

ECCLESIASTES

Although no name is mentioned, it is obviously written by Solomon

- he calls himself "The Preacher" and "Son of David" "King over Israel"
- also describes a man of great wealth and wisdom

Written around 935 B.C. in Solomon's later years

- this would make sense
- although a lot of people wish they were young again, there is a certain amount of wisdom that only comes from age and experience
- I would never want to go back to being young again but I have often wished that I could have my 40 year old mind in my 25 year old body

In English, the title "Ecclesiastes" means "Preacher".

- The purpose is to prove the vanity of everything "*under the sun*".
- Have you ever heard the saying "Learn from others; life is too short to make all the mistakes yourself"
- that's what this book is about
- Solomon has experienced just about everything this world has to offer
- He finally realizes that without a spiritual foundation, everything is meaningless
 - that's not to say that we can't enjoy material possessions, just that they will never bring lasting joy or peace

The book opens with this popular phrase from verse 2:

[Ecc 1:2](#) "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."

-I'm pretty sure this would not be a proper writing style to open with if you were trying to sell books today

-Some of the things he says he has done:

- stimulate his body in every way
- built house, planted vineyards and fruit trees
- built parks and gardens and ponds
- had servants, women, flocks and herds
- silver, gold,

[Ecc 2:10](#) All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

The beginning of chapter 3 is one of the most well known portions of scripture, even among non-believers

Ecc 3:1 There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven--

Ecc 3:2 A time to give birth and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted.

Ecc 3:3 A time to kill and a time to heal; A time to tear down and a time to build up.

Ecc 3:4 A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance.

Ecc 3:5 A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones; A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing.

Ecc 3:6 A time to search and a time to give up as lost; A time to keep and a time to throw away.

Ecc 3:7 A time to tear apart and a time to sew together; A time to be silent and a time to speak.

Ecc 3:8 A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace.

In the late 1950's Pete Seeger wrote a famous song called "To Everything There is a Season" (or "turn, turn, turn")

-most of the song is adapted almost word-for-word from this section of scripture

When asked about his religious or spiritual views, Seeger replied: "I feel most spiritual when I'm out in the woods. I feel part of [nature](#). Or looking up at the stars. [I used to say] I was an atheist. Now I say, it's all according to your definition of God. According to my definition of God, I'm not an atheist. Because I think God is everything. Whenever I open my eyes I'm looking at God. Whenever I'm listening to something I'm listening to God."

-even the people that try to ignore God still have this deep desire to know Him

-I don't believe there are any genuine atheists in the world

-the reason why is found just a few verses later

Ecc 3:11 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.

Ecclesiastes closes with a few more words of wisdom

Ecc 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with *all* your might..."

Ecc 9:9 Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.

-to summarize, he says "life is short. Enjoy the blessings God gives you while you can, but realize that they not the source of happiness."

- As negative as this book is, it is actually refreshing to me
- It is not easy for me to allow myself to take it easy and just have fun
- there always seems to be an underlying bit of guilt
 - so many people in the world have it so hard
 - is it really ok to eat a \$20 rib-eye or take the kids to the beach?
- according to the wisest man that ever lived, it is

Jesus Type: (only one)

Ecc 12:11 The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of *these* collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd.

-Of course, Jesus said:

Joh 10:14 "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me,