

Bible Study – Outline

ECCLESIASTES

Finding Wisdom for Life

Summary

Time Period Between 970 to 930BC

Author Solomon

Major Theme(s)

An examination of human life and purpose from the perspective of “Under the Sun”.

Joy is God’s purpose for us.

The worlds seeking of meaning and purpose from:

Chap. 2	Hedonism Materialism Money
Chap. 3	Existentialism (Sartre, Nietzsche)
Chap. 4	Business World
Chap. 5	Mans religions and religious formalism
Chap. 6	Materialism and possessions
Chap. 7	Stoicism
Chap. 8-11:1-8	Worldly wisdom and commonsense

..... is meaningless.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole of man. Eccl. 12:13 (KJV)

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

OPENING DECLARATION: EVERYTHING IS MEANINGLESS	1:1-11
Introduction	1:1-3
Illustrations of Human Meaninglessness	1:4 -11
DEMONSTRATIONS OF MEANINGLESSNESS OF LIFE APART FROM GOD	1:12 – 6:12
Thesis of meaninglessness proved from scripture	1:12 – 2:26
Thesis of meaninglessness proved from nature, human society, and human behaviour	3 - 6
COUNSEL AND CONCLUSION “FEAR THE LORD”	7 - 12
Fearing God in a wicked, unjust world	7 - 9
Trusting God in an uncertain, unpredictable world	10:1 – 12:8
Conclusion: The key to meaning is the fear of, and obedience to, the Lord	12:9-14

A few Key Scriptures

Eccl. 2: 24-26 Without God who can eat or find enjoyment,
God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness

Eccl. 3:11 God has set “eternity in the human heart”

Eccl. 3:13

“Every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.” (KJV)

Eccl. 4 :9 “Two are better than one..”

Eccl. 5: 10 “He that loves silver will not be satisfied with silver”

Eccl. 5:15 “Everyone comes naked for their mothers womb...”

Eccl. 6: 3 “If a man cannot enjoy his prosperity.....”

Eccl. 7:20

“Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does right and never sins.”

Eccl. 9:11 Time and chance happen to all.

Eccl. 12: “Remember your creator...”

Eccl. 12:13 Fear God and keep His commandments

Eccl. 12:14 “God will bring everything into judgment...”

FEAR

F stands for Faith in His Existence Heb 11:6

E is the Experience of His grace John 8:11

A is Awe at the majesty, the wisdom, and wonder of God

R stands for the Resolve to obey Mark 12:30, Micah 6:8

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between the wisdom of Proverbs and the wisdom in Ecclesiastes?
2. Eccl. 3:1-8 praises and laments the different times in life. Why is there a time to hate? Do you agree?
3. What does Solomon mean that God has set eternity in our hearts? Eccl. 3:10-11
4. What does it mean that we are “but beasts”? Eccl. 3:18
5. Compare Job 1:21 with Eccl. 5:15-16. How are these similar? How are they different?
6. There is no justice in the world. Eccl. 7:15 The righteous perish – the wicked survive. That is a human perspective. Is there a perspective that does give meaning to our lives?
7. What does Eccl 7:16-17 mean? Don't be overrighteous or overwicked
8. What does it mean to “fear” the Lord ?
9. What is the whole duty (or purpose) of man? Eccl. 12:13
10. How can we use Ecclesiastes as a means of witnessing to unbelievers?

Resources Used

www.biblestudytools.com

www.biblegateway.com

www.biblehub.com

www.raystedman.org

Adventuring Through the Bible by Ray Stedman

Is This All There is to Life? Finding Wisdom for Life in Ecclesiastes. By Ray Stedman

NIV – Life Application Bible