

Ecclesiastes V
The Labour of the Lonely
Ecclesiastes 4:7-8

- I. THE EVALUATION OF OPPRESSION AND LABOUR (Ecclesiastes 4:7)
 - a. Solomon Returns
 - i. From his overview of verses 1 through 6 of Ecclesiastes 4.
 - 1. From it he saw all of the oppression that this world has.
 - 2. They have no comforter.
 - 3. The righteous do have a comforter.
 - a. The OT saint
 - i. Had the Lord as their comforter (Psalm 23:4; 86:17)
 - ii. Had God's very words could be a comfort to him (Psalm 119:50)
 - b. The NT saint has the Lord
 - i. We have the Holy Spirit in us as the Comforter
 - ii. We have the Lord to go to in prayer
 - b. From That Overview
 - i. He turns
 - ii. And sees vanity in the next direction he looks.
- II. THE LABOUR OF THE INDIVIDUAL (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - a. This Individual Does Not Have:
 - i. Child
 - ii. Brother
 - b. He Is Alone (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - i. This man does not have anyone (Genesis 2:20)
 - 1. Still he must work (Genesis 3:19)
 - 2. He must work to provide for his needs and wants (2 Thessalonians 3:10)
 - ii. Yet there is no end to his labour (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - iii. Without a child there is no one to carry on what he has earned (Genesis 15:1-3)
 - 1. In every man there is a desire to hand down something that he has accomplished
 - a. To his children (Genesis 25:21)
 - b. To a son if possible (Jeremiah 20:15)

- iv. There is no one to share his joys, his labour, and his trials with (Genesis 2:18)
- c. His Eye Is Not Satisfied with Riches (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - i. The eyes of man are never satisfied with what he has (Proverbs 27:20; Ecclesiastes 1:8)
 - ii. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver (Ecclesiastes 5:10)
- d. He Labours For Himself and Keeps Himself From Good (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - i. He gathers riches and has no one to give them to (Psalm 39:6)
 - ii. This can be true in a false religion (Isaiah 44:19-20)
 - iii. This is true in the earthly riches of this world, when one makes those said riches their god (Luke 12:15-21; esp. 20-21)
 - 1. A man's riches is not in what he has (Luke 12:15)
 - 2. But in how rich he is toward God (Luke 12:21; 1 Timothy 6:17-19)
 - 3. True riches are found in knowing and serving God (Matthew 6:19-20), for there will your heart be (Matthew 6:21)
- iv. He "bereave(s)" his soul of any good (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - 1. Historical use of "bereave" –
 - a. Scriptural usage:
 - i. The taking away, or depriving of children (Jeremiah 15:7)
 - ii. The depriving of men in the land (Ezekiel 36:12; Hosea 9:12)
 - b. Etymology of "bereave":
 - i. Old English bereafian "to deprive of, take away, seize, rob," from be + reafian "rob, plunder,"
 - ii. Since mid-17c., mostly in reference to life, hope, loved ones, and other immaterial possessions.
 - iii. Above info taken from www.etymonline.com
 - 2. He has bereaved his soul of good (Ecclesiastes 4:8)
 - a. Two scenarios presented
 - i. It's as if this man has labored for himself all this time without taking thought of sharing what he has with a family, a wife, and children (Psalm 128:3; Proverbs 5:18).
 - ii. Or this man has not shared what he has with anyone and wants to keep it all for himself. Therefore making no friendships and sharing what he has (Luke 12:16-18).

- b. In the end this man has kept himself from the true riches of this life (Psalm 128)
- v. His labour is one that is of vanity
 - 1. Vanity, the root word is *vain*.
 - 2. The definition and history of *vain* means something that is “devoid of any real value, idle, unprofitable.
- vi. His labour is one that is a sore travail
 - 1. Travail in scripture is used to describe a woman giving birth to a child (Psalm 48:6; John 16:21)
 - 2. Travail is associated with sorrow, grief, or not getting rest. (Ecclesiastes 2:23)