Chapter 7:
Please read Ecclesiastes chapter 7. As you do, try to answer the following questions to help you understand the passages of scripture and apply the spiritual truths to your life. Please read all the scripture passages cited.

(1) Read Ecclesiastes 7:1-4 and answer the following questions. For further study in answering these questions read Psalms 39:3-5; 90:10-14; Matthew 5:3-4; and James 4:8-10; 2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Peter 1:22-25.

(a.) Think about the things that Solomon is saying here and do they make sense? Why or why not?

(b.) Do you think the average person would agree with these things? Why or why not?
(c.) What application to your personal life, if any, do you find in vv. 1-4?

(2) Read Ecclesiastes 7:5-10.
(a.) What moral characteristics are referred to in this passage and how does Solomon perceive them?

(b.) What are some other moral characteristics not explicitly mentioned by Solomon that can influence our thoughts and actions in relationship to God and people?

(c.) Do you think that God’s definition of morality is always better than man’s? Why or why not? See for example Ephesians 4:25-29; 1 Peter 2:1-5; James 1:18-21; 5:7-12. See also 1 Tim. 6:6-12.
(d) Have you ever found yourself asking the same question as in v.10? Why and did it make anything better?

(3) Read Ecclesiastes 7:11-14.

(a.) How can wisdom "preserve" (i.e., "give life")?

(b.) What kind of wisdom ‘preserves life’? See Proverbs 1:7; 2:5-6; 3:5-6; Colossians 1:9-10; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 and John 11:25; 14:6. (Note the power Solomon ascribes to God and compare it with Isaiah 22:22 and Revelation 3:7).

(c.) How can a person be content in any circumstance or condition (v.14)? See for example Philippians 4:10-14 and 1 Timothy 6:6-12.
(d.) Would you agree with the following quote (Why or why not): "Good times don't last—but bad times don't last either!"

(4) Read Ecclesiastes 7:15-22.

(a) How is the attitude expressed in vv. 16-17 dependent on the situation described in v.15? Is the following statement a valid one: "Verses 16 and 17 give wise advice to a fool". Would you agree with this statement? Why or why not? Compare with the alternate viewpoint given in Ecclesiastes 8:6-13!

(b) In verse 18 Solomon gives us the "superior" viewpoint. What is the focus of the person who in the end triumphs over all? Would you call this "a word to the wise"? See also Ecclesiastes 3:16-17; Romans 1:16-20; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 1 Peter 1:18-25 and 2 Peter 2:9. Note especially Ecclesiastes 12:13-14!
(c) What spiritual truths are referred to in verses 19-22? See Psalms 14:1-5; Isaiah 64:6-7 and Romans 3:9-12, 23-26. What are your conclusions?

(5) Read Ecclesiastes 7:23-29.

(a) What was Solomon’s motivation in v.23? What did he conclude in v.24 and why? Did he give up? (see v.25). Was Solomon successful? (see v.28a). Why do you think the "wisdom" Solomon was pursuing was so elusive? See for example Ecclesiastes 12:8-12; 1 Corinthians 2:1-6, 13-16 and James 3:13-18.

(b) What do you think v.26 is describing and how does one escape the situation? (See for example Hebrews 11:6). In light of 1 Kings 11:1-4; do you think Solomon is speaking from personal experience here? Note that Solomon’s thoughts are leading to v.28.
(c) Do you agree with Solomon’s statement in v.28b? Is this a "sexist" remark? Would you consider this a ‘universal’ truth or a ‘qualified’ one [i.e., ‘things done under the sun’]? Does your viewpoint change after reading 1 Kings 11:1-4 in this context?