

Ecclesiastes: An Overview

Read Ecclesiastes 5:8 – 6:12; 9:1-12

As you read Ecclesiastes, don't hear it as the musings of a disillusioned old man. Hear it as positive wisdom from Your Creator God. He is telling us, "If you are looking for meaning in life, if you're looking for something to seek and trust and worship, look beyond every earthly good. The brevity of this life makes them all meaningless."

Here's an overview of the message of Ecclesiastes:

- Everything is meaningless (1:1-11).
The cycles of our world continue to go round and round, yet we never gain ground. Those who come after don't remember those who have gone before.
- Wisdom is meaningless (1:12-18).
Wisdom is helpless to actually change what's wrong. Understanding brings only sorrow and grief.
- Pleasure is meaningless (2:1-11).
In the end, pleasures of every kind prove empty and unsatisfying.
- The wise and the fool are both meaningless (2:12-16).
They both die and are forgotten.
- Work is meaningless (2:17-23).
We die and leave what we've earned to another, who may be a fool. In the end, we get only pain for all our effort.
- Riches are meaningless (5:8 – 6:12).
The rich take care of the rich, and the poor pay the price. Money never satisfies, no matter how much you accumulate. We all die empty-handed.
- Death is waiting for each of us (9:1-12).