

## ECCLESIASTES – Koheleth [Preacher]

### I. Is Life Worth Living?

**A. The philosopher, playboy, and producer who had every advantage found life utterly meaningless.** “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, ***vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?***” (ECCLESIASTES 1:2-3) VANITY and UNDER THE SUN occur over 25 times each.

**B. Solomon asked WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MAN? and experimented to find the answer.** “And ***I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven:*** this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. ***I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.***” (ECCLESIASTES 1:13-14)

### II. Solomon Tried All the Obvious Answers

**CHAPTERS 1,2 The search for satisfaction and happiness does not lead to either.** Gathering, producing, and consuming are better than foolishness but their rewards are limited. “***There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour.*** This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God. For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I? For God giveth to a man that *is* good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but ***to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.***” (ECCLESIASTES 2:24-26)

**CHAPTER 3 Everything has its time but everything also has limits.** “***He hath made every thing beautiful in his time:*** also he hath set the world in their heart, so that ***no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.***” (ECCLESIASTES 3:11)

**CHAPTER 4 SOCIETAL ills spoil all human endeavors.** “***So I returned, and considered all the oppressions*** that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of *such as were* oppressed, and ***they had no comforter***; and on the side of their oppressors *there was* power; but they had no comforter.” (ECCLESIASTES 4:1)

**CHAPTER 5 Playing at religious duties compounds disaster.** “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and ***be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools:*** for they consider not that they do evil.” (ECCLESIASTES 5:1)

**CHAPTER 6 Even long life is unsatisfactory at the end when it is no longer possible to enjoy.** “A ***man to whom God hath given riches***, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, ***yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it:*** this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease.” (ECCLESIASTES 6:2)

**CHAPTER 7 Wisdom is valuable and productive but bad women will transform every virtue into a vice and every victory into a defeat.** “And ***I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets***, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but ***the sinner shall be taken by her.***” (ECCLESIASTES 7:26)

**CHAPTER 8 Life is decorated with duties and opportunities but only death is certain.** “***There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit;*** neither *hath he* power in the

day of death: and ***there is no discharge in that war***, neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.” (ECCLESIASTES 8:8)

**CHAPTER 9 Great opportunities and disasters come without regard to the particular people touched; the end is always the grave.** “***All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous***, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. ***This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.***” (ECCLESIASTES 9:2-3)

**CHAPTER 10 Within the context to this point, Solomon still contrasts wisdom and folly.** “***The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.***” (ECCLESIASTES 10:12)

**CHAPTER 11 Invest in virtue and the Lord will see to the return.** “Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” (ECCLESIASTES 11:1)

### **III. In the End, Solomon Returned to God**

**CHAPTER 12 Turn to the Lord early because life passes quickly.** “***Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not***, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;” (ECCLESIASTES 12:1)

“LET US HEAR THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER: ***Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.***” (ECCLESIASTES 12:13)

+ Dr. Edwin P. Elliott