

Ecclesiastes VI
The Abundance of Riches
Ecclesiastes 5:9-17

- I. THE PROFIT OF THE EARTH (Ecclesiastes 5:9)
 - a. The meaning of the word *profit*; “to benefit, gain, advantage” c. 1300.
 - b. The Possible Contradiction (Mark 8:36)
 - i. At first glance someone might say that there is contradiction between this passage and the Gospel of Mark.
 - ii. However notice the context of Ecclesiastes 5:9.
 - c. The Context of Ecclesiastes 5:9.
 - i. One) Notice what the entire verse is talking about;
 - 1. It speaks about a field.
 - 2. It speaks about the king being served by that field, as if he is eating what is coming from it.
 - ii. Two) The next verse warns against loving the riches of this world.
 - d. The Profit Given (Ecclesiastes 5:9)
 - i. It is for all (Ecclesiastes 5:9a; Genesis 1:29)
 - ii. It was given by God to man (Genesis 1:29; Psalm 115:16)
 - 1. Originally; without blight, thorns, and pestilence (Genesis 3:17-18)
 - 2. For food (Genesis 3:18)
 - 3. To be worked by man (Genesis 3:19)
 - a. No longer could man tend to the ground that God had given without the blight, thorns and pestilence that came from a corrupted earth.
 - b. He (man) now would have to fight and work hard by the sweat of his face to get a profit from the very ground that he caused a curse to be placed on. (Proverbs 27:23-27; 28:19)
 - c. If he does not work, the Bible declares that he should not partake of the profit (2 Thessalonians 3:10)
 - iii. It was also given to the animal for food (Psalm 104:14)
 - iv. It is for the king of the land (Ecclesiastes 5:9b)
 - 1. Two things to note:
 - a. No matter how high you get you still must eat.

- b. Food comes from the ground which God made.
(Isaiah 45:18) – Therefore, we are all dependent upon God giving us the crops at their appointed times.
(Genesis 8:20-22)
 - 2. “The king himself is served by the field” – The king of the land had people to do the tillage (working of the ground for him) (1 Samuel 8:12-17; 1 Kings 4:7).
- II. THE LOVE OF ABUNDANCE (Ecclesiastes 5:10)
 - a. He that loveth silver will not be satisfied with it (Ecclesiastes 5:10a; 6:7)
 - i. This man loves the riches of this world.
 - ii. In fact he has insatiable appetite for them.
 - iii. It is like a fire (Proverbs 30:15-16)
 - iv. Notice the following old maxim: “The love of money increases, in proportion as money itself increases.” More often than not this very thing plays out in the lives of men. (1 Timothy 6:10)
 - b. He that loveth abundance with increase (Ecclesiastes 5:10b)
 - i. This man loves the abundance (treasures), and the increase of those treasures. (Habakkuk 2:5)
 - ii. He has set his heart on those things. (Psalm 62:10)
 - iii. This is also vanity (Ecclesiastes 2:11)
- III. THE IRONY OF THE INCREASE (Ecclesiastes 5:11-17)
 - a. The more you have, the more you need (Ecclesiastes 5:11a)
 - i. Solomon had much therefore he needed servants to take care of all that he had (1 Kings 5:13-16)
 - ii. Those that sat at Solomon’s table (1 Kings 4:20-24); compare this to Nehemiah (Nehemiah 5:17-18)
 - b. The owner beholds them with his eyes (Ecclesiastes 5:11b)
 - i. “What good is there to the owners thereof,…”
 - 1. The Bible asks the question of the good of the owner having so much, if he himself cannot enjoy it.
 - 2. The owner; either so concerned about keeping what he has, or taking care of those that are taking care of his things, cannot enjoy what he has.
 - a. Riches fly away (Proverbs 23:5)
 - b. The lusts of this world will pass away (1 John 2:16-17)
 - c. Note: This does not mean that you should not work to provide for your needs and the needs of your family.
As a Christian we should be labouring for the glory of

God. What are you laboring for? Is it for your own pleasure? Are you working to the glory of God? Only you can truly answer that for yourself.

- c. The sleep of the labourer and the rich (Ecclesiastes 5:12)
 - i. The rest of the labouring man
 - 1. His rest is sweet because:
 - a. Work gives satisfaction
 - i. It is meant for the labourer to enjoy the good (fruit) from his labour. (Proverbs 12:14; Ecclesiastes 2:24; 1 Timothy 6:17)
 - ii. It is a gift from God (Ecclesiastes 3:12,13)
 - b. And gives a peace of mind (Proverbs 12:11; Ecclesiastes 5:12)
 - 2. Whether he eats little or much
 - ii. The rest of the rich man
 - 1. His rest is little
 - 2. His abundance will not let him sleep
 - a. The rich has to worry about who will take their riches away from them.
 - b. They have to learn to clear their mind from all of the concern they have for their earthly possessions.
- d. The evil of the abundance (Ecclesiastes 5:13-16)
 - i. These riches are on earth (“under the sun”)
 - ii. These riches are kept for the hurt of the owner
 - 1. It is “a sore evil” – only twice does this phrasing occur in scripture; both are here in Ecclesiastes 5. (Ecclesiastes 5:13, 16)
 - a. In all points as the man came.
 - b. “So shall he go.”
 - 2. What profit hath he?
 - a. He hath laboured for the wind (Ecclesiastes 5:16)
 - i. Wind scatters (Proverbs 11:29)
 - ii. Example of one that laboured for the wind (Lot)
 - 1. Lot and his riches (Genesis 13:5-11)
 - a. Lot went by what he saw
 - b. He pitched his tent toward Sodom
 - 2. Lot’s downfall
 - a. There was no respect from his son-in-laws (Genesis 19:14)
 - b. He loses his wife Genesis 19:26)

- c. His daughters commit sinful acts (Genesis 19:31-38)
 - b. The riches perish by evil travail (Ecclesiastes 5:14)
 - i. Certainly we see this example in Lot (Genesis 19)
 - ii. The example of the rich man (Luke 12:16-21)
 - c. The son has nothing (Ecclesiastes 5:14b)
 - i. Maybe through poor management of the funds (e.g. bankruptcy)
 - ii. Maybe through some other evil
 - iii. Yet a good man leaves an inheritance (Proverbs 13:22)
 - 1. This may be land
 - 2. This may be a work
 - 3. This may be finances
 - 4. This may be wisdom
 - 5. This may be their heritage
 - 6. It may be a combination of all or part
 - 7. What kind of inheritance are you leaving?
 - d. As he came forth (Ecclesiastes 5:15a)
 - i. From his mother's womb (Job 14:1)
 - ii. Naked came he forth, he will return the same (Job 1:21)
 - e. He can carry nothing away (Ecclesiastes 5:15b)
 - i. There is nothing physical that a man may take with him at the point of death (Psalm 49:17)
 - 1. His glory will not follow him
 - 2. All of his pride, pomp, and glory will not help at the day of judgment (Jeremiah 9:24; 1 Corinthians 1:31)
 - 3. We will be judged against the one that made the universe (Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 1:1-3)
 - ii. We cannot carry anything out of this world (1 Timothy 6:7)
 - e. The days of darkness and wrath (Ecclesiastes 5:17)
 - i. He eateth in darkness (Ecclesiastes 5:17a)
 - ii. And hath much sorrow (Ecclesiastes 5:17b; Job 21:23-26; Psalm 78:19-33)