

ECCLESIASTES 1

1. What does Solomon call himself in the beginning of this book?
2. If you have a concordance handy, how many times does he call himself this in this book? Does he ever give this title to himself in any other book?
3. How does the beginning of this book radically differ from the beginning of Proverbs? List out at least 7 ways that the opening chapters radically differ.
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4. The word for “vanity” in the Hebrew is *lhv*. It refers to the vapor of one’s breath; therefore, it is something empty or meaningless. What does this tell you about the attitude of Solomon’s heart by this state?
5. What evidence is there in Proverbs that his attitude was radically different then?
6. In Ecclesiastes 1, what does Solomon call vain (empty)?
7. In what way does he see labor as vain?
8. What does he say abides forever? So, what is he connecting with the transcending or eternal at this point in his life?

ECCLESIASTES 1

9. Then he goes into elements of the world and their work. How do the following work?
 - a. The sun

 - b. The wind

 - c. The rivers

10. What do all of these things have in common?

11. How does he view the past and its connection with the future?

12. So what is new to him?

13. So he looks at what was done before and considers that which is yet to be done and says that both will have this in common. What is it?

14. Again we are searching for the heart of Solomon in this, so you definitely want to chart out all the things said about his heart in this book. Now we come across the 1st: what did he first set his heart out to do and where?

15. Was this a task he enjoyed?

16. What conclusion did he come to about the works done under the sun?

17. What 2 things did he see as unfixable?
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18. So then, he has a meeting with his heart and comes to some conclusions about himself. What 4 conclusions did he come to about himself?
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19. So, after concluding this with his first pursuit he then he sets his heart out to do what?

20. What does he call pursuing wisdom, madness and folly?

21. In His current opinion, what comes with great wisdom?

22. What comes with gaining more knowledge?

Application

- Now as we look at this ch, it becomes painfully obvious that Solomon is stuck in a worldly plane where thoughts of Heaven, true eternity, and of intimacy with our Creator are not present. This is what can happen when you live for this world and not in the mindset of Eternity. How do the things he sought to discover in this chapter pertain to the world around you? Do you see others doing the same? How much of your life is spent doing the same?

ECCLESIASTES 2

1. So Solomon has another meeting with his heart. He seeks to “test” (hon = prove, tempt, try) it with what?
2. How does he try to test it? What does he do?
3. What was his conclusion about that endeavor?
4. What does he say of laughter?
5. What did Solomon say about laughter in Proverbs?
6. What did he say about mirth?
7. So then he searches in his heart to find what?
8. What did he think his heart told him he could gratify his flesh with?
9. What did he also try to do while gratifying his flesh with wine?

10. He goes on to say “I made my works great” and then lists at least 14 things he did to make his work great. What were they?

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11. So how does he see himself by v. 9?

12. In all this acquiring, what does he say he also kept?

13. What limits did he place on his desires?

14. How did his heart respond to this? What does that tell us about his heart?

15. Somewhere in all of this, he looks on all his works and has to make another conclusion. What was this conclusion?

16. So then what does he turn to consider? How does this differ from vs. 1-2 of this chapter?

17. What surpasses folly?

ECCLESIASTES 2

18. What excels darkness?
19. Even though a wise man has better vision than the fool's, what does Solomon say they have in common?
20. So now he has another conference with his heart. Don't forget to write out all this about his heart, listing out all the times he has these "heart conferences". What does he conclude in his heart right now?
21. All of a sudden he sees himself as if he has no advantage over the fool. How?
22. In regards to the wise and fool, how does death equalize them both?
23. How does this conclusion cause him to feel? Why?
24. What else did he wind up hating? Why?
25. What does he call a "great evil?"
26. What does he consider the condition of a man at night?
27. What does that tell you about his own condition?
28. So now he has another conclusion. What does he say is best for a man to do?
29. What does he say is right from the hand of God?

30. How does this differ from what he says in Proverbs?

31. What does he say he has more than everyone else?

32. What 3 things does he say God gives to a man who is good in his sight? What does that tell you about Solomon's view of himself?

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33. What is allotted by God to the sinner?

34. What is the inevitable end of his labors?

Application

- Now, again consider what happens when we are stuck with a view that is only earthly-based. The transcending is only a grave long, not eternity focused. Personally, note the depression he seems to be suffering. How did he get there (with regards to focus and viewpoint), and what were the symptoms? Where are you with this in your own personal life? Also, note the things in this chapter that Solomon pursued and caught that brought him no real pleasure in the end (but the world sells that at the end will satisfy). Lastly, please take a moment and look at what we learn about the heart of man from this chapter, and take some personal inventory. Ask our Gracious God to cleanse our hearts from being the commander to being the submitter to the Spirit of God.

ECCLESIASTES 3

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3. Then he goes back to the issue of working. What has God made everything in its time?

4. What has God put in the hearts of men? Is this something that Solomon seems to be operating from right now?

5. What else do all men have in common here?

6. Then Solomon says that 5 things are best and a gift from God. What are they? Do you agree? Can you see the internal struggle between what he knew to be true from his father to what he struggles to be true now?
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7. What does Solomon claim to know about regarding what God does (3)?
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8. How should men respond?

9. What does God require?

10. When he looked at the judicial system, what did he see?

11. So he has another meeting in his heart. What does he conclude here?

ECCLESIASTES 3

12. How does Solomon see men and animals as alike? What does that tell you about where Solomon's perspective is right now?

13. How are they seen as different?

14. What is considered man's heritage? What does this show about how he views what happens after he dies?

ECCLESIASTES 4

1. What does he then turn to try to understand?
2. What does he say is lacking from the afflicted? How does this differ from how his father saw this issue in Psalm 12:5 and 139:13-16?
3. Who does he consider better off? Why?
4. What else is considered “vanity” (note: the word has been used roughly 20 times already in this book!)?
5. What does a fool do?
6. When is a handful better than both hands full?
7. Compare vs. 7-8 to Psalm 139:7-10 and 37:7-8. In what ways does Solomon’s view differ here?
8. In what ways are 2 better than one (There are 4 reasons here)?
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9. According to vs. 9-12, what are the dangers of being alone? How does this information sit with you?

10. When is a child/youth better than a king?

11. Read carefully vs. 13-16 and compare it to what you know of Solomon's own past. How does this relate to his personal experiences?

Application

- Consider the necessity of companionship. Now check what you know about Proverbs. How does one get friends? How does this compare to what we know in John 15? Let us pray that we would see the utterly amazing aspect of Who wishes to be our friend and how we can be His!

ECCLESIASTES 5

1. When we go to the house of the Lord, how are we to be? What does this mean? How does this apply to you?
2. We are told to 'walk prudently' and then we are told how. How are we to walk prudently?
3. What do fools not know?
4. What are we not to be in a hurry to do (2)?
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5. Why should we let our words be few?
6. How can you recognize a fool's voice?
7. When should you fulfill your vow to the Lord?
8. What does God have no pleasure in?
9. When is it better not to vow?
10. In what situation would God be angry and destroy the work of your hands?
11. What also here has Solomon called vanity? Do you agree?
12. What are we told to revere instead?

ECCLESIASTES 5

13. What 2 things are we told not to be amazed by? Why?

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14. The profit of the land: who is it for?

15. What 2 people are never satisfied?

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16. Whose sleep is sweet?

17. Who doesn't have sleep?

18. What does Solomon call a "severe evil" here (2)?

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19. What does Solomon call good here?

20. What does Solomon consider man's heritage?

21. What does he call God's gift here? Do you agree?

22. What does God keep a man busy with?

ECCLESIASTES 6

1. In the beginning of this chapter, Solomon sees another thing he calls “evil” and, for that matter, “common to man”. In your own words, what is that evil?
2. What does he conclude it is besides vanity?
3. Who does Solomon say a stillborn child is better than (2)? Why?
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4. How would the man who even lives 2000 years be just as bad off as any other person?
5. What does Solomon say all of man’s labor is for? What does that mean?
6. And yet, with all that work, what is the result?
7. What is the sight of the eyes better than?
8. What does Solomon conclude this also is (2)?
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9. What questions are asked between vs. 10-12 (3)? What does this tell you about Solomon’s attitude at this point in his life?
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ECCLESIASTES 7

1. In Solomon's viewpoint, what is better than precious ointment?
2. What is better than your birthday?
3. What is better than going into a house of feasting?
4. Why?
5. (Again, this is all in Solomon's mindset) what is better than laughter? Why?
6. What is in the house of mourning?
7. What is in the house of mirth?
8. What is better than hearing the song of fools?
9. What is also considered vanity here?
10. What debases the heart?
11. What is better than the start of something?
12. Which type of spirit is considered better than the other?
13. What should you not be in a hurry to do?
14. What should you not be comparing?
15. To whom is wisdom beneficial and why?

ECCLESIASTES 7

16. What are we challenged to consider here?
17. What has God appointed?
18. What seems unfair to Solomon here?
19. How can you destroy yourself (2)?
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20. How can you shorten your life (2)?
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21. Who will escape what here?
22. What is more beneficial to the wise than 10 city rulers?
23. What do all men have in common?
24. What should you be careful not to take to heart?
25. What does this tell you about where Solomon is with his staff right now?
26. What was far from Solomon?
27. What did Solomon find more bitter than death?
28. Those who please God shall escape whom?
29. What has Solomon not found?
30. How does Solomon see man as God made him?

ECCLESIASTES 8

1. What makes a man's face shine?
2. What should you not be in a hurry to do?
3. Be careful not to take your stand for what? Why?
4. Where is there power?
5. Who will experience nothing harmful?
6. What will a wise man's heart discern (2)? Why?
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7. In what are all men powerless?
8. What does Solomon call death here?
9. What is powerless to deliver in the end?
10. As you look at v. 9, consider how this may apply to Solomon. What condition do you think Solomon was in here?
11. What else did Solomon see as vanity here?
12. Why are hearts of men fully set on doing evil?
13. Even though a chronic sinner may live long, what is Solomon convinced of?

14. What other thing does Solomon see as a vain thing on earth?

15. So Solomon resolves that the best thing to do is what? Why?

16. Then he set his heart to know what?

17. What is a wise man unable to find?

10. What do they no longer have a share in?

11. Why, in Solomon's opinion, should you eat your bread and drink your wine with joy and a merry heart?

12. So what is your portion in life?

13. Why are you to do everything with all your might?

14. In Solomon's view, what happens to all men? What does that tell you about Solomon's view of the relationship between God and man?

15. How are men like a fish caught in a cruel net and a bird caught in a snare?

16. What did the poor man do that was so great that no one seemed to remember? Can you think of any event in Solomon's life (or in the life of David while Solomon was alive) that this learning may have come from?

17. What is better than strength?

18. When is the whisper to be heard above the shout?

19. What is better than weapons of war?

20. What does it take to destroy much good?

ECCLESIASTES 10

1. What does it take to spoil the smell of the perfume? What is that a metaphor for?

2. So 1 of the differences between the wise and the fool is where their heart is. What is the difference?

3. What are you to do when a ruler seems to come against you?

4. What else has Solomon seen? Can you think of any situation in his life that this might have come from?

5. What are the dangers in the following:
 - a. Digging a pit?

 - b. Breaking through a wall?

 - c. Quarrying stones?

 - d. Splitting wood?

6. In what way does Solomon parallel an ax to wisdom?

7. How is a babbler like a serpent?

8. What does a fool do with words?

9. What does a fool not even know what to do?

10. Solomon speaks to the woe of a city. What is the woe and how does that relate to Solomon's own life (hint: remember God and Solomon's first conversation at the beginning of his reign)?

11. Why do the buildings decay?

12. Why does the house leak?

13. What does Solomon say the feast and wine are for?

14. What does Solomon say answers everything?

15. Who are you not to curse and why?

ECCLESIASTES 11

1. Why are you to cast your bread upon the waters?
2. Why are you to have big dinners of 7 or 8? What does that mean?
3. Who will never sow or reap?
4. What are you to do in the morning and evening, and why?
5. When Solomon speaks of light and darkness, which of the 2 does he connect with death and beyond?
6. What will God bring you into judgment for? What does this say about Solomon's view of God here?
7. Why are you to remove sorrow from your heart, and evil from your flesh?

ECCLESIASTES 12

1. What are you to remember before the difficult days come?
2. What attitude does Solomon seem to have about his older years?
3. Where does man go?
4. In v. 6, Solomon gives 4 metaphors for death. What are they, and what are you to do before they happen?
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5. What does Solomon say happens at death (2)?
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6. What is Solomon's conclusion to this?
7. And yet, while still calling himself wise, what does Solomon continue to do, even in his current state?
8. What are the words of the wise like?
9. What are the words of the scholars like?
10. What do they both have in common?

11. What did Solomon hope to accomplish with his son by all these words?

12. In Solomon's conclusion what is man's all (2)?

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13. How does this book end: with hope, grace, love, or judgment? What does that tell you about Solomon's current state?