

Remember, as we started Ecclesiastes 5; Solomon now beheld those that entered into the house of God to worship. Specifically, how they entered in; what were they thinking about, where were their hearts? Did they realize that they were coming into the presence of God?

Qoheleth commanded us of the imperative of preparing our hearts for worship BEFORE entering into the house of God, and to be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; (the sacrifice of fools is akin to speaking piously before God when your heart is not at all intent of worshipping God, but it is full of wickedness; THEREFORE:

“Be more ready to hear” when you’re in God’s presence; & “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God”.

It is one of the characteristics of the fool to enter into the presence of God carelessly and thoughtlessly; not considering the Highness, Majesty, and Holiness of God. Don’t ever forget, when we do gather for worship, we are on holy ground, and that is because God’s presence is among us.

And Solomon addresses us in something that we probably do more than we realize it:

We “say things” in the presence of God with our lips; things which we promise God that we will do in service or devotion, (I am going to do this or that for you God); I am going to be devoted to your Word; Lord, I am going to pray effectually and fervently every morning.

How often have we made solemn promises to God, vows to do something (in a passionate moment), but then afterward didn’t keep that promise? We will come back to this thought!

Ecclesiastes 5:4: “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay”

A VOW (in context here) is a solemn promise or an oath made to God or in the presence of God; HERE, in the context of worship. Hence, *“when thou vowest a vow unto God”*

Once again, the fool comes to the forefront; Qoheleth identifies fools as those who makes vows to God; but then, they do not keep their vows or solemn promises to God.

With that in mind, we MUST learn to be very careful of making vows or promises in the presence of God before we have first wisely considered and carefully thought about what we are about to commit ourselves to in His Holy Presence:

“Be NOT RASH with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God”

And then, Qoheleth wrote: When you DO vow a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; because God hath no pleasure in fools. I don’t know about you, but I don’t want to be involved in anything that God has NOT PLEASED with!

Numbers 30:1-2, Deuteronomy 23:21-23

The Lord Jesus dealt with swearing before God in the Sermon on the Mount; this is very similar to making a vow before God: Matthew 5:33-37

Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, “thou shalt not forswear thyself, (which means don’t swear falsely or don’t lie when you swear or promise to do something), but thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.

Leviticus 19:12: “And ye shall not swear by my Name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the Name of thy God: I am the LORD”

It had become common place among the people to swear to God in common conversations; to speak rashly, but also to swear falsely! It’s common place to hear people saying, I swear to God! Do you realize what you’re saying when you say that? You’re calling God in as a witness that what you’re saying is absolutely true!

Now think about those that make a vow or solemn promised unto God, when they aren’t serious about keeping that vow! BUT that doesn’t matter, God is going to hold you to it whether you meant it or not!

Jesus, in Matthew 5 said, STOP all of your swearing before God in your common conversations! And here in Ecclesiastes 5; Christian, be careful of being rash with your mouth in vowing vows unto God if you’re not going to keep them!

Back to our text: The Preacher is admonishing us about making vows and promises in the context

of worship and in the presence of God! If you do that, God is going to hold you to it, to pay what you have vowed to Him!

Proverbs 20:25: "It is a snare to the man who devoureth (to devour here means to speak rashly or blurt something out inconsiderately concerning) that which is holy, (or in the presence of God), and (then) after vows (or after he has rashly made a vow) to make enquiry, (or reconsider what he has vowed)". Proverbs 18:7

The most famous NT example of lying to God when a promise was made unto God is Ananias and Sapphira: *Acts 5:1-4: Cp. Ecclesiastes 5:4*

Back to what I said when we opened the text: How many times do we promise God something but we then don't deliver or offer unto God what we vowed unto Him?

Think about it; we get caught up in the moment and make promises to God; that we are going to do more for God from now on, but then after a few days, we fail to keep our Words which we expressed before God.

Don't commit to resolutions and don't make passionate promises and vows in the presence of God; LET YOUR WORDS BE FEW; be not rash with thy mouth; refrain from speaking unadvisedly with your lips before God!

What TO DO? Continue steadfastly in your Christian life; always reaching forth; steady as she goes; keep the strait gate that leads to life in your sights. Walk by faith in Christ in THIS MOMENT; one minute, one hour, and one day at a time.

There will be vows that every one of us will enter into in our lives; vows which we are to perform and keep; let them be entered into cautiously and carefully; if you have vowed a vow before God; defer not to pay it.

"Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: (I didn't mean to commit to that); wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands? For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God"

Bottom line: "FEAR THOU GOD". This has everything to do with your view of God and your esteem and reverence and respect for Him. But if you have a very low view of God, you will take His Name in vain like a fool, never considering that you are doing so.

Let your yea be yea, and your nay be nay! Don't swear or vow at all unless you first long consider what you are about to do; and whose Name you're doing it before!