



## Review

### Eccl. 1-12

September 13, 2020

### Chapter 1

- ✓ “Qoheleth” a preacher, a teacher – one who would gather people together.
- ✓ Ecclesiastes is classified as both Poetic and Wisdom literature.
- ✓ Written 931 BC – 935 BC
- ✓ Author: Solomon
- ✓ Reasons:
  1. Son of David, King in Jerusalem
  2. Wealth
  3. Accomplishments.
  4. Wisdom.

✓ Purpose: The purpose of the book of Ecclesiastes is to show that life “under the sun”, without God, is pointless and meaningless.

✓ 5 terms that Solomon uses repeatedly: Vanity, “under the sun”, wise, wisdom, fool.

✓ Work “under the sun” becomes meaningless. 4 examples:

1. The cycle of life and death.
2. The cycle of sunrise and sunset.
3. The cycle of the wind.
4. The cycle of evaporation and precipitation.

✓ “Nothing new under the sun.”

✓ This is not a pessimistic book but a realistic book. To learn the true meaning of life you must first view life apart from God in all its futility.

✓ We must learn to value emptiness for its positive potential.

✓ The world is one big marching band of futility, declaring to mankind what it cannot deliver - a better, brighter tomorrow – so here come the trumpets of progress, the trombones of hope, the clarinets of promise, the flutes of invention, the drums of purpose, the saxophones of meaning, but in the very last row bringing up the rear, it is the tubas of vanity that declare the reality that none of what is being played matters . . . and no one is listening to them.

### Chapter 2

✓ Solomon set out to see if anything lasting can be found in:

- Riotous laughter.
- Controlled drinking.
- Elaborate estates.
- Innumerable servants.
- #1 business.
- Limitless wealth.
- Greatest music.
- Unlimited sex.

Solomon had it all and tried it all and withheld none of it from himself.

It’s all vanity.

✓ It is better to live this life making wise decisions than foolish ones.

✓ But both the fool and the wise man have the same destination. Both kinds of men die. They both are buried.

✓ Future generations will no more remember the scholar, than they will the beggar on the street.

✓ Solomon hated life and the way life works. “So I hated life”. All is vanity included work.

✓ To work hard all your life, die, and leave it to someone who may squander it all away. Who knows . . . will they be wise or foolish?

✓ The thought of this dropped Solomon under the “line of despair.”

✓ Solomon, in 2:24, introduces God to life “under the sun.”

✓ With God everything becomes meaningful, even the mundane (eating and drinking)..

✓ God gives the gift to enjoy labor in this life.

✓ For the believer there is no meaningless work; there is no unimportant labor. All is seen, all is noted, all is rewarded, all is blessed in and by God; but outside of God, there is no blessing, there is no meaning, there is no satisfaction, there is no reward. There is only emptiness and futility. The unbeliever’s work is done to serve the believer.

## **Chapter 3**

- ✓ The things in life are not random, do not happen by chance, fate, or blind determination.
- ✓ There is an appointed time for everything because there is a sovereign God who is not only in control but He is rolling out His plan moment by moment.
- ✓ God, the “artist”, painted on a canvas in eternity past every detail of what would take place. God has “gone public” with His painting and now it is time for us to admire, praise, honor, and rejoice in the work that He has done.
- ✓ All of man’s labor, without God, is unprofitable, and insufficient to make him fulfilled and satisfied.
- ✓ It takes a God Who is in control of all things to insure there is a higher purpose in work and life than just “making a living.”
- ✓ God makes everything appropriate in its time, including your loss, your hospital experience, your failures, your brokenness, your battles, your fragmented dreams, your heartache, your illness. Without Him, life is purposeless and profitless, miserable and meaningless. With Him, it will ultimately all make perfect sense.

## **Chapter 4**

- ✓ Oppression can come from bullies on the playground to rich bankers, to gov’t officials, to politicians, to judges, to police officers. Men, women, and children are oppressed generally throughout their lives in business, in marriage, in various relationships, by anyone with power.
- ✓ People in despair are better off dead, because death removes them from the clutches of the oppressors.
- ✓ Better still than those who are dead, are those who have never been born and witnessed the oppression of the world.
- ✓ Competition, greed, envy, and corruption in the work force is universal in the world and puts man in a “rat race” he never wins.
- ✓ On the opposite end is the one who drops-out of the rat race and just waste away.
- ✓ It’s better to have a few things and be satisfied, than to have many things and lose your health and peace of mind. Bring your labor and leisure into balance.

## **A Balanced Life is a Wise Life! Blessed are the Balanced!**

## **Chapter 5**

- ✓ Preparation for worship is important.
  - ✓ Before you go into God’s House, you must think. You must prepare your thoughts and your words. You must be careful.
  - ✓ You will be approaching God.
  - ✓ We come to God’s House to listen to God’s Word.
  - ✓ If you walk out of a church service not hearing from God through His Word, then you have not worshiped. You have attended church but you have not worshiped.
  - ✓ Be careful how you speak in God’s House – remember who God is and who you are - we should respect the Creator-creature distinction. Don’t be impulsive or hasty with your words. Your words should be few and measured. If you make a vow, keep it. To do otherwise is foolish and meaningless.
  - ✓ We are hearing too little and we are talking too much.
  - ✓ Daydreams and babbling words share the same thing in common – they are empty and they are meaningless.
  - ✓ “Fear God” says it all.
- ✓ Every man knows there has to be more than just this life. Man has a desire to know about what happens following death. “Eternity in their hearts.”
  - ✓ It is a blessing to **not** know everything about God’s plan. It would overwhelm us.
  - ✓ God has given 2 gifts for a believer to enjoy – a good meal and his work.
  - ✓ If we are connected to God, then our lives will have eternal significance.
  - ✓ A relationship with God brings meaning and purpose because those are both connected to eternity.
  - ✓ You don’t have a chance to live a meaningful life, unless you are connected to the God of eternity because you are searching for something eternal among that which is temporary.
  - ✓ Justice will be carried out in eternity. Sometimes God judges people in this life; sometimes He does not. When He does not, we call that delayed judgment. In the end, Jesus Christ will judge all people.
  - ✓ When the courts are not just, they are acting like animals – they don’t care, no conscience, no remorse, no thought of judgment, they prey on the weak, and man and animals both die.
- ✓ A Workaholic, or Lazyholic, or an Independent Man who has no time for relationships, all live meaningless lives.
  - ✓ It is better to go through life with a friend. Two are better than one – efficiency, capacity, profits, benefits, relationships.
  - ✓ A helper, a comforter, and a defender all are needed in life’s many settings. The cord you form together with them will be a cord that is difficult to break.
  - ✓ Life at the top is not only lonely but it is also fleeting.
- ✓ **Money has a dark side:**
    1. The more we have, the more we oppress.
    2. The more we have, the more we want .
    3. The more we have, the more we spend.
    4. The more we have, the more we worry.
    5. The more we have, the more we hoard.
    6. The more we have, the more we leave behind.
    7. The more we have, the greater the darkness.
  - ✓ Money will never satisfy but God will. God is the one who gives man: 1. the ability to enjoy life. 2. The number of years for him to enjoy life. 3. His place in life.
  - ✓ Each day therefore is a gift of God.

## **Chapter 6**

- ✓ You may have been given:
  1. Wealth (1,2)
  2. 100 Children (3-5)
  3. Long life (2,000 years)(6)
  4. Appetite (you work but are never satisfied) (7)
  5. Wisdom (8)
  6. Desires (9)
  7. Knowledge (10-12)
- ✓ You may have it all but not enjoy it. Someone else does (foreigner).
- ✓ Better to be content and enjoy what you have than to waste your life desiring what you do not have.
- ✓ If you can't enjoy life/ riches and no one grieves when you die (unnoticed, unlamented, and unfulfilled), what does that say about your life? You would be better off never to have been born (miscarriage).
- ✓ In the course of a life, which is better: Wealth or poverty? Health or sickness? Fame or obscurity? You don't know but God does.
- ✓ All the words in the world are not going to change God's predetermined plan for you. You argue with God all day long about why He made your life like this and why this was in your life and why this was not in your life. Rather just accept it and give thanks.

- ✓ Bribes are given to hurt those who tell the truth & help those who oppose it.
- ✓ Proud people are impatient because they think they're too important to wait.
- ✓ God is interested in character development so He will test our patience to develop perseverance.
- ✓ God does not waste sorrow or adversity. He knows the purpose for which we go through tragedy and sorrow.
- ✓ God has appointed both the good (the straight) and the bad (the bent or crooked) circumstances.
- ✓ God has made the day of prosperity and the day of adversity.
- ✓ God has designed life to be full of the unexpected so that we might realize that we do not control our future.
- ✓ When times are good, be happy. But when times are bad, be patient.
- ✓ God balances our lives by giving us enough blessings to keep us happy and enough burdens to keep us humble.
- ✓ Some righteous men die young, some evil men die old.
- ✓ You can't figure out what is coming next in your life and that forces you have to learn how to live in faithful dependence upon God.
- ✓ Don't think your self-made righteousness or your self-made wisdom, will allow you to manipulate God to get what you want – a long life.” To try to manipulate God by being excessively righteous and overly wise is a waste of time.

## **Chapter 8**

To deal with government requires wisdom.

There will be times when obeying the government will not be very convenient.

Citizenship is serious. If you share in the blessings of government, you are also responsible to obey the authority and laws of that government.

10 principles to follow:

## **Chapter 7**

- ✓ Some things in life are better than other things ;  
Your reputation (better than a good oil).  
The day of your death better than day of birth.  
The house of mourning than house of feasting.  
Sorrow rather than laughter.  
Rebuke by a wise man than the song of fools.  
The end of a matter.
  - ✓ The day of death is better if one has developed a good reputation for oneself.
  - ✓ Don't look back and envy the past.
  - ✓ Wisdom is a skill that will protect you.
  - ✓ The wise see a need to be thoughtful, to reflect on life. How much time do I have? Do I have the assurance of my salvation? Am I making my life count for God? Am I dealing with the sin in my life? How am I handling temptation? What does death teach me? What if it were me? What about my friends, relatives, children, parents who will all die one day? Do they know Christ? Where do I need to make changes?
  - ✓ Biblical wisdom involves right teaching (knowledge from Scripture) that produces right thinking, resulting in right choices that make for right living.
  - ✓ Wisdom is the skill to live well. And to live well is to accept adversity and prosperity as coming from the hand of God.
  - ✓ There is not a righteous man on earth. No person is completely good. All people are sinners. All people are lost and condemned. The only hope for humans lies not in human understanding or human efforts, but in God.
  - ✓ Don't be a hypocrite by holding a standard for someone else that you do not follow.
  - ✓ The power of an evil woman is like:
    - a trap to catch animals.
    - a snare net to catch fish.
    - chains to bind prisoners.
  - ✓ Your only hope of escape is to please and obey God and His Word.
  - ✓ God created man sinless with natural righteousness but man deliberately chose to go his own independent way. He now must have righteous imputed to him.
- Wisdom and Government:**
- I. Wisdom will direct you change your appearance when approaching government.
  - II. Wisdom looks beyond those in government to One who is higher in control.
  - III. Wisdom is careful not to be hasty in judgment nor quick to join in a revolt against the government.
  - IV. Wisdom submits to the authority of government rather than always questioning government's authority and power and the decisions it is making.
  - V. Wisdom chooses to obey the government and knows the proper channels and ways to be an influence for righteousness.
  - VI. Wisdom exercises patience in properly going through the right channels of government, even though their subject is of great concern.
  - VII. Wisdom stays away from foolish speculation and prediction for the future of a government.
  - VIII. Wisdom recognizes that man has little control over what happens in the world.
  - IX. Wisdom warns us that not correctly submitting to the government's authority can have grave consequences.
  - X. Wisdom instructs the believer to know his identity, his authority, his humility, and his ministry.

## **False appearances:**

- ✓ Funerals can be a lot of phony baloney.
- ✓ Delayed justice can be a license to do evil.
- ✓ Living a long life of sin can be deceptive.
- ✓ Notoriety for the sinner is short lived.
- ✓ The reality exists that many good people suffer and many evil people thrive.
- ✓ Wisdom “under the sun” doesn’t solve all of the mysteries of life.
- ✓ Staying up day and night searching for answers will not solve the mysteries of life.
- ✓ Conclusion: There are things man will never understand about the sovereign plan of God.

✓ When life is unpredictable and events are unexpected, find something to do and do it with 100% effort.

### **✓ 5 examples of the unexpected:**

1. The fastest runner does not always win the race.
  2. The mighty warrior does not always win the battle.
  3. The wise don’t always get the bread.
  4. The intelligent don’t always have the most money.
  5. The skillful worker does not always get the promotion.
- ✓ Sometimes time and chance affect the outcome more than skill or ability. Ability does not necessarily guarantee success.
  - ✓ From a spiritual viewpoint God does the unexpected by appointing the times and the occurrences.
  - ✓ People are limited by the times in which they live and the circumstances into which they are born.
  - ✓ Wisdom is better than strength but rarely honored or respected.
  - ✓ Wisdom does not need an increase in decibels in order to provide wise solutions.
  - ✓ Wisdom is preferred but it can be subject to destruction by only 1 sinner. A wise man can accomplish many things, yet the truth is that one sinner can ruin everybody’s day.

✓ Choose your words wisely.

- ✓ If you have a bad beginning, it will only get worse.
- ✓ Be brief, to the point, and avoid empty statements. To speak, and to speak well, are two different things.
- ✓ Your endless amount of words will lead to confusion.
- ✓ A wise person doesn’t say something in private that he wouldn’t want someone to hear in public.
- ✓ Use wisdom when you select your leaders.
- ✓ Look for a well disciplined administration.

## **Chapter 9**

✓ It does not matter if you are righteous or wise. You simply don’t know what is around the corner.

✓ **Everyone has the same ending “under the sun” - death:**

1. Righteous and wicked.
2. Good and the sinner.
3. Clean and unclean.
4. One who sacrifices and one that doesn’t.
5. One who takes an oath and one that doesn’t.

✓ Sin, evil, and wickedness are all insanity. When you sin, you are having a moment of insanity. Sin makes no sense. Its crazy, insane.

✓ We share, with unbelievers, a common destiny, but, we DO NOT share a common eternity.

✓ Death is not an accident, but an appointment. One that no one will miss or be late for.

✓ As long as you are alive there is always hope – a live dog is better than a dead lion.

✓ Being alive is better than being dead because those who are alive still have the opportunities and capacities to enjoy life but the dead do not.

✓ So, there is no time to waste. Death is coming.

## **Chapter 10**

✓ Something very small can ruin something very great. (Dead Flies)

✓ Sinfulness is the natural inclination (the left) of people unless God has changed their hearts and lives and turned them to the right.

✓ We can identify a fool by his “walk”, meaning the direction or the pursuits of his life.

✓ **Wisdom says: Watch your temper. Stay under control. Let it go.** Calm down. Take a deep breath. Don’t quit. Allow God to develop within you a gentle, quiet spirit. Never let another person’s actions determine your reaction.

✓ Fools often get promoted while the wise get forgotten.

✓ Fools are careless when doing jobs –digging a pit, tearing down a wall, breaking rocks, and splitting wood.

✓ We should work smarter not harder – sharpen your axe.

✓ Wisdom is good to have, but it gives no advantage unless it is used, and even then it must be exercised at the **right time – snake charmer.**

## **Chapter 11**

✓ Taking calculated risks is the path of wisdom.

✓ Don’t expect your ship to come in if you’ve never sent it out.

✓ We ought to make our plans, use our brains, study the situation, take all factors into consideration, seek wise counsel, do the best we can, and then leave the results to God.

✓ Diversify – many ships. Do all you can, invest all you can, and then a little more.

✓ If you magnify every difficulty (clouds and wind), you won’t ever work. If you sit around and wait for the ideal circumstances, trying to avoid adverse conditions, you won’t ever get anything done.

✓ Don’t be paralyzed by what you don’t know.

✓ Since the future is in God’s hands, the wise person continues his work diligently.

✓ Life is the gift of God and if you are not enjoying life then you are not living it the way God intended.

✓ The older we get the more thankful and content we should become.

✓ Youth need to understand that the actions of their youthful years are not going to pass away and be forgotten. The day was going to come when they were going to face judgment for how they used those years.

✓ Youth goes by fast. Don’t waste your life in sorrow and anger.

## Chapter 12

- ✓ Take advantage of your youth and the strength you have and accomplish much for your Creator, because in a shorter time than you think you will not have the strength to do it.
- ✓ The body, like a house that ages with time, will begin to fall apart. Therefore don't waste your youth. Death is approaching.
- ✓ A wise teacher imparts knowledge, meditates, researches, organizes, pays attention to the words he uses, and tells the truth.
- ✓ The words taught by wise teachers serve to motivate (goads) and provide stability (nails) for the believer.
- ✓ The Word is powerful because it has been given by One Shepherd.
- ✓ Don't wear yourself out. **Be careful of your sources. All does not come from the one Shepherd. Only one book – the Bible.**
- ✓ If you fear God, you will fear no one else.
- ✓ Everyone needs to fear and everyone needs to obey.
- ✓ You will be judged for your meaningless life that you lived “under the sun.”

## **12 Major Subjects**

- ❖ **Vanity** – apart from God everything “under the sun” is the ultimate of meaninglessness.
- ❖ **Wisdom** – apart from God wisdom may be useful in this life, but does little to provide anything beyond the grave.
- ❖ **Work** – apart from God work provides no satisfaction or fulfillment and benefits little beyond the grave.
- ❖ **Pleasure** – apart from God pleasure is only a temporary fix for a permanent problem, is not necessarily always the most beneficial, and contributes nothing beyond the grave.
- ❖ **Money** – apart from God money brings darkness to the life of man and gives him nothing beyond the grave.
- ❖ **Life** – apart from God life is only an endless cycle of nothingness and results in death for everyone.
- ❖ **Death** – apart from God death is the final destination for everyone resulting in final judgment.
- ❖ **Justice** – apart from God justice is easily corrupted.
- ❖ **Government** – under God government must be obeyed or you will suffer severe consequences.
- ❖ **Worship** – under God worship must be thoughtful, filled with content to be heard, and to the point.
- ❖ **Teaching God's Word** – under God teaching must be thorough and honoring to the Shepherd who gave it.
- ❖ **God** – must be remembered, feared, and obeyed.