

# LIFE UNDER THE SUN



STUDIES IN ECCLESIASTES

2 September 2018

הַבַּיִת

*“Things which are not in their intended positions are restless.  
Once they are in their ordered position, they are at rest.”*

— Augustine of Hippo, “Confessions”

## Ecclesiastes Part 4 - “The Heart’s Quest for Meaning”

### Introduction: ‘The Heart’ & Human Behavior

“heart”— **לֵב** (*lev*)— The inner man, mind, or heart. Literally, bowels.

It is the seat of \_\_\_\_\_ life →

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It is the seat of \_\_\_\_\_ life →

It is the seat of \_\_\_\_\_ life →

#### Considerations:

1.

2.

The Biblical emphasis on the heart shows that we are both \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ creatures.

### Qohelet’s Search for Meaning—Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:11

#### The Summary of the Quest—1:12-15

**The Means:** Ecccl. 1:12-13a—<sup>12</sup> *I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.* <sup>13</sup> *And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven.*

**The Findings:** Ecccl. 1:3b-14—<sup>13b</sup> *It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.* <sup>14</sup> *I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.*

**Why?** Ecccl. 1:15—*What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.*

#### The Vanity of Wisdom & Knowledge—1:16-18

- Solomon had been granted extraordinary wisdom by God (1 Kings 3:12) and we should understand this wisdom primarily in terms of intellect or rational capability.

His examination of wisdom & knowledge involved two things:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**His conclusion:** Ecccl. 1:18—*For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.*

**Why?** 1. Wisdom is acquired through the \_\_\_\_\_ of life.

2. Increased knowledge brings about a greater understanding of the fallen \_\_\_\_\_ of the world.

## The Vanity of Pleasure—2:I-II

- Having declared the intellectual pursuits of life unsatisfying, Qohelet turns to consider pleasure.

### The Pursuit:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:2)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:3)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:4-6)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:7)
5. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:8)

**The Result:** *Eccl. 2:9-10—<sup>9</sup> So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. <sup>10</sup> And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil.*

- Observations:**
1. Solomon recognized his own \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. While he gave himself fully to indulge his \_\_\_\_\_, he continued to think deeply about the nature of the human experience.
  3. He admits that he \_\_\_\_\_ indulging his deepest desires.

**Upon Further Reflection:** *Eccl. 2:11—Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.*

- Observations:**
1. At some point, probably towards the end of his life, he \_\_\_\_\_ upon all that he had done.
  2. He recognized that all the experiences of his life ultimately failed to provide any lasting \_\_\_\_\_ or sense of gain.

## Desiring the Kingdom

1. Our \_\_\_\_\_ have a deep desire to find the things that Qohelet himself was seeking from his own kingdom.
2. Our inability to find the desires of our hearts met by the things of this world can create great \_\_\_\_\_ in us.
3. We need the wisdom of a better \_\_\_\_\_ and we need a vision of a better \_\_\_\_\_.

**Luke 12:22-34**—<sup>22</sup> And he said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. <sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! <sup>25</sup> And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? <sup>26</sup> If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? <sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! <sup>29</sup> And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. <sup>30</sup> For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup> Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

<sup>32</sup> “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

**Col. 3:2**—<sup>2</sup> Set your minds (KJV ‘affections’) on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.