

Lesson 7: Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon¹

GROW University - Old Testament 102

	Ecclesiastes	Song of Solomon
Authorship	Solomon	
Date	Unknown for sure	
Recipients	Israel	
Purpose / Events	Temporal nature of earthly life	Celebration of marital love as God intended

Introduction

ECCLESIASTES

Context

Historical

Redemptive Historical

- A how-to _____ to life in a fallen world.

¹ This lesson is adapted from Lesson 9 – Writings of Solomon, Module 2: Old Testament Survey.

- Think of this book as it was used by the first compilers of the Old Testament, as an _____ to the meaninglessness of life in and after exile.
- Third – the OT ideas here are wrapped up in the words of Christ (**John 17**)
 - To know and obey _____, and so to know and obey God, is to find all the doors of life open.

The Message of Ecclesiastes

What is the meaning of life? Isn't it all fleeting, empty, pointless, and vain since we are all just racing towards death anyway?

- The popular theme: "everything is vanity" (1:2)
- The key word of the book is "meaningless" or "vanity" literally meaning "breath"
 - Meaning life is like a breath
 - Don't get caught up pursuing meaningless pleasures
- The author appears to be instructing us that looking for ultimate meaning only in this life (under the sun) here on earth is; brief, unimportant, and nothing but a breath.
- There is nothing under the sun, "earthly" that can give meaning to life (Meaning is only found in what is over the sun...God)
- Center your life on God – life's pleasures cannot provide lasting satisfaction, but life's pleasures can be enjoyed from God. Fear God and keep His commandments

If we wanted to summarize the thoughts of this book we could in 3 sentences

- Conviction affects character through conduct
- Conduct untrue to conviction is disaster
- Conduct guided by conviction is fulfillment

1:2

1:11

A summary of this book's answer:

Meaningful! Meaningful! All is meaningful because all is ordered by an eternal, sovereign, and purposeful God. Therefore, we should fear God and rejoice in what He has given us to do and to have.

God's Character and Life's Meaning

Structure And Theme Texts

Ch 1 — Introduction (1st Person)

Ch 2-11 — Investigation (3rd Person)

Ch 12 — Epilogue (1st Person)

What is the conclusion of the matter? **(12:13-14)**

1:1-2:23

2:10

2:17

2:23

2:24-26

3:12-14 (cf. 5:18-20, 8:15, and 9:7-10)

The Rest of the Book

Humanity's main objection to God's goodness and sovereignty: the problem of evil. (3:16)

3-part Answer

1.) Be quiet (5:2, cf. 5:1-7). Who are you, created one, to challenge the creator?

2.) 7:14, a clear-headed assessment of prosperity in this world.

Is lack of material things really a sign of God's curse? Perhaps part of the problem of evil is a misunderstanding of what really is good.

3.) Why do bad people prosper? (7:15) Silly question, as there are no good people!
(7:29)

Applications in Ch 8 and following:

- Obey the king.
- Work hard.

- Enjoy your spouse.
- Seek wisdom.
- Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.

Conclusion: Ecclesiastes Points to Jesus

12:13-14

So use the book of Ecclesiastes.

- 1.) Use it when you are feeling _____, as an honest path back to faith.
- 2.) Use it in _____, to honor the meaninglessness your non-Christian friend is grappling with and then turn them to the gospel. And
- 3.) Use it to _____ the treasure of the gospel in your own heart.

What is the greatest evidence for his trustworthiness in seeming nihilism?

A sovereign God who used the greatest _____ in history, his son's death on a cross, for our eternal _____.

Ecclesiastes says that all are wicked, and yet meaning comes to those who please God. How is it that the wicked can please God?

Through _____ in Jesus' sacrificial work on our behalf.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Context

Genesis 3:16.

SoS 7:10

Isaiah 62:5b

Theme of the Book

The Song of Solomon sings of the son of David: the ideal King of Israel, the Seed of the woman, Seed of the Abraham, Seed of Judah, Seed of David, who enjoys uninhibited, unashamed intimacy with His beloved, in a garden that belongs to him.

The revelation of the true nature of human love in different thematic ideas:

- The Foundations of Love; Mutual Satisfaction (2:2-3)
 - Complementary
 - Exclusive
- The Strength of Love; Indestructible – 8:6-7 (an unquenchable flame)
- The Methods of Love
 - Male – irresistible, intense, and protective
 - Female – yielding, answering, and trusting
- The Experience of Love
 - Rest
 - Joy
 - Courage

The Structure of the Book

1. **Song of Solomon 1:1-3:5 – the Courtship**

2:7

3:5

2. **Song of Solomon 3:6-5:1 – the Wedding**

5:1

3. **Song of Solomon 5:2-8:14 – the Marriage**

8:4

Conclusion:

—G. Campbell Morgan, "The songs should be treated first as simple and yet sublime human affection. When they are thus understood, reverently the thoughts may be lifted into the higher value of setting forth the joys of the communion between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God, and ultimately between Christ and the church" (Commentary on the Song of Solomon)

Ephesians 5:17-33