



## "A Search For Meaning" (Ecclesiastes 1-2)

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Intro:

1. Solomon, son of the greatest king of Israel, and the only described by God himself as a man after his own heart (Scripture?)...no matter godly you are, you cannot automatically pass on that godliness to your children. Please note too, that David, though a man after God's own heart, was a man who made some terrible mistakes. But David did not live for long in those mistakes...

2. Book written in later years of Solomon's life...

3. Great irony in this book is that Solomon, the man of great wisdom, became a great fool. He was a botanist, biologist, ichthyologist (branch of zoology that deals with fish); he wrote books, plays, poems, proverbs, and songs. People came from all over the world just to hear his wisdom.

### I. THE TEXT

1:1 The "Teacher"

\* KJV = the "preacher," It is the Hebrew word koheleth, a title given to an official who calls an assembly. The Greek word for assembly is ekklesia, thus we get the title of the book, Ecclesiastes. Solomon has something he wants the assembly (all men) to hear...

\* Matthew 16: 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my *church*, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

\* 1577. ekklesia, ek-klay-see'-ah; from a comp. of G1537 and a der. of G2564; a calling out, i.e. (concr.) a popular meeting, espec. a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Chr. community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both):--assembly, church.

v.5 Isn't it incredible to think that the same sun that rose & set in the days of Adam and Eve is the same sun that rises & sets on us?

1:6 The wind is in constant motion, following "circuits" that man cannot fully understand or chart.

1:7 Scientists tell us that, at any given time, 97% of all the water on earth is in the oceans; and only .0001 % is in the atmosphere, available for rain. The cooperation of the sun and the wind makes possible the evaporation and movement of moisture, and this keeps the water "circulating." But the

sea never changes!! The rivers and the rains pour water into the seas, but the seas remain the same. So as man looks nature, things seem to keep on going like they always have.

1:8 Prov.27: 20 Death and Destruction are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man.

Acts 17: 21 (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

There's always something new to see or new to hear, but never enough.

1:9-10 History does repeat itself; Thomas Carlyle called history "a mighty drama, enacted upon the theater of time, with suns for lamps and eternity for a background." Solomon would add that the costumes and sets may occasionally change, but the actors and the script remain pretty much the same;

1:11 Grand Funk Railroad, Spooky Tooth, Humble Pie, Cream, Deep Purple, The Box Tops...

1:15 There are lots of things twisted in this life, and there is a lot lacking in this life.

\* Rom.8: 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope

21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

1:18 "Ignorance is bliss"

2:1-2 Billy Graham tells of a disturbed man who consulted a psychiatrist for help. The man was suffering from deep depression. Every morning he awoke discouraged and blue, and the condition worsened as the day progressed. Now he was desperate, and here he sat with a psychiatrist. Before he left the office, the psychiatrist told him about a show in one of the local theatres. It featured a clown who had the audience convulsing with laughter night after night. The doctor recommended that his patient attend the show, saying it would be an excellent way laugh a bit and forget his troubles. To the psychiatrist's surprise, the man muttered, "I am that clown."

2:3 In the beginning I scrimped and saved just to buy a dime bag of weed, then in the end there I was with Randy Truett & Jimmy Dutton, 3 lbs. of pot, 100 hits of tuinol, 100 green amps, and none of it satisfied me...

2:21 And it was a real misfortune for Solomon, because he left all he had to a son who was an idiot! Rehoboam the rebel caused the kingdom to be divided...see I Kings 12...

2:26 I Cor.3: 21 So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours,

22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future--all are yours,

## II. LESSONS

## A. What Happened To Solomon?

### 1. He got away from the Word (See Deut.17:16-19)

- I Kings 11: 3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.

4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD...

- I Kings 10: 14 The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents, 15 not including the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the land... 18 Then the king made a great throne inlaid with ivory and overlaid with fine gold.

### 2. He lost sight of eternity

\* He believed in eternity (Eccl.3:11), but he stopped viewing this present world in light of eternity.

### 3. He began living for now.

\* He attempted to find satisfaction in and through the things of this life.

### 4. He learned that life without God is meaningless

## B. Learning From Our "Teacher"

### 1. Realize the necessity of "daily bread" from heaven

\* Psalm 119: 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

\* John 17: 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

### 2. Never lose sight of eternity

\* Col.3:1-4

\* Luke 3: 5 Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. 6 And all mankind will see God's salvation."

\* Isaiah 11:6-10; 65:17-19, 25

### 3. Do not love this present world

\* I John 2:15-17; I Cor.7:29-31; Heb.11:24-26

\* Psalm 16: 11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

\* Jeremiah 2: 13 "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

4. Find satisfaction in the work God has given you here and now.

\* Col.3:22-24

5. Make decisions that will benefit you beyond this present world.

\* Eph.4: 28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

\* I Tim.6: 17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

## CONCLUSION

\* Our constitution tells us that we have the right to pursue happiness. Yet as wonderful as that sounds politically, it is disastrous in reality, for happiness will never be found by those who pursue it. Happiness is an elusive butterfly - the more you chase it, the quicker it flies away. The only way to find real life is to let it go, die to self, and seek first the kingdom of God, whereby all you ever longed for will be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).

\* Isaiah 55: 2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

\* Jer.2: 13 "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.