

Bible Reading Notes
Ecclesiastes

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Ecclesiastes 1

1:1 – The Preacher – Because of the description that follows, we assume that Solomon is the author.

1:2 – Vanity – This is a key term for the book describing the futility of life in a fallen world. The term is used more in Ecclesiastes than any other book of the Bible.

1:3-11 is a summary of and example of the vanities that Solomon has in mind about life.

1:3 – under the sun - Another phrase used throughout the book. It refers to the fallen creation. “Under heaven” and “on earth” is used synonymously.

1:12-18 – Solomon’s first expanded example of vanity is the futility of seeking after wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 2-3

2:1-11 – Solomon describes his pursuit of pleasure in seeking to find purpose in life.

2:12-17 – It appears to be vanity to live wisely for both the fool and wise will face the same end (vv. 15-16).

2:18-26 – Solomon discovered that it is vain to work hard all your life to build up an estate because at death it will be left to others who did not work for it.

3:9-15 – In the midst of an ever-changing life (3:2-8), the one thing that is unchanging is the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 4-6

4:6 - striving after wind – imagery of the frustration of life in a fallen world.

4:9-12 – The value of companionship. This has application to all the situations of life.

5:1-7 – We must be careful of the words we speak when we are in the presence of the Lord (which is always), but particularly when taking vows.

5:18-19 – There can be joy and goodness even in a fallen world (under the sun) and these are gifts from God.

Ecclesiastes 7-8

7:2 – house of mourning – This is one of the values of a funeral.

7:10 – Warning for those who long for the “good ol’ days.”

7:16 – be not overly righteous – Not in the moral sense but in terms of always needing to be right.

7:17 – Would be the opposite of v. 16. A willingness to be “wronged” by others, even when you are right.

8:1-8 – In a fallen world it takes a person of great wisdom to know how to respond to a king who exercises absolute power over his realm.

Ecclesiastes 9-10

9:1-6 - Death is the reality for all human beings – both the righteous and the wicked.

10:16-20 – These are interesting insights from a king in his old age.

Ecclesiastes 11-12

11:1 – **cast your bread on the water** – Traditional interpretation is that it is a reference to helping the poor and then experiencing the kindness of others at a later time. It might also refer to trading by ship.

12:1-8 – Poignant picture of an older person suffering from the effects of age.

Darkened – eye sight is dimming

Grinders – teeth

Grasshopper – unable to move as you once did.

12:13-14 – This is the conclusion of the matter after the Preacher has searched out everything else.