samaria. /It was noon, when the sun was glaring down on him.

/In the land of Judea, it can get really hot at around noon. /It was a time when everyone was taking a nap. /Jesus and his disciples were passing by a well. /The disciples, knowing that Jesus was hungry, went around the village looking for food to buy.

/When everyone was resting, one woman appeared. /This woman went to a well at noon under the blazing sun to collect some water. /Then she met Jesus. /Jesus said he will give her water of eternal life.

/He said, “Whoever drinks of my water will never be thirsty again.” /This woman’s eyes lit up. /Why did she feel this way? /There was a reason the woman came to fetch water at this time of the day. /She was a corrupt woman who had five husbands in the past.

/She was ashamed so she tried to avoid people. /That is why she secretly came to get water at noon. /This is when Jesus said he will give her water of eternal life. /Is this not a joyous event? /Our Jesus says this.

/ “I will give you water. /Bring your husband.” /When Jesus told her to bring her husband, she replied in this way. / “I have no husband.” /Jesus replied.

/ “You have five husbands. / “The man you are with now is not your husband.” /Then how many husbands does this woman have? /In the past, five, /but now, one.

/It is a total of six men. /She had five husbands in the past.

/She could not fill her empty heart. /She was not happy.

/But then she met Jesus. /Jesus gave her eternal life.

/ “Bring your husband.” /Jesus Christ knows everything about us.

/The moment she discovered Jesus, /the woman’s life changed. /Now, she became a preacher who preached around her village. /She found Jesus, who is wisdom. /She found treasure.

/The woman used to avoid people in her shame. /Now, there is no one she avoids. /She preached by saying, “Come.” / “The Christ /we have been waiting for, /the one whom we have been longing for/ has come.

/The Samaritan woman became a Preacher. /She was only able to do this because she had found her treasure. /She had found wisdom.

/When we find true wisdom, when we discover true treasures, /we will not hide /like this sinful Samaritan woman, /but we will reveal ourselves /and share the treasure we have found. /Now, this woman is no longer poor. /She is rich.

/She was changed to someone who preached the good news. /This is the definition of “Preacher.” /A preacher is someone who assembles people. /It means wisdom.

/The one who gained wisdom gathered others and preached. /Believers! /I hope that all of you become preachers. /I hope you become people who share wisdom.

/The second point is / “The vanity of the world.” /Verses 2-7.

/Verse 2. Let us read. /Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

/The Preacher is speaking. /The Preacher is one who has gained wisdom. /He is the one who assembles. /He says “vanity” a total of five times. / “Vanity” in /Hebrew is / “hebel.”

/It means “vapor” or /the breath of humans. /Believers! /Our breath appears and disappears quickly. /It disappears quickly into the air. /Vanity means everything will disappear like our breath.

/The writer says this five times because /first, /he emphasizes the true vanity of things. /This is why it is recorded five times. /What kind of person was Solomon? /He had one thousand concubines. /His plates were made of gold.

/He conquered the surrounding nations. /He did not lack anything. /But in the end of his days, he says, “vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” Why did he say this? /He is emphasizing the vanity of all things.

/1 Peter 1:24-25 says, / “All flesh is like grass /and all its glory like the flower of grass.  
/The grass withers, and the flower falls, /but the word of the Lord remains forever.”  
Everything in this world is meaningless.

/Are there things you desire in this world? /We all have our desires. /How can we  
compare what we have to what Solomon has? /Solomon had everything he could possibly  
get.

/He confesses that all is vanity. /Beloved believers! /Our flesh is like grass. /This world is  
like the fog. /There are three heroes of the world. /They are Alexander, /Genghis Khan,  
and Napoleon.

/Alexander the Great /ruled the world at a young age. /But he died at the age of thirty  
three due to an endemic. /And he left a will. /What did he say in his will? /He asked that  
his hand be placed outside the coffin.

/Why did he want his hand outside of the coffin? /He wanted to show the visitors that /he  
is entering the afterlife with empty hands. /Our lives are empty in the sense that we leave  
everything behind.

/On December 28, 2006, /a rich man in the United States /won the lottery. /He received  
about 200 million dollars. /He was forty years old. /He was living in the state of  
Michigan. /He worked as an excavator.

/His wife worked at a supermarket for six dollars an hour. /They had received a sum of  
200 million dollars. /But these people did not spend all this money, but they died one year  
later. /Every night, he went out to spend money. /He bought nice clothes to wear. /He ate  
good food. /But nothing was fun. /Do you know how blessed we are to work? /Do you  
realize how joyful it is to do the Lord’s work?  
/The man who won 200 million dollars /died in one year.

/Thus everything is meaningless. /Solomon knew this, so he said /vanity five times.  
/Everything in this world is vanity. /Not believing in Jesus Christ is the greatest vanity.  
/This world is an illusion, and it will pass by.

/There was a Chinese emperor by the name if Qin Shi. /He conquered the entire world.  
/He built the Great Wall of China. /To live eternally, he sought after elixir plants.  
/Eventually, he died. /Therefore all is vanity in the world.

/1 John 2:17 says, / “The world is passing away along with its desires, /but whoever does  
the will of God /remains forever.” /Yes, everything is meaningless. /Verse 2 says “Vanity  
of vanities, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.”

/Verse 3. /What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

/The work that man does under the sun is all vanity. /Solomon is saying that it is all meaningless. /The first reason is /man does not gain by toiling under the sun.

/Verse 3 says, /“What does man gain by all the toil?” /A person goes through the four phases of life: birth, old age, sickness, and death. /A person is born and gets sick, /gets old, /and dies. /This is the process of life.

/Children cry when they are born. /The child is crying because it is sad about its future of suffering. /It says, “Toils under the sun.” /This is referring to everyone who lives on this planet.

/A person will toil but he will gain nothing. /Who will answer our toiling? The answer is Jesus Christ. /Matthew 11:28-29 say, / “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, / and I will give you rest. /Take my yoke upon you. /Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

/I hope all of you will lay down your burdens and labors before the /cross of Jesus. /I hope you labor for the Lord. /That is what remains in eternity. /Like we saw in the text, /you will gain nothing /if you toil for yourself.

/Galatians 6:8 says, /“Whoever sows to his own flesh /will from the flesh reap corruption.” /Chasing after our greed is meaningless. /They are nothing but toil and sadness. /There is nothing that remains.

/If we do not do these things in faith, everything is meaningless. /Everything we do without faith is vanity under the sun. /Therefore we need to do everything we do in faith.

/Galatians 6:8 says, / “Whoever sows to his own flesh /will from the flesh reap corruption, /but the one who sows to the Spirit /will from the Spirit /reap eternal life.” Those who live for the flesh /will become corrupt.

/Some people live their whole lives for the flesh. /When they die, their bodies decay. /It all disappears. /If we do not live in faith, this will happen to us. /Toiling under the sun is vanity.

/It is like a house built on sand. /What happens when we build houses on sand? /Not too long ago, there was a big flood in China. /I also saw on television that an earthquake had happened.

/If the buildings were built better, /if they had built it with better steel bars, /there would not be that much damage /when the earthquake or /flood struck them.

/Because they did not build the buildings with steel bars, /it was like a house built on sand /that fell apart when /the earthquake and /flood happened. /All of this is vanity. /It is not living in faith. /It is like building a house on sand.

/In Matthew 7:24-27, /Jesus speaks. /He says that a house built on sand /falls when the floods come and /the winds blow.

/Beloved believers! /Toil under the sun, /but do so in faith. /If we do not do it in faith, /it becomes sin and it becomes vanity.

/We believers have a hope. /When we believe in Jesus and do things in faith, /our actions will remain in the presence of God. /Therefore believers! I hope that you do everything in faith. /They are the things that remain in eternity.

/Verse 4. /A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.

/Verse 4 says, “A generation goes, and a generation comes.” /It means in this world of vanity, generations come and go. /People can only live through one generation. /We all eventually die. /Can a dead person return to this earth?

/A dead person cannot come back to this world. /In this lecture, I talked about the emperor Qin Shi. /Can this man come back? /We also talked about Alexander the Great. /Can he return?

/You and I have met at this place. /In a little while, we will no longer be on this earth. /Can we come back to this world? /No, we cannot. /A generation goes, and a generation comes. /How important is it for us to realize this?

/Solomon did many things during his lifetime. /In the last of his days, he came to realize such things. /He had wisdom that was unprecedented. /He was a respected king. /He did not lack anything.

/When it was time for him to go to God, /he says, “A generation goes, and a generation comes.” /Our generation will come to pass. /During our short lifetime, how unfortunate is it that we /fight, argue, and steal?

/As our generation /passes by with the speed of light, /we need to believe in Jesus Christ /and live meaningful lives. /We must live meaningful lives. /That is living by faith.

/This world of vanities /goes and does not return. /They are all things that pass on this earth. /Our generation will pass by as a generation goes and a generation comes. /Therefore, do not have any lingering affection for this world.

/But the Bible says there is something that lasts forever. /It says, “But the earth remains forever.” /This means that the foundations that God has made will remain. /Thus, the conscience that God has created, the soul, and the heart that seeks God has been the same in the past, today, and will remain unchanged in the future.

/This ends our 1<sup>st</sup> lecture on the book of Ecclesiastes. /Thank you.