

Introduction To Ecclesiastes

- A. Authored By Solomon (Ecclesiastes 1:1,12). *Note that while David did have several other sons, including Amnon, Absalom, Adonijah, Nathan...etc, none were kings except for Solomon.*
- B. Author Also Identifies Himself As “Preacher” (assembler, 1:1, 2; 7:27)
- C. Likely Written Later In Solomon’s Life, approximately 935 BC (*Song of Solomon likely written early in Solomon’s life... Proverbs likely written near the middle of Solomon’s life.*)
- D. Solomon Was Given Wisdom By Inspiration (1 Kings 3:5-12; 4:29-34; 10:23-24, *though Ecclesiastes suggests that Solomon vainly sought to acquire other (human) wisdom*)
- E. Primary Focus Of The Book — To demonstrate the *vanity* of mere earthly pursuits absent the fear of God (1:2, *the word vanity is used 33 times in Ecclesiastes*)
 - 1. Wisdom (1:12-18; 2:12-17)
 - 2. Pleasure / Enjoyment (2:1-11)
 - 3. Labor / Accomplishments (2:18-26)
 - 4. Selfish Ambition / Acquisition (4:7-8)
- F. Solomon’s focus upon *vanity* has led some to describe Solomon’s approach in the book as *skeptical* or *cynical* because of his constant focus upon death: *“the few days of his vain life which passes as a shadow”* (6:12)
 - 1. The fool dies, as do the wise & productive (2:16, 18*)
 - 2. A time to be born; a time to die (3:2)
 - 3. Animals die; humans die (3:19)
 - 4. State of the dead better than the living state of those severely oppressed (4:1-2)
 - 5. Enjoy life... because it is short! (5:18)
 - 6. The day of one’s death is better than the day of his birth (7:1)

7. The value of funerals for the living (7:2-4)
 8. No man has power to retain his spirit to prevent death (8:8)
 9. Whether one is righteous, wicked, good or evil, he dies. Whether one is clean or unclean, he dies. Whether one sacrifices or does not sacrifice, he dies. Whether one swears or shuns oaths, he dies (9:2-5)
 10. Life is uncertain; Death is unpredictable (9:12)
 11. Be grateful if you live long but know that you will still die (11:8)
 12. Serve God while in your youth for you will eventually grow old and die (12:1-7)
- G. Ecclesiastes Emphasizes The Importance Of Fearing God (3:14; 5:7; 8:12-13; 12:13)
- H. Ecclesiastes Addresses The Reality That The Wicked Sometimes Succeed & Prosper and The Righteous Sometimes Suffer And Lose (7:15; 8:14)
- I. Ecclesiastes Teaches The Importance Of Enjoying Life (2:24; 5:18; 9:9) PROVIDED That One Puts God First (11:9)