

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

(OT Survey Lesson 297—Eccl. 4:1-5:7)

Introduction: Beginning with this section, the preacher's observations of life under sun are more specific. He shows the vanity that is often found in life's relationships and offers balancing advice about to handle them.

Lesson aim: To learn wisdom in dealing with others and also with God.

Observations about human relationships—Eccl. 4:1-16

1. What social phenomenon did the preacher address in v. 1? What vanity did he see in it? What then was his reaction to this vanity? (v. 2-3)
2. What other grounds of vanity did the preacher observe? (v. 4) However, what words of wisdom did he give about our work? (v. 5-6)
3. How did the preacher's observations of man without relatives suggest vanity? (v. 7-8)
4. What advantages or benefits did the preacher see in having relationships with others? (v. 9-12)
5. What observation did the preacher make about those who govern others? (v. 13) What things did he observe about the king and his replacements that suggested the vanity of life? (v. 14-16)

Observations about one's relationship with God—Eccl. 5:1-7

1. What warning did the preacher issue about approaching God in worship? (v. 1) What should have priority in the Lord's presence?
2. What additional warning is given in v. 2? Of what kinds of things do you think the preacher is speaking? Why does he give this admonition? (v. 2-3)
3. What did the preacher urge one to do who made a vow? (v. 4) What did he say was "better"? (v. 5)

4. What did he urge one not to do? (v. 6) What situation did he envision developing? What did he think would be the consequence?
5. What was the preacher's opinion of "many dreams" and "many words"? (v. 7) What did he consider to be the important thing in relation to God?