

LIFE UNDER THE SUN



STUDIES IN ECCLESIASTES

10 February 2019

הַבַּיִת

“So you run and you run to catch up with the sun but it’s sinking
Racing around to come up behind you again.
The sun is the same in a relative way but you’re older,
Shorter of breath and one day closer to death.”

— *Time* by Pink Floyd

Ecclesiastes Part 18 - “Life Under the Sun”

Introduction: A Unique Book of Scripture

- The book of Ecclesiastes works on us to shatter our _____ about life.
- The book of Ecclesiastes works in us to create a sense of _____ for something better.

The Messenger of Ecclesiastes: _____

1. He was a man of great _____.

⇒ We should understand this special gift of wisdom primarily in terms of human _____ and aptitude.

1 Kings 3:12—behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.

⇒ This unique gift of wisdom was incomplete if not also paired with the wisdom of God’s _____.

1 Kings 3:14—And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

2. He was a man of great _____.

⇒ Specifically, he had vast _____ and wielded almost total _____ within Israel.

1 Kings 3:13— I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.

Key Point: Solomon’s words should carry weight with us because he speaks with the _____ that comes from both ability and experience.

The Message of Ecclesiastes: _____!

1. Life is _____ . “vanity” →

⇒ This term refers to both the nature of life and the effect that it has on the human _____.

Ecc. 1:2—Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

2. Life is _____ . “gain” →

⇒ The term is used to call us to consider just what it is that will _____ or remain from all our labor in life.

Ecc. 1:3—What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

3. Life is to be _____ . “enjoy” →

⇒ In the midst of the difficulties of life, God has given _____ blessings to mankind.

Ecc. 2:24—There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil.

4. Life is to be characterized by the _____ of God. “fear” →

⇒ God has made us for Himself and life cannot therefore be lived well apart from being properly _____ to Him.

Ecc. 12:13—The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

Key Point: The message of the book of Ecclesiastes resonates with our own experiences of life and serves to remind us that we have been made by God to find our _____ and _____ in Him and not in the things of life.

Ecclesiastes and the Story of Scripture

1. With the addition of NT revelation, the message of Ecclesiastes is _____!

Ecc. 12:7b-8a—...the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher...

Romans 8:18-25—¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

- ⇒ The ‘_____’ (frustrations and disappointments) of this life are not worthy of being compared to what lies ahead for us as believers.
- ⇒ The sense of ‘vanity’ or ‘futility’ that we experience in life is the byproduct of life in a world that has been _____.
- ⇒ Although believers in Jesus Christ have been spiritually set _____ from the bondage to corruption, we still experience the effects of living in a fallen world.
- ⇒ Our experience of deliverance through Christ allows us to live with a sense of _____, awaiting the ultimate completion of God’s work in us through our physical resurrection.

2. With the addition of NT revelation, the Shepherd of Ecclesiastes is _____!

Ecc. 12:11—The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd.

John 10:14-18—¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

- ⇒ ‘The Shepherd’ is _____ who has come to rescue and deliver God’s people.
- ⇒ Unlike Solomon, Messiah was qualified to serve as both a _____ to and _____ of His people.

Ecc. 12:13—The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

1 John 2:3-6—³ And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, ⁵ but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

- ⇒ To truly ‘fear God’ is to trust in the _____ of Messiah (to come to know Him) and to _____ in Him so that our lives might mirror His life.

3. With the addition of NT revelation, we find that the longings identified in Ecclesiastes will one day be _____!

Ecc. 9:7-10—⁷ Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do. ⁸ Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head. ⁹ Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. ¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

Rev. 21:5-7—⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Rev. 22:1-5—¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

- ⇒ The deepest longings of our hearts will be truly satisfied in the _____ of our Savior Jesus as we worship Him forever in the New Creation that He has made for us.