

**Faith-Rest Drill: Solomon's Frantic Search for Happiness from Money, Eccl 6:1-2; from Sex, 1 Kgs 11:1-4; Eccl 7:26,29; 11:10**

**Ecclesiastes 6:1 -** There is an evil which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent among men—

**v 2 -** A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires, but God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is emptiness and severe affliction.

9. Solomon is rich, is a king, and lives in a palace with all the best accouterments available. His meals were the best foods prepared by the very best chefs.
10. But because of worry and fear, Solomon lost his health and was forced to watch his many guests eat his food, at his table, while he was reduced to chewing Pepto-Bismol tablets.
11. Happiness is a condition of soul which is not dependent upon outside circumstances whether good or bad. Happiness is not an effect caused by possession of money.
- 5) Sex. This is the last resort of the hedonist. It is assumed to be a guaranteed winner for the one who is in a frantic search for happiness.
1. I don't know what Viagra means but it may be Latin for Solomon. You'll see what I mean when we note his exploits in:

**1 Kings 11:1 -** Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite (Lot), Ammonite (Lot), Edomite (Esau), Sidonian (Canaan), and Hittite (Canaan) women.

**v 2b -** Solomon held fast to these in love.

**v 3 -** And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines and his wives turned his heart away.

**v 4 -** For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods and his heart was not totally devoted to the Lord his God and the heart of David his father had been.

2. The physical pleasure he received from over 1000 women was unable to provide Solomon with happiness.
3. There is only one way true happiness can be found in sex and that is in the marriage contract. This contract is a mutual relationship based on virtue love between one man and one woman who have been united in marriage.
4. All other relationships are destined to some level of failure because of the diminishment or the absence of virtue love.
5. Solomon expresses his views in:

**Ecclesiastes 7:26 -** I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her but she will capture the sinner.

6. He summarizes his conclusions on the whole matter in:

**Ecclesiastes 7:29 -** “Behold I have found only this, that God made men upright but they have sought out many devises.”

7. The “many devices” refer to reasonings and speculations of human viewpoint which cause the believer to abandon wheel-tracks of righteousness.
8. The basic order in society is the principle of one man for one woman in marriage. Violation of that arrangement simply cannot lead to happiness of any kind, human, divine, or otherwise.

9. All these human viewpoint attempts at happiness were finally brought into perspective as Solomon grew older.

10. The world's richest man woke up one day to the fact that he was old and in the way, his youth was gone, and his life a waste.

11. All that was left was personal misery and the prospect of physical death became a haunting reality.

12. The only way for Solomon to salvage anything from this period of self-centeredness was to resume his spiritual life. That requires rebound:

**Ecclesiastes 11:10 - Remove vexation [ *ka'as*: anger, spite, wrath, bearing a grudge ] from your heart and put away pain from your body, because childhood and the prime of life are fleeting.**

13. The word "fleeting" in the Hebrew is *hebel* /HEH-bel/ and means vanity, emptiness, and transient.

14. This is the dominant word used by Solomon to describe his period of reversionism. The English word "transient" gives us some insight:

***Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "transient":***

Passing especially quickly into and out of existence. Passing through a place with only a brief stay or sojourn. Transient applies to what is actually short in its duration.

15. The Hebrew *hebel* is defined as follows by:

***Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, s.v. 463:***

The basic meaning of *hebel* is “wind” or “breath.” There are three basic categories of contexts in which *hebel* is used. First, it is used as a designation of false gods worshiped by the people of God and hence is usually translated in this context by the word “idols.”

Secondly, the term represents the exasperating sentiments of individuals. Job complains about the brevity and uncertainty of his life in Job 7:16 (“I waste away, I will not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are but a breath.”).

Third, is the cluster of references found in Ecclesiastes of which there are thirty-six. Life in its quality is “empty” or “vacuous,” and its quantity is “transitory.”

16. It is quite possible that Solomon’s views on aging and ill-spent youth were at least partially inspirational to William Shakespeare when he wrote in *Macbeth*, act 5, scene 5, these lines spoken by Macbeth:

(19-28) To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
 To the last syllable of recorded time,  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
 Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player  
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
 And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
 Signifying nothing.

17. Regardless, as Solomon arrives at chapter 12, the Holy Spirit inspires him to issue a message to the youth:

**Ecclesiastes 12:1 -** Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, “I have no delight in them.”

- 14) The key to staying out of the frantic search for happiness is to believe in Christ at an early age.

- 15) “Remember your Creator in the days of your youth” is a challenge for both salvation and for recall of doctrine under pressure.
- 16) The Lord is remembered first of all through faith-alone in Christ alone and then by the execution of the spiritual life of one’s dispensation.
- 17) Anyone who enters old age without a relationship with the Lord is destined to enter the Death-Shadowed Valley either alone as an unbeliever or under punishment as a reversionistic believer.
- 18) In chapter 12, Solomon gives us a picture of old age through figures of speech. Through them we see that many afflictions related to aging are exacerbated due to forgetting one’s Creator.