

WINTER SEASON

A WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY IN ECCLESIASTES



FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON,
A TIME FOR EVERY MATTER UNDER HEAVEN.

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

DENISE GLENN

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TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN



May God give you wisdom all your days, and may you remember your Creator in the days of your youth. May He bless you and keep you and use you for His glory to reach the nations. You are our heart and our joy, our hope for future generations. We love you with all our hearts. We did our best to make an impact on our generation. Now it's your turn to make an impact on yours.

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INTRODUCTION TO WINTER SEASON

In June 2015, I was plunged into a Winter Season in the span of a five-minute phone call. My 90-year-old mother had a medical crisis, and she and my sister were heading to the emergency room. Death was certain without surgery; but even with it, the doctors weren't sure she would survive. Up to this point, my elderly parents were both living and in good health—they lived on their own at home, and my father was still exercising at his gym five days a week! That one phone call changed everything. Suddenly, my three sisters and I were facing the possibility of losing our mother, who also happened to be the caretaker of my father, whose memory and mental function were fading.

By God's grace, my mother lived through the surgery that spared her, but life was never the same again. That one phone call began a five-year journey that included her recovering at a rehabilitation-nursing home, moving our dad into the same place to be with her, and taking on the total responsibility of their care. During that time, we also sold the house they'd lived in for 40 years and finally said goodbye to them 13 months apart when God took them to His heavenly home. I just said in one paragraph what took me to the darkest place I'd ever been.

For me, the Winter Season has been a time of grief and loss, of feeling my world as I knew it turned upside down. But it's not like life came to a stop so that I could deal with all of these heavy things. I'm blessed to live near my three daughters, their husbands and our 10 grandchildren, which means I was trying to balance being present in their lives, continuing to speak and travel with Kardo Ministries and helping take care of my ailing parents who lived a four-hour drive away. It was a lot.

I've just begun to come out of the fog of those years, and I can say that I learned so much from that time. Some things I wouldn't change, such as the way my sisters and I honored and cared for our parents. But others, such as the way I cared for myself, I would do differently.

I wasn't necessarily planning to write another book, but the Lord laid this message on my heart; and I want to share the good news with you that joy is possible on the other side and even in the midst of your Winter Season. Your Winter Season might look very different from mine, but going through challenging circumstances happens to everyone. Winter Season might be brought on by a sudden change like a new job or a new baby, a job loss or retirement, a season with a prodigal child or elderly parents. A death or divorce, a sudden devastating illness, or a sin that destroys a life and all the people around them can send you into the Winter Season. It is a season that is especially hard for you, and you need answers. Some people seem to live their lives in Winter Season, never turning the corner to joy and peace.

What we need for the Winter Season is wisdom to get through the rough patches into a place of stability and security. We need answers to life's big questions. We want to understand when life's not fair, when the good guy doesn't win. We long for God to speak to us when we're broken-hearted, disillusioned, grieving and torn. What do the wise men say about our situation? What we need in the Winter Season is the book of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes is a book that faces harsh reality, raw emotion and deep truth head on. I don't know about you, but that's exactly what I need.



What people are saying about Winter Season...

♦ *When I think of reading Ecclesiastes, I typically feel the need to steel myself for an unpleasant reality check, but Winter Season was a refreshing take on a book that turns out to be full of goodness and wisdom. It revealed to me that the ultimate goal for ourselves and our children should not be to gain riches or honor, because Solomon had all that and yet it did not satisfy him. Instead, I'm learning to trust God more, knowing that all my striving is in vain outside of God's plans for me.*

♦ *Winter Season could not have come at a more strategic time in my life. While my earthly father was being called home by our heavenly Father, this study held my hand and guided me through my very own "Winter Season" with Scripture and personal life experiences. What a blessing!*

♦ *There is so much to be gained from this study from Ecclesiastes, no matter what stage of life you find yourself. But, for me, it was very timely as my husband and I entered a new phase of life with his retirement.*

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A WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY IN ECCLESIASTES
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WEEK 1

WHO WAS THE WISEST MAN IN THE WORLD,
AND WHY SHOULD I TRUST HIM?



A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO YOU FROM SOLOMON

I have a lot to tell you. I've lived through so much and learned more than you can imagine. I've seen enough of life to be able to steer you away from the pitfalls and toward the path of joy and peace. Please listen to me. I don't want you to make the same mistakes I did. I've taken the time to write down the things I want to leave with you before I'm gone. I hope you're paying attention. I wrote Proverbs as a first course, but now I want to share with you something more advanced, more like a graduate course in wisdom. That's why I wrote Ecclesiastes. But first, you need to know who I am.

THE PREACHER

Day 1

Lord Jesus, I long to know the truth that will set me free in this season and time of my life. Show me the way. Lead me with Your wisdom, Your mind and Your heart. I love You and trust You, Jesus. It is in Your matchless name I pray, Amen.

We often learn the best by experience. It was like that for me, as I had to experience a Winter Season before I could ever really understand it and certainly before I could ever write a book about it. Caring for my elderly parents, facing their deaths, having an adult daughter with a chronic illness, and dealing with my own aging issues have all thrust me into a Winter Season. I knew I needed wisdom that I didn't have for this intense season of life. I turned to the book of Ecclesiastes to explore Solomon's Winter Season and find direction.

Just as I wrote the story of Ruth and Levi in one of my previous Bible studies, *Restore My Heart*, I wanted to tell a fictional story in this book that would flesh out the truths of Ecclesiastes in a practical way. Allow me to introduce you to the Page family.

THE PAGE SISTERS—all five of them—had grown up in a home overflowing with love, support and encouragement. Their parents took them to church from the time they were babies, and in time each one of them decided that they would accept the love of Jesus Christ and follow Him all of their lives. They took their faith as seriously as their parents did. But they were very different; and with personalities and gifts that ranged the spectrum, they each faced challenges that, at this juncture of their lives, brought them to their knees. Each of them was in a Winter Season of their own that came from different circumstances.

ABIGAIL. THE ELDEST. was married to John, the head of their big, bustling, noisy family. She had mountains of energy; and it was a good thing, too, since she and John owned and ran a restaurant, taught a Bible study at church and had a revolving door of high school and college-aged students in their home. Life was very full, in a good way. But some days it was just too much. Abby was also the primary caregiver for Mom and Dad, and it felt like everyone expected her to keep things running for both her own family and her parents.

DAPHNE'S life took a turn she would have never expected when her husband, Richard, left her for a younger woman. As if that weren't bad enough, he had actually married her! Daphne should now be heading toward retirement and enjoying time with her husband, but she was alone, single and in financial straits. This wasn't the way she'd imagined her life, but she trusted that God would carry her through.

LOVELY. ARTSY CELINA was the middle daughter who was the easiest to get along with. She was the fun aunt to all the nieces and nephews and had the ability to connect at a heart level with everyone around her. If only she was as good with money as she was with people! Celina always struggled to pay the bills with her equally flighty but lovable husband, Paul. Unfortunately, now they realized that their meager retirement savings weren't going to be enough and even though they were both really ready to stop working, they couldn't for several more years.

ELIZABETH had been struggling with her health for months. Still she was the steady, sweet one who served both her family and the church. She helped her sisters and parents with practical things like their taxes, served in the church's international ministry, and prayed faithfully on the church prayer team. In spite of her illness and with the support of Stephen, her beloved husband of many years, she was able to continue most of her family and ministry obligations. Then suddenly, Stephen had a stroke; and everything changed. Elizabeth became his caregiver and for several years, poured herself into his care until the day the Lord took Stephen home. Now, while she was left alone to face her own illness, she drew strength and life from the Lord like never before.

MADLINE was the baby of the family by many years, arriving long after the others were already in school. Although as the darling of the family she could have been selfish and spoiled, she was the opposite. Madeline and her husband, Luke, were missionaries in Asia, caring, giving, and surrendering their lives in service. She knew they were where God had called them to be, but daily living in a foreign environment and possibly facing a new assignment that would keep them away from extended family even longer, took her to a Winter Season of her own.



Winter Season is a Bible study on Ecclesiastes, not for a particular age person but for a season of life. Ecclesiastes is a piece of wisdom literature in the heart of the Bible that speaks to the deep places in the heart about big issues. It's a book that allows us to step outside our daily lives, to "go up 30,000 feet" and look down at what's really important. For those going through a difficult season of loss or change, Ecclesiastes will help you work through it. For those hungry to learn from the wisest man who ever lived, this book will chart your path. For those asking big questions about life, Ecclesiastes explores them with you and leads you to the truth. For first-world mature adults either nearing retirement or enjoying it, this book is critical.

Solomon is an experienced guide who has tested the waters and knows his way to steer us clear of the obstacles. In his philosophical, sometimes poetic way, he brings us the truth about the most serious issues in life—money, control, aging, legacy, death, trials, sex (or lack of it), joy, wisdom, and faith. In eras past, Ecclesiastes was called a "dangerous book," and some even now say it's a "downer." But I beg to differ! Solomon does look at life realistically, seeing all the brokenness in our world, but Ecclesiastes is a book full of wisdom and insight from a wise man ready to share the secrets of life.

Ecclesiastes will take us on a journey where we will see life from both the messy underside of the tapestry and the finished topside when all is completed in God's eternal plan. There will be black threads woven throughout; but when we see it from God's perspective, we see those threads just outline the beautiful design God is making of our lives. Ecclesiastes won't read like a novel. It isn't meant to be read from beginning to end, easily digested and set aside. When read in a single sitting, Ecclesiastes seems to meander in circles and lack organization. Next to the fascinating stories of the Old and New Testaments, it lacks a coherently unfolding story. No, this book is organized in a way far different from a modern novel or newspaper. And that's part of its unique power and challenge.

Ecclesiastes is meant to be read and studied verse by verse, a little section at a time, contemplated and the wisdom absorbed and applied. As we study, you'll want to zoom in on one or two verses each day that speak to you and where you are right now. But first, we need to know who wrote this book and why you can trust that he knows what he's talking about.

Read Ecclesiastes 1:1.

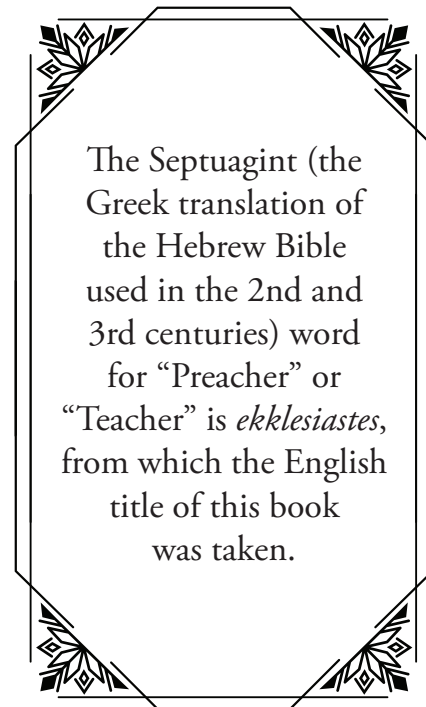
The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. (ESV)

Who is the probable writer of Ecclesiastes?

What do we learn about this man?

The writer of Ecclesiastes identifies himself as the “Preacher” (ESV) and “Teacher” (NIV). The Hebrew word is *kohleth*.¹ It means “assembler,” “lecturer” or “preacher.” He is *kohleth*, the one who has gone astray and gathered or “assembled” back to God. He is *kohleth*, the one who wrote to bring the lost sheep back to the shepherd by preaching a sermon. The traditional view, including that of noted biblical scholar Matthew Henry, is that this book is authored by Solomon, as stated in verse one, and that he is “the son of David, king in Jerusalem.”²

Solomon, whose name means “peace,” used a pen name instead of writing under his own name as he did in Proverbs and Song of Solomon because, at the end of his life, he didn’t bring peace to the kingdom, nor to himself, but trouble. Solomon, the Teacher or Preacher, gives a long sermon in the book of Ecclesiastes to show us that the things of this world, in the end, are vanity and will not make us happy. Solomon ends the sermon with a simple solution to this dilemma that will lead us to joy. So, who was Solomon, and why should we listen to him?



Read the following passages from II Samuel 11:2-12:25 about Solomon's birth and summarize the story from the following passages.

²David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. ³And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her.

(Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. ⁵And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

(From Nathan the Prophet) 12:9 Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

¹⁵And the Lord afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick.

(King David) ²³But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." ²⁴Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the Lord loved him ²⁵and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So, he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord.


Who was Solomon's mother?

What were the circumstances of his birth?

Google the meaning of the names “Solomon” and “Jedidiah” and write the definitions here.

Why were those names given to this baby?

✧ What did you learn that helps you understand the man Solomon became?



Throughout the book you will see a snowflake beside some of the questions. These are for discussion with your group.

Solomon, born to King David and Bathsheba after they married, was a legitimate son. For David and Bathsheba, who lost the child of their adultery before their marriage, Solomon must have represented a second chance, redemption, and God’s forgiveness. He was God’s gift to them and represented resurrection of their marriage, David’s reign, and the cleansing of the kingdom. Their first son embodied their sin. Their second son personified their restoration. They named him Solomon, from *shalom*, meaning “peace.” David had made peace with God about his sin. When Nathan, the prophet, came to see the baby, he brought a blessing from God for the boy and called him Jedidiah, “beloved of God” or “friend of God.” God had his hand on Solomon’s life from the beginning.

¹*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, Hebrew Number 6953, biblehub.com.

²*Commentary on the Whole Bible by Matthew Henry*, 1961, Zondervan Publishing House, p. 791-792.



A Bit of Wisdom

Like King David, we all have past sins and regrets. Take some time today to forgive yourself of those poor choices. It's a first step to the next chapter of your life. Until you give to God all those things that haunt your thoughts and nag at the corners of your mind, you'll never be free to be the person you can be in Him.

These are old tricks, but they work. Take out a sheet of paper and write down the details of your past that still bother you today—mistakes, outright sins, foolish decisions that caused pain, harm or just inconvenience. Thoughts that continue to go around and around in your mind, never finding resolution because you can't go back in time and re-do any of them. Put them on paper and ask God to forgive you for each one and for the consequences others had to pay because of them. Ask Him to wash you clean, heal and restore you. Then, in a safe place, burn or shred that paper and throw it away. Now, receive God's forgiveness by celebrating. Maybe your celebration will just be to walk in the sunshine or take a long soaking bath. Maybe you'll go to dinner with your loved one. Take a moment to mark the event when you receive God's restoration.

THE CHOSEN ONE *Day 2*

Lord Jesus, thank You for choosing me to be in Your family. Thank You for the plan You have designed for my life. Lord, I want to walk in Your plan alone. Here is my life. Use me. Fill me. Send me. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

DAPHNE was lonely. Richard's abrupt departure from their marriage in favor of a younger woman had left her angry, hurt, feeling inadequate and ugly both inside and out. She needed wisdom to know how to move forward. For months that seemed like years, she'd been stuck in never-ending cycles of self-reproach, self-hatred, and searing anger toward Richard for his traitorous infidelity. How dare he! Well, today, she decided, would be a different day. She was finished with the pity party and ready for a fresh start. Since it was Saturday, she was in her robe and slippers when she curled up in her big chair with coffee in hand and began to read Ecclesiastes. While it seemed an unlikely choice of reading material to lift her spirits, the Lord directed her to this book that would help her through this Winter Season in her life.

She decided to begin learning more about Solomon, the author of the book. Why did he write it and what were his credentials that gave him the ability to give her wisdom? In her research, she found out that David, his father, had many sons. He had six sons by different wives before Solomon was even born. Shouldn't they have succeeded David to the throne of Israel instead of Solomon?



Read II Samuel 3:2-5.

²And sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel; ³and his second, Chileab, of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; ⁴and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; ⁵and the sixth, Ithream, of Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

Who was the firstborn of King David, the rightful heir to his throne and why was he disqualified? (See II Samuel 13:1-22.)

Why was another older brother of Solomon disqualified from being king? (Read the story in II Samuel 15:1-12, 16:15-23, 18:10-15.)

What was the likelihood of Solomon becoming king because of his birth order?

David's first six sons were each born of a different mother. They would all have been in line for the throne before Solomon. The first son of David and Bathsheba, David's seventh son, died in infancy. Solomon was the eighth son of David, who was himself, the eighth son of his father, Jesse. Only God could ordain an eighth son of an eighth son to be the king of Israel.

Read I Kings 1:32-35.

³²King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. ³³And the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. ³⁴And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵You shall then come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, for he shall be king in my place. And I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah."

How was Solomon crowned king?

Why was there a question about his succession to the throne?
(I Kings 1:1-53.)

Read I Chronicles 28:1-7 to discover God's plan for Solomon's kingship.

¹David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds, the stewards of all the property and livestock of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty men and all the seasoned warriors. ²Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD and for the footstool of our God, and I made preparations for building. ³But God said to me, 'You may not build a house for my name, for you are a man of war and have shed blood.'

⁴Yet the LORD God of Israel chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. For he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel. ⁵And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. ⁶He said to me, 'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. ⁷I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues strong in keeping my commandments and my rules, as he is today.'

Who appointed Solomon to be king of Israel according to verse 5?

✦ What was the special relationship between Solomon and God as stated in verse 6?

✦ What was the condition God placed on Solomon's reign being firmly established?

Solomon was specifically chosen by God to be king after David. He ascended the throne of Israel, with a task appointed by both his earthly father and heavenly Father. David charged his son to observe God's commandments with a whole heart and a willing mind. David knew what he was talking about. His sin had cost him dearly. He wanted better for this son of promise. David gave to Solomon the wisdom he had acquired by sitting at the feet of the Lord but also by making terrible mistakes. He knew by experience that "the Lord searches all hearts and understands every intent of the thoughts."

In I Chronicles 28:7, David repeats God's words in the hearing of all Israel and to his son, "I will establish his kingdom forever if.."

✦ What did you learn today from David about counseling your children, even adult children and grandchildren?

What message do you want to communicate with your kids from what you have learned through the experiences of your life?



A Bit of Wisdom

Pray for your children and grandchildren to make wise choices today, this week, and this year. Your prayer might sound something like this:

“Lord Jesus, thank You for my beautiful children. You created them wonderfully and uniquely for Your purpose. Now today, I lift them up to You, asking You to give them the gift of wisdom in making decisions. I am asking according to James 1:5-6, where Your word says, “if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach and it will be given to him.”

So, Lord, pour out Your wisdom into their hearts and minds. Strip away fear and unbelief. Give them unusual discernment before they make final decisions. I entrust my children into Your hands, knowing that the plans You have for them are to prosper them and not to harm them, to give them a hope and a future. I ask all this in the powerful name of Jesus, the name above every other name. Amen.”

SIR ISAAC NEWTON, ALBERT EINSTEIN & STEPHEN HAWKING ROLLED INTO ONE

Day 3

Heavenly Father, I come today before You to adore and bless Your name. You are God of all gods and Lord over all things in heaven and earth. I praise You, O God. Thank You for every blessing You have given to me. I am so grateful for every good and perfect gift. Today I am counting my blessings. I love You, Lord. Amen.

THE YOUNGEST SISTER. MADELINE. and her husband, Luke, had some big decisions to make in their ministry. They were asked to take a new assignment, but it wouldn't be easy. Not only was the assignment truly God-sized, way outside their scope, but it was far from home. With aging parents and young adult children, the answer wasn't going to be easy, whether they accepted or rejected the offer. They needed to be wiser than ever. They both had seminary degrees, but they didn't need a lot of heavy theology tonight. They needed a clear word of wisdom from the Lord.



Read I Chronicles 28:10-12 and I Chronicles 29:1-3.

¹⁰Be careful now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it.” ¹¹Then David gave Solomon his son the plan of the vestibule of the temple, and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner chambers, and of the room for the mercy seat; ¹²and the plan of all that he had in mind for the courts of the house of the Lord, all the surrounding chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for dedicated gifts;

29:1 And David the king said to all the assembly, "Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the LORD God. ²So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones and marble. ³Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God:

What was the legacy David left to Solomon before he died?

Solomon was to build a spectacular temple for the worship of God. King David had dreamed of building this temple, but that privilege was given to his son. So, David transferred all the plans and provisions for the task, carefully explaining to Solomon everything in his heart for this beautiful building. David recognized his place in history and that of his son. He did his part willingly and happily passed the baton. It was up to Solomon to have courage and take action to get it done.

He must have been daunted by such big shoes to fill as those of his father, David, and such an overwhelming responsibility to not only lead Israel as king but to oversee the building of a permanent, magnificent place for offering sacrifices to God.

Read I Kings 3:3-5.

³Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. ⁴And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you."

Describe Solomon's relationship with God.

How did Solomon prove his zeal for loving and worshiping God?

Did he worship God in the same place as David his father? Why or why not?

What did God say to Solomon?

How did Jesus repeat that in Matthew 7:7, 8?

What do you want to ask of God today?

Solomon really loved the Lord God and demonstrated that love by 1000 sacrifices on the altar. He chose to worship at the high place instead of at the tabernacle before the ark of the covenant. Was this a first step away from worshiping the one true God? He had not yet received his wisdom and was young and inexperienced. God gave him grace and accepted his sacrifice without judgment. And He asked Solomon the million-dollar question that any man would envy. God asked him what he wanted. Solomon could literally ask for anything! Here is his interesting reply to God.

Read I Kings 3:6-9.

⁶And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”

What did Solomon ask of God?

What was Solomon’s attitude toward God?

Read I Kings 3:10-14 to discover God’s answer in His dialogue with Solomon.

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

What was God’s answer to Solomon?

God appeared to him in a dream and asked Solomon what he wished for as a new king. Humbled, he asked God for discernment and wisdom, and God was so pleased with his unselfish request that he granted him both wisdom and incredible wealth and if Solomon was obedient to God's commands, he would be granted a long life. God lavished upon this boy of David's a heaping portion of His gifts. Scripture gives us some startling examples of Solomon's gift of wisdom and his unusual wealth.

For the story of two mothers who needed Solomon's wisdom read
I Kings 3:16-28.

¹⁶Then two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷The one woman said, "Oh, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house, and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. ¹⁸Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. And we were alone. There was no one else with us in the house; only we two were in the house. ¹⁹And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. ²⁰And she arose at midnight and took my son from beside me, while your servant slept, and laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. ²¹When I rose in the morning to nurse my child, behold, he was dead. But when I looked at him closely in the morning, behold, he was not the child that I had borne." ²²But the other woman said, "No, the living child is mine, and the dead child is yours." The first said, "No, the dead child is yours, and the living child is mine." Thus they spoke before the king.

²³Then the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead'; and the other says, 'No; but your son is dead, and my son is the living one.'" ²⁴And the king said, "Bring me a sword." So a sword was brought before the king. ²⁵And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." ²⁶Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, "Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death." But the other said, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him." ²⁷Then the king answered and said, "Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother." ²⁸And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice.

According to this story, how did Solomon demonstrate God's gift of supernatural wisdom after he prayed for it?

Read II Chronicles 9:1-8 to see how the Queen of Sheba was affected by Solomon's wisdom.

¹Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions, having a very great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. ²And Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from Solomon that he could not explain to her. ³And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁴the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her.

⁵And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, ⁶but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, half the greatness of your wisdom was not told me; you surpass the report that I heard. ⁷Happy are your wives! Happy are these your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! ⁸Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the LORD your God! Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and righteousness."

What did the Queen of Sheba recognize about Solomon's unusual wisdom?



Read I Kings 4:29-34.

²⁹And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, ³⁰so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol, and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. ³²He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. ³³He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. ³⁴And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.

Describe Solomon's mind.

Who were the four wise men, besides Solomon, who are listed in this passage?

Which chapter of the Bible was written by Ethan the Ezrahite, one of the wise men to whom Solomon was compared? (Google his name.)

Read I Chronicles 6:31-33.

³¹These are the men whom David put in charge of the service of song in the house of the Lord after the ark rested there. ³²They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting until Solomon built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, and they performed their service according to their order. ³³These are the men who served and their sons. Of the sons of the Kohathites: Heman the singer the son of Joel, son of Samuel.

What was Heman's role in both David and Solomon's courts?

Which chapter of the Bible was written by Heman, one of the wise men to whom Solomon was compared? (Google “Heman in the Bible.”)

The Bible says Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of both the people of the East and of Egypt, and that was saying a lot. The ancient Near East produced a lot of “wisdom literature”—texts that instruct the reader about life, virtue and social interaction. The wise men of that region in ancient times wrote instructive as well as reflective texts. Ecclesiastes has both. Some scholars would classify Proverbs as the workbook for a beginning, or “undergraduate course” in wisdom, while Ecclesiastes is the advanced or “graduate school” text.³

We find an example in the writings of two Egyptian wise men in 1100 BC, 100 years before Solomon. *The Instructions of Amenemope* and *The Instructions of ‘Onchsheshonqy* were two examples of wisdom literature brilliantly written by men who were considered some of the wisest Egypt ever produced. They wrote proverbs and maxims for Egyptians that were read worldwide. But Solomon’s wisdom far exceeded their own.⁴

In today’s world, how would we write I Kings 4:31?

“For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than

Born in Boston in 1898, William James Sidis made the headlines in the early twentieth century as a child prodigy with an amazing intellect. To put his intellect in perspective, Albert Einstein’s IQ is estimated at 160, Leonardo da Vinci’s at 180 and Isaac Newton’s at 190. Sidis is thought to have had an IQ between 275-300. He could read the New York Times before he was 2. At age 6, his language repertoire included English, Latin, French, German, Russian, Hebrew, Turkish and Armenian. At age 11, he entered Harvard University as one of the youngest students in the school’s history.⁵

But Sidis was no match for Solomon, whose wisdom was far greater.

In which intellectual disciplines was Solomon an expert?

Can you just imagine how smart Solomon was? After God answered his request for an understanding heart to rule the people, He then added all types of wisdom and knowledge, and Solomon's mind must have raced with the heightened electricity flowing through his brain. Knowledge of many subjects came pouring into His mind from the mind of God. He understood arts and sciences, history, mathematics and music. He was an expert in biology and botany, zoology and philosophy, psychology, theology and was a gifted song-writer. He had unusual discernment in criminal justice and legal matters. In our day, he would have had multiple doctorates in several disciplines of science, psychology, music, and languages. He would have made Sir Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, Ludwig Beethoven, Wolfgang Mozart, Stephen Hawking and Bill Gates look simple-minded and small.

✦ What decision are you facing now that needs the wisdom of Solomon?

More than just knowledge, Solomon had the wisdom to know how to apply it. "In literary history and beyond, wisdom is generally understood as a mental quality most common in older people, and familiarity with a set of customs and practices acquired through long experience rather than book learning or spontaneous revelation. You can learn calculus, physics, violin, sculpture, or gymnastics as a child. But only through years of experience – through ups and downs that trace lines around your eyes – can you acquire wisdom."⁶



Read Proverbs 2:1-15.

¹*My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you,*
²*making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;*
³*yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴if*
you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, ⁵then you will
understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. ⁶For the
LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
⁷*he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in*
integrity, ⁸guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.

⁹*Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every*
good path; ¹⁰for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be
pleasant to your soul; ¹¹discretion will watch over you, understanding will
guard you, ¹²delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted
speech, ¹³who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of
darkness, ¹⁴who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of
evil, ¹⁵men whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.

List the things the Lord gives to us, according to verses 6-8?

You might end your time of study with the following prayer: *“Lord, give me wisdom and discernment to make important decisions according to Your will. Show me the right path and open and close doors before me. I trust You, and I will follow You. I ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.”*

³*Archaeological Study Bible, NIV, An Illustrated Walk through Biblical History and Culture, Zondervan, 2005, p 960.*

⁴*The Literature of Ancient Egypt, edited by William Kelly Simpson and published by Yale University Press.*

⁵*“Meet William James Sidis: The Smartest Guy Ever?” npr.com.*

⁶*“The Pros and Cons of Wisdom,” Episode 6, literatureandhistory.com.*



A Bit of Wisdom

What big decisions do you need to make in the next month?

In the next 3 months?

Next year?

Try this: Begin reading a chapter in Psalms and one in Proverbs, and record verses that speak to your questions. Keep reading and praying through Psalms and Proverbs until God speaks to you in a way you can hear and understand what He wants you to do. Ask Him to give you wisdom according to His will.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY *Day 4*

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your many, abundant blessings given to me and my family. Thank You for supplying our needs. Now, Lord, show us how to be a blessing to others, passing on Your blessings where they are needed. I love You, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

CELINA needed help. She and Paul just couldn't seem to stop spending money. They didn't buy "bad" things, but it seemed all those little online expenditures added up to more than they had each month. And the house and car always seemed to need repairs. The credit card bills never got fully paid. They just needed a little more money—or a lot more. Then their problems would be solved. They could relax and get out from under this stress. They were getting too old for this! She knew there had to be a way out. They needed to talk to someone really wise with solid answers for straightening out this mess and to hear from someone who had lots of money and knew how to manage it well. Her sisters had told her they were studying Ecclesiastes. She wondered if Solomon could help them as well?



Read II Chronicles 1:12.

"...I will also give you riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had who were before you, and none after you shall have the like."

What three things did God give Solomon in addition to wisdom and understanding?

Read II Chronicles 9:13-16 to discover the enormity of Solomon's wealth.

¹³Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, ¹⁴besides that which the explorers and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁵King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold; 600 shekels of beaten gold went into each shield. ¹⁶And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; 300 shekels of gold went into each shield; and the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

Do a Google search for the value of Solomon's income of 666 talents of gold. How much money is it in your currency?

What other revenue streams of income did he receive regularly?

What did Solomon do with some of his gold according to verses 15 and 16?

What do you think those shields represented for him?

Solomon had an income of a modern-day equivalent of approximately 1 billion US dollars per year. His wealth was staggering. He could have anything, buy anything, build anything, own anything or anyone. His wealth was greater than Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world, according to the Forbes billionaires' list.

He could have all of the finest palaces fitted out with the most extravagant furnishings. He could eat the most exquisite foods and wear the most expensive clothes. He had servants, slaves, wives and concubines to fulfill his every desire. There was nothing he had to wait for and nothing on his wish list. He could have everything right now.

Read II Chronicles 9:17-19.

¹⁷The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁸The throne had six steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests, ¹⁹while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. Nothing like it was ever made for any kingdom.

Describe Solomon's throne:

Read II Chronicles 9:20-22.

²⁰All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. Silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. ²¹For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. ²²Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

According to these verses, how did Solomon and his guests eat and drink in his palace?

What was the name of one of his palaces in his royal complex and why do you think this was its name?

What did Solomon import from Tarshish every three years?

Fill in the blanks from II Chronicles 9:22:

Thus King Solomon _____ all the kings of the earth _____ and _____ .

Read II Chronicles 9:23-28.

²³And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. ²⁴Every one of them brought his present, articles of silver and of gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year. ²⁵And Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁶And he ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. ²⁷And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. ²⁸And horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

Why did the kings of the earth come to Solomon?

What did each one of them bring to Solomon that further increased his wealth?

✧ What did God give to Solomon besides wisdom?

✧ How much money did Solomon have and why did he have it?

What item was on earth in Solomon's time that he couldn't buy?



Solomon was wealthier than we can imagine. Besides the income from taxes, the kings in surrounding nations gladly came to pay tribute to him just to hear his astounding wisdom and knowledge. They brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh, just as the kings did to newborn Jesus almost 1000 years later. They heaped gifts upon Solomon and his kingdom. Solomon was blessed and gifted by God like no other.



A Bit of Wisdom

When you are under stress, one of the things that's hardest to manage is money. Compared to what you're going through, your finances seem inconsequential. But life on earth requires us to be good stewards. Bills must be paid, accounts reconciled, and taxes filed. If you can't handle that right now, find a trustworthy person who can help you. It might be for a short season or long term. Reach out and get help before your finances become yet another burden. The last thing you need is to be overwhelmed by a monetary crisis. Ask God to bring to you just the right person for the job.

PUFF OF SMOKE

Day 5

Lord Jesus, I thank You for who You are and all that You have done for me. Bless You for Your sacrifice for me that I might be in a relationship with You. Now, Lord, I bring You my questions and concerns, my problems and trials and lay them at Your feet. Take them and show me how to walk by faith, even when I cannot see the way ahead of me. I trust You, and I love You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

STEPHEN AND ELIZABETH loved to go river rafting. The thrill of the rapids, the adrenaline rush of near disasters, the quiet float down a majestic river, the wildlife on the river banks, and the exercise of paddling all added up to a perfect day for them. When the water level was high and the sun was shining, there was nothing like it.

But with first her diagnosis of lupus, then Stephen's death, Elizabeth was on a journey of the river of life that had brought a series of rapids and rocks. While her prayer life was strong and her knowledge of Scripture helped, she still found herself crying out, "Why?" Her faith was being tested to the core. She decided to join her sisters by diving into Ecclesiastes for answers. Right from the start, she could identify with Solomon. He begins his sermon with a bold cry.



Read Ecclesiastes 1:2, 3.

²Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, ³What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

The New International Version says it this way: "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."

Which word is repeated by Solomon over and over in this verse?
Find it in several translations.

What does this word mean to you?

Where exactly is “under the sun?”

How would you answer the Preacher’s question in verse 3?

How did Jesus expand on this question in Mark 8:36, 37?

³⁶ *For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?*

³⁷ *For what can a man give in return for his soul?*

Solomon was intelligent and discerning and able to be objective about life on earth. He used one word to summarize it: Vanity! This word “vanity” means “breath” like a puff of smoke. There is no substance to it.

So, the wisest and wealthiest man who ever lived said this is the summary of all things? It’s nothing? It’s a puff of smoke that’s here today and forever gone? Yikes! No wonder everyone says this book is a “downer.” But wait! Did you catch the key phrase that goes with the key word? Over and over Solomon tells us that he is observing “life under the sun” when he describes it as meaningless. “Under the sun” means life here on earth that you can observe with your five senses. It is life on this planet with no consideration for God, faith, and the supernatural. That is the life that is meaningless.

The Preacher is going to repeatedly say, “vanity” and “under the sun.” (“Vanity” is repeated 38 times and is the key word of the book.) By saying, “Vanity of vanities” he is using superlative language that means “breath of breaths.” He exclaims that life is just a vapor. And he writes it in bold print and underlines it by saying, “ALL is vanity!” It is a powerful statement to open his sermon and command the attention of his audience. What if your pastor opened his sermon next Sunday with those words? I imagine everyone would perk up and listen!

Then, he gives his hearers the location of these vanities. They are “under the sun.” This refers to life on *terra firma* that every person on earth experiences and observes. It is in contrast to what’s in the heavenlies and the spiritual realm—God, Jesus, the Spirit, angels, and faith. His opening theme cries out to us that life down here is rough. It starts out hard and gets harder. When we only see life from earth’s point of view, it’s pretty bleak. Everything we thought would be reliable isn’t, and everything that is supposed to satisfy us doesn’t. The world is broken. But thankfully, if we keep listening to him, the Preacher will bring us into the light.

Read Ecclesiastes 1:4-7.

⁴A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. ⁵The sun rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises. ⁶The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. ⁷All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again.

Do you think the Preacher is at the beginning of his adulthood, the midpoint, or the end of his adult life when we wrote these words?

How does he describe the cycle of life?

We are about to study this man's life and read the Last Will and Testament of King Solomon, the wisest, richest man who ever lived. He had unlimited resources, wealth, and unfathomable wisdom. This man who had it all, tried it all, tasted it all, experienced it all, is willing to show us the way down the river. If he were doing a lecture series, would you buy a ticket? Well, here it is, captured for you in the book of Ecclesiastes. This incredibly gifted man is in his Winter Season. He's coming to the end of his amazingly colorful life and looks back to impart his final analysis of life on earth: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Read Ecclesiastes 1:8-11.

⁸All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. ⁹What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us. ¹¹There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.

Verse 9 contains a famous phrase that is often quoted. Write it here.

Why is the Preacher frustrated in these verses? What is he searching for but can't find?

An ancient Assyrian, Tatianus, showed the Grecians how all the arts they treasured were actually originated by their enemies. "For shame, do not call those things 'inventions' which are but 'imitations!' For surely there is nothing new under the sun."⁷



Solomon was bored. He searched the world over for something new to see, hear, and experience; but he couldn't find it. Have you ever said, "There's nothing new under the sun" when fashions that went "out" are suddenly back "in?" When colors that became ugly and outdated are now the rage? Our senses are bombarded with information, education, and entertainment, and after a while nothing looks or sounds new or good any more.

Sometimes we watch television or surf the internet looking for something we haven't already seen, only to find re-runs of news stories, movies and television programs. Even with hundreds of channels and several streaming devices, nothing is appealing. This must be how Solomon felt. He had seen everything available in his day, and he was bored to tears. This is the best life offers "under the sun."

Solomon summarized for us at the beginning of his sermon what life is like without reference to God. It comes up short. But we have the whole of God's Word to lay over Solomon's assessment of life. Yes, "under the sun", it is troublesome. But as believers in Jesus Christ, we have the New Testament, the new revelation of God's plan and purpose for His children on earth.

Read II Corinthians 5:17.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

✦ What is truly new that Solomon didn't understand?

While on earth, the cycles of life, nature, and even our thoughts go on in endless cycles, but what IS new is a man or woman when they've been re-created as a new creature in Christ. The old life, old sins have passed away, and now life really is new.

Solomon had unlimited resources, supernatural wisdom, expansive power, and sexual fulfillment; and he begins his sermon with an outburst. I hear him saying, "It's all a puff of smoke! It's all vanity! It doesn't satisfy like I thought it would. I'm bored, looking for something new."

Stop for a moment and think about how God has made you a new creation. If you have prayed, “Lord, I surrender my life to You. Please forgive me of my sins; please take control of my life,” Your old nature that loved to sin has been dealt with on the Cross of Jesus. You now have a new nature and the mind of Christ. YOU are something new on the earth. You are a human being, living, breathing and walking on this earth carrying around a precious treasure—the life of Jesus. Jesus, who loved you so much He sacrificed His life; Jesus, who spoke truth in love; Jesus, who loved His enemies; Jesus, who believed God could feed 5,000 people from five loaves and two fish. HIS life is in you if you have given over your life to Him personally.

Our world IS broken. Things rotate in endless cycles of generations that come and go. That is true of life “under the sun.” But for those of us who know Jesus Christ as Lord of our lives, that is not the whole story! If we have bowed our knees before Him and surrendered our lives into His hands, God’s faithfulness is new every morning! Our past is gone, and we are new creatures who have gone from death to life. We live “above the sun” with the Son of God in a real, vibrant, moment-by-moment relationship—a relationship that satisfies our heart and fills our longings. And He leads us into a life full of purpose and meaning. Meaningless, Solomon? No, with Jesus, it is meaningful!

If you have never accepted Christ personally as Lord and Savior of your life and experienced the new life He gives, we invite you to do that now.

- ♦ Ask Him to forgive all your sins and receive His forgiveness.
- ♦ Believe in your heart that Jesus died to save you from the penalty of your sins.
- ♦ Confess that Jesus is Lord and Savior of your life and commit yourself into His hands to lead you for the rest of your life.

⁷"The Pros and Cons of Wisdom, Episode 6," historyandliterature.com.





A Bit of Wisdom

A good example of “nothing new under the sun” can be seen on our screens. Most movies today become franchises so they can take the same old story line, then just stretch and embellish it to become five or six films, increasing their revenue exponentially. Because of streaming services, we can watch old programs to our heart’s content. But is that the best use of our time? You might be watching television with your phone in your hand, the TV blaring, while you scroll the iPad on your lap to see the Instagram postings of your friends. Does that sound like an overload for your brain? Researchers tell us, yes, probably.

So how about calling a media fast...even if it’s just for a few hours a day. Let’s take a brain break. Light a candle and sit quietly for a while, then put on instrumental praise music. Let peace steal over you. Breathe and let your mind and heart reset.

Hearts Surrendered. Lives Transformed.

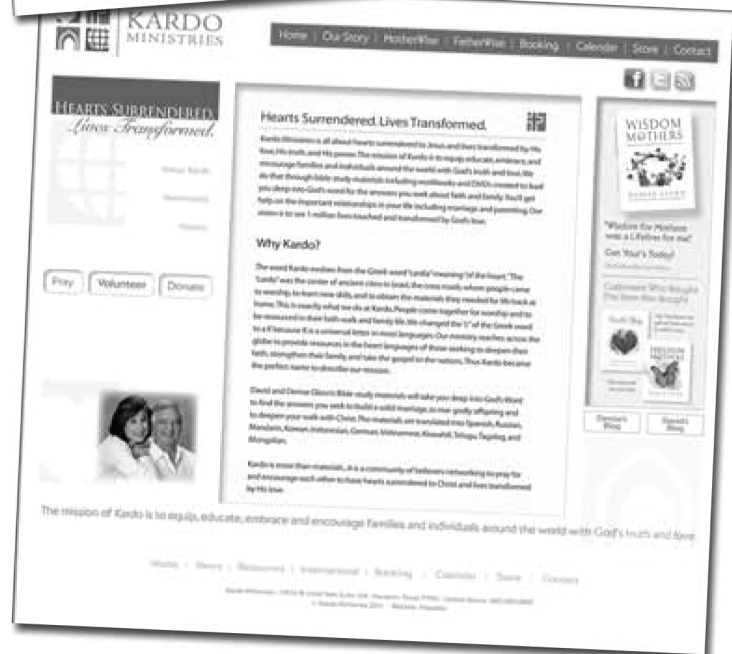


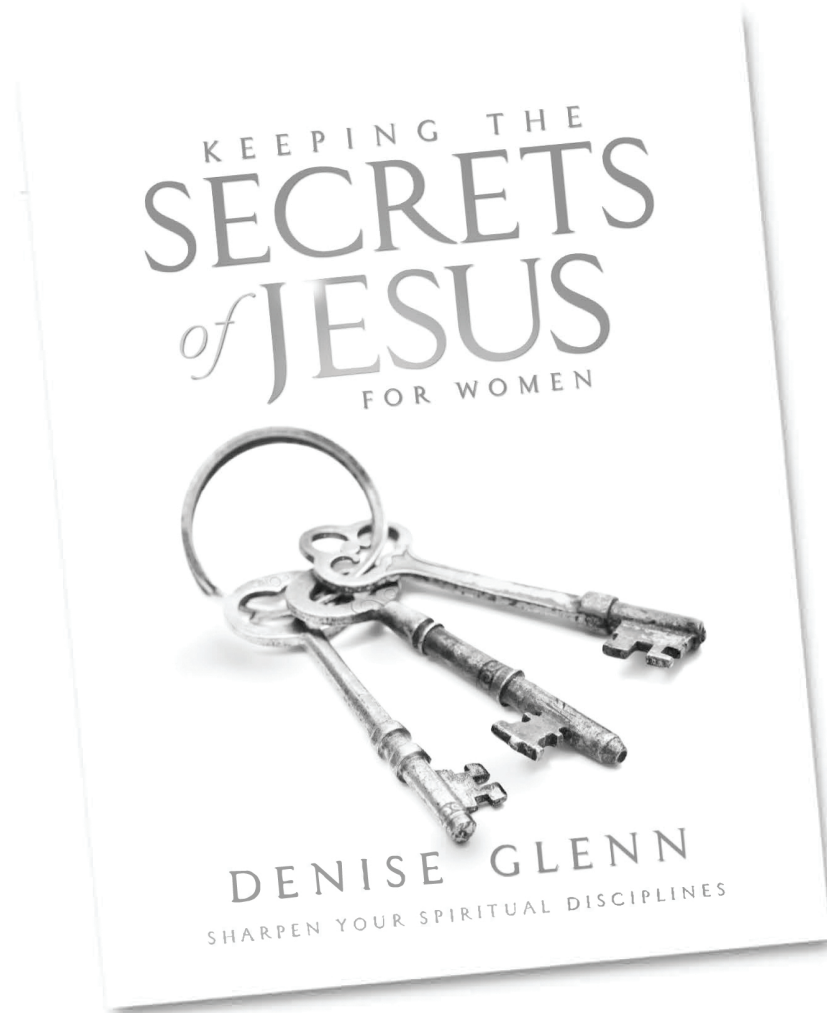
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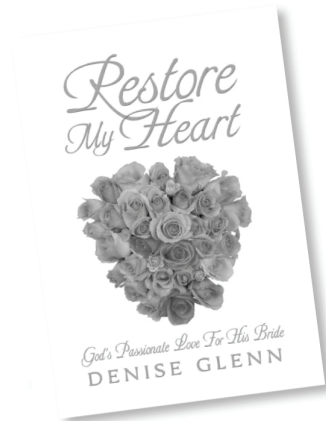
Denise has taken the amazing original study and revised it in workbook format to focus on the challenges that women face today and how to deal with those challenges using spiritual Disciplines. In this 6 week study women will learn how to:

- Pray in ways that will demolish strongholds
- Give sacrificially and effectively
- Fast in an effort to draw near God
- Use worship as a weapon to fight spiritual battles
- Engage your faith as never before

Using Matthew 6 and lessons learned while living overseas, Denise will take women through a life changing studying of the Secrets that Jesus taught. Your spiritual skills and disciplines will be sharpened and taken to new depths for a deeper relationship with God.

Bible study lessons are on DVD and leader discussion questions are located at the end of the workbook.

Available now online! Visit www.kardo.org or call 1-888-272-6972.



Learn how to have your heart restored to the function of its original design, transporting God's love to you, through you, and to others!

Restore My Heart

Explore God's Word in this penetrating 6-week Bible study about Christ's love for you and His invitation to you! Discover the passion of the Lord God for His people; how tenderly and compassionately you are loved, just as you are; and His desire to lavishly adorn you with His precious gifts.

- Find out how these eternal truths are beautifully illustrated for today's women in the ancient Jewish customs and wedding traditions.
- Learn from Denise how a toothbrush, a pickle, and heavenly sand paper can illuminate God's Word in your life.
- Receive healing and restoration as you bring your hurting and wounded heart to the One Who made the ultimate sacrifice for His Bride, the Church.

"A thoughtful reading of "Restore My Heart" will provide fresh in-sight to readers as the author makes a vivid comparison of the Jewish wedding traditions with our heritage as the Bride of Christ. Our identity in Him and His unconditional love for us give ample cause for rejoicing in 'so great salvation' (Hebrews. 2:3)."

Charles R. Solomon, Author, "Handbook to Happiness".

RESTORE MY HEART DVD SET:

Taped-live sessions with Denise Glenn teaching the Bible study content of the workbook

RESTORE MY HEART CD SET:

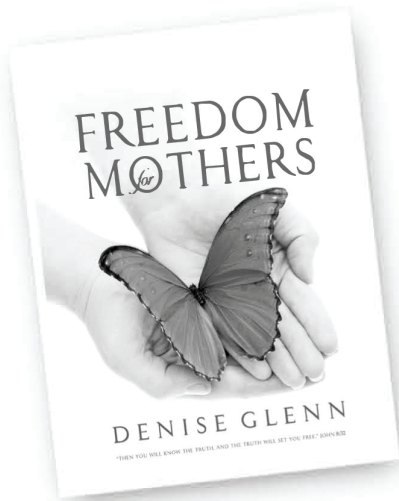
The audio portion of Denise Glenn's video series is available in a 3-CD holder.

RESTORE MY HEART LEADER'S GUIDE:

Complete instructions for leading *Restore My Heart* in a large or small group setting whether in a church or home.

"In 'Restore My Heart' Denise Glenn reminds us that as Christians, we are the love of the Lord's life! Through Jesus' teaching of Himself as the Bridegroom and the Church as the Bride, Denise brings the reader and the Lord together for an inspirational and intimate visit and study of that unique and fulfilling relationship."

H. Edwin Young, Senior Pastor, Second Baptist Church, Houston, TX



MotherWise is a lifeline for mothers of all ages and stages providing the biblical and practical instruction moms need to thrive in today's chaotic, changing world. Denise Glenn's Bible Study materials will take you deep into "God's Word to find the answers you seek to rear godly offspring and build a solid marriage. MotherWise is more than materials... it is a community of mothers networking to pray for and nourish each other in the high calling of motherhood.



Freedom for Mothers

As mothers, it is our heart's desire to be loving and joyful, full of peace and patience in relating to our families. Unfortunately, there is often a Grand Canyon: between our hopes and reality.

The Freedom For Mothers Workbook Helps You:

- Find the source to fill your "love bucket"
- Recognize common mothering traps
- Deal decisively with self-defeating habits in mothering
- Let Christ's love and patience flow through you to your family
- Experience God's peace in your mothering circumstances

In addition, you'll be equipped with mothering skills to help you set appropriate boundaries for your children. You'll understand how to take appropriate steps in guiding your children through the progressive stages of maturity, and even to "letting go" when the time comes.

Freedom for Mothers DVD Set: Taped sessions with Denise Glenn teaching the Bible Study content of the workbook, including material for the introductory session and mothering skills.

Freedom for Mothers Audio: The audio portion of Denise Glenn's video series is available in CDs.

Freedom for Mothers Leader's Guide: Complete instructions for leading *Freedom for Mothers* in a MotherWise group setting.

"Mothering is just about the hardest job around. Denise's materials put powerful tools into the hands of mothers to navigate the journey victoriously."

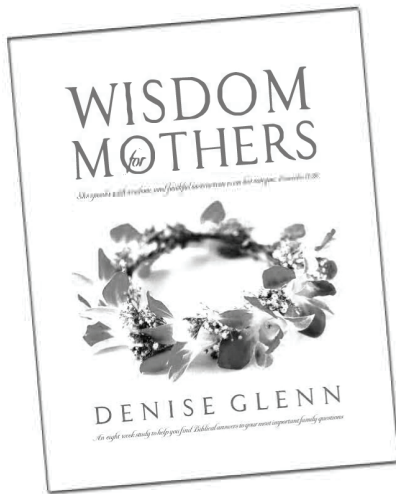
—Josh McDowell, speaker and author

Materials available: workbooks, DVD lessons, CDs, and leader's guides.

Order Today!

www.kardo.org

1-888-272-6972



“The series MotherWise is the best material I have ever seen on mothering. Wisdom for Mothers gives practical advice on the everyday work of mothering. It is thoroughly scriptural and covers all facets of what most mothers worry about. Mrs. Glenn is frank about the real problems mothers face, with insightful, biblical advice on how to meet the problems. I recommend these books to all mothers who have Christian concern for godly practice.”

—Dr. T. W. Hunt, professor, author of The Mind of Christ, the Doctrine of Prayer, Disciple’s Prayer Life



Wisdom for Mothers

Wisdom for Mothers can help you find Biblical answers for your important parenting questions.

You’ll learn to bring order to your life when you discover the truth about:

- Your Relationship With God—Learning To Trust And Obey
- Your Relationship With Your Husband—What About Submission?
- Your Relationship With Your Children—Settling Your Questions About Discipline
- Your Relationship With Work—Four Biblical Tests For A Woman’s Daily Work
- Your Relationship With The World—Having A Heart For Service

You’ll learn practical mothering skills:

- How To Have A Quiet Time When It’s Never Quiet At Your House
- Discipline Techniques That Work
- Food For The Whole Family
- Getting your Family Organized
- Romancing The Home
- How To Have Family Night Without Chaos

Wisdom for Mothers materials include: workbook, DVDs, CDs, and leader’s guides. For more information visit www.kardo.org.

“Are you a mom who needs encouragement, hope, energy? WISE up! Let Denise show you the way through her teaching and heartwarming stories.”

—Dr. Kevin Leman, author of The Birth Order Book

“These materials give excellent encouragement to mothers who are in the middle of raising a family. Thanks, Denise, for pointing moms back to Christ to find the strength and wisdom they need to meet life head on.”

—Dennis Rainey, Family Life Today, Campus Crusade for Christ

“Denise Glenn has a gift for helping to bring God’s Word of truth alive for today’s women. Her warm and engaging style welcomes you into the very essence of God’s encompassing love and provision. Join her for this journey into healing, hope, encouragement and the call of God’s heart of love for you.”

- L. B.

"Denise invites you to encounter God on mountaintops—and enjoy His glory. Denise has been my prayer partner for years. She loves to pray, and she has a huge heart for worship. She created 'Fan the Flame' to help you scale the heights of worship!" —Sarah Young, author of "Jesus Calling"

Fan the Flame

**Discover Worship on the Mountains of the Bible
That Will Fire Up Your Passion for God.**

Speaker and author, Denise Glenn, will take you on a journey to learn more about worship on six different mountaintops in Scripture. When fire and mountains come together, God teaches His people something new about worship—something they didn't know before. If you are hungry for revival, hungry to hear God's voice and ready to see God at work, *Fan the Flame* is for you. Leader's Guides, DVD sets, and CD sets available to accompany this bible study pupil's workbook.

...fan into flame the gift of God which is in you... 2 Timothy 1:6



Denise Glenn is a mom, grandmother, author, popular speaker, and co-founder of Kardo Ministries. She speaks to women on topics from her books, **Keeping the Secrets of Jesus**, **Restore My Heart**, **Wisdom for Mothers**, and **Freedom for Mothers**. Denise began *MotherWise*, a discipleship ministry for wives and mothers, in 1981 when she had three preschoolers. From a small group of five women, the ministry of *MotherWise* has grown to reach women around the world with discipleship materials in their own heart languages. Today, with her materials translated into 11 languages, Denise's global teaching ministry reaches beyond mothers to include women of all ages and stages. She has been featured on many American radio broadcasts including, "Revive Our Hearts" with Nancy Leigh DeMoss, "Family Life Today" with Dennis Rainey, and Josh McDowell's nationwide program. She is sought out as a speaker for women's events both nationally and internationally.

Denise and her husband, David, are co-founders of Kardo Ministries, a non-profit international organization providing bible study and mentoring materials and conferences. Kardo materials authored by the Glenn's cover the deeper aspects of Christian family life and discipleship such as covenant marriage, rearing godly children, worship, prayer, fasting, giving, and our identity in Christ. David and Denise have taught these materials in conferences in the United States, as well as in Australia, New Zealand, Botswana, Kenya, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Korea, the Philippines, China, Vietnam, Germany, Austria, Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. They enlist powerful prayer warriors to pray before, during, and following each event.



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