

ECCLESIASTES

DATE	BOOK	KEY THOUGHT	CONTENT	KEY LESSONS	JESUS IN THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE
	Old Testament				
	Poetry				
940 - 931 BC	Ecclesiastes 12 Chapters	Life without God is empty	This is the result of Solomon's quest for meaning in life during a period of his life when he was away from God. His conclusion is that life is empty apart from God.	Life, to have meaning, must be lived in the Fear of God.	Jesus is our meaning in life.

ECCLESIASTES

The book of Ecclesiastes never mentioned the writer. Nevertheless, Solomon was the author of Ecclesiastes. We can conclude this with the following verses.

He was a son of David and a king.

Ec. 1: 1

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

He ruled all of Israel in Jerusalem.

Ec. 1: 12

12 I, the Preacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.

He was a wise man of great renown.

Ec. 12: 9-10

9 In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly.

ECCLESIASTES

Solomon, inspired by God, declared the results of all human wisdom, of earthly advantages and aspirations, of indulgence in everything that wealth and wisdom could procure which might show fair promise of producing utmost happiness on earth.

There is an emptiness in Ecclesiastes that comes from not having a relationship with God.

ECCLESIASTES

The first seven chapters of the book of Ecclesiastes describe all of the worldly things “under the sun”.

The Preacher tries to find fulfillment in the following:

A. He tries scientific discovery.

Ecc. 1: 10-11

10 Is there anything of which one might say, “See this, it is new”? Already it has existed for ages Which were before us.

11 There is no remembrance of earlier things; And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no remembrance Among those who will come later *still*.

ECCLESIASTES

The Preacher tries to find fulfillment in the following:

B. He tries wisdom and philosophy.

Ecc. 1: 13-18

13 And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. *It* is a grievous task *which* God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with.

14 I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.

15 What is crooked cannot be straightened and what is lacking cannot be counted.

16 I said to myself, "Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge."

17 And I set my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind.

18 Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge *results in* increasing pain.

ECCLESIASTES

The Preacher tries to find fulfillment in the following:

C. He tries pleasure.

Ecc. 2: 1

1 I said to myself, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself.” And behold, it too was futility.

D. He tries alcohol.

Ecc. 2: 3

3 I explored with my mind *how* to stimulate my body with wine while my mind was guiding *me* wisely, and how to take hold of folly, until I could see what good there is for the sons of men to do under heaven the few years of their lives.

E. He tries architecture.

Ecc. 2: 4

4 I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself;

ECCLESIASTES

The Preacher tries to find fulfillment in the following:

F. He tries to acquire property.

Ecc. 2: 7

7 I bought male and female slaves and I had homeborn slaves. Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem.

G. He tries luxury.

Ecc. 2: 8

8 Also, I collected for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men—many concubines.

ECCLESIASTES

Ecc. 2: 19-20

19 And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the fruit of my labor for which I have labored by acting wisely under the sun. This too is vanity.

20 Therefore I completely despaired of all the fruit of my labor for which I had labored under the sun.

He found that everything was meaningless, a temporary diversion that, without God, had no purpose or longevity.

ECCLESIASTES

The Preacher turned his mind towards different philosophies to find meaning, such as materialism, and even moral codes (including chapters 8-9).

Chapters 8-12 of Ecclesiastes describe the Preacher's suggestions and comments on how a life should be lived.

He comes to the conclusion that without God, there is no truth or meaning to life. He saw many evils and realized that even the best of man's achievements are worth nothing in the long run.

ECCLESIASTES

He advises the reader to acknowledge God from youth and to follow His will.

Ecc. 12: 1

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”;

Ecc. 12: 13-14

13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.

14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes gives Christians a chance to see the world through the eyes of a person who, though very wise, is trying to find meaning in temporary, human things. Most every form of worldly pleasure is explored by the Preacher, and none of it gives him a sense of meaning.

In the end, the **Preacher comes to accept that faith in God is the only way to find personal meaning.**

He decides to accept the fact that life is brief and ultimately worthless without God.

The Preacher advises the Christian to focus on an eternal God instead of on temporary pleasure.

ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes offers the Christian an opportunity to understand the emptiness and despair that those who do not know God grapple with.

Those who do not have a saving faith in Christ are faced with a life that will ultimately end and become irrelevant. If there is no salvation, and no God, then not only is there no point to life, but no purpose or direction to it.

In Christ, life is but a shadow of the glories to come in a heaven that is only accessible through Him.

ECCLESIASTES

For all of the vanities described in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the answer is Christ.

1. God judges the righteous and the wicked.

Ecc. 3: 17

17 I said to myself, “God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man,” for a time for every matter and for every deed is there.

2. In Christ all sinners are reconciled to God.

2 Cor. 5: 17-19

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

18 Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

ECCLESIASTES

For all of the vanities described in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the answer is Christ.

3. God has placed the desire for eternity in our hearts.

Ecc. 3: 11

11 He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

4. God has provided the Way to eternal life through Christ.

John 3: 16

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

ECCLESIASTES

For all of the vanities described in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the answer is Christ.

5. We are reminded that striving after the world's wealth is vanity and it does not satisfy.

Ecc. 5: 10

10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its* income. This too is vanity.

6. Without Christ we will lose our souls.

Mk. 8: 36

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

ECCLESIASTES

The Preacher lived in a world where God worked behind the scenes and judged everyone.

Ecc. 12: 13-14

13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to every person*.

14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

ECCLESIASTES

Christians don't live in the same world as the Preacher's.

Christians have something he didn't experience:

The continuous indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

ECCLESIASTES

God is at work in us every single day. The world may be a messed up place, but if Christ is in us, we always have hope.

Col. 1: 25-27

25 *Of this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God,

26 *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,

27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

ECCLESIASTES

We all desire meaning in life. Often that search takes us along winding, up-and-down paths filled with bursts of satisfaction that shine bright for a time but eventually fade.

When we attempt to find meaning in the pursuit of pleasure, the commitment to a job, or through exploring intellectual depths, we all eventually find in each of these pursuits a dead end.

ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes shows us a man who lived through this process and came out on the other side with a wiser, more seasoned perspective.

When we're surrounded by the temptation to proclaim life's ultimate emptiness, we can find in Ecclesiastes a vision tempered by experience and ultimately seen through divinely colored lenses.

Life is destined to remain unsatisfying apart from our recognition of God's intervention.

It only remains for each individual to decide if he will place his trust in God's sure and able hands.

ECCLESIASTES

We are reminded that striving after the world's wealth is vanity because it does not satisfy.

Ecc. 5.10

10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its* income. This too is vanity.

Even if we could attain worldly wealth, without Christ we would lose our souls and what profit is there in that.

Every disappointment and vanity described in Ecclesiastes has its remedy in Christ, the wisdom of God and the only true meaning to be found in life.

ECCLESIASTES

Every material thing “under the sun” considers things from an earthly viewpoint.

Jesus provides a superior purpose that will provide satisfaction to the heart of man.

It is through God’s grace and mercy that man can have eternal life through Jesus Christ.