

Ecclesiastes

What is the Meaning of Life?

*“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher.
“Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” Ecclesiastes 1:2*

Welcome

Opening Prayer

The Teacher (1:1)

Who wrote this book?

Ecclesiastes 1:1

What are some clues that have led most to believe that Solomon was the Teacher?

Ecclesiastes 1:12

Ecclesiastes 1:16

Ecclesiastes 2:4-9

Ecclesiastes 12:9

The Title

Koheleth

Kahal

Ecclesia

Ecclesiastes

Name given to book in Septuagint

The Problem (1:2-11)

What bothered the Teacher?

Ecclesiastes 1:2

Why did this bother him?

Ecclesiastes 1:3

Ecclesiastes 1:4

Ecclesiastes 1:5-7

Ecclesiastes 1:8

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

Ecclesiastes 1:11

Wisdom (1:12-18)

What did the Teacher decide to do to find the meaning of life?

Ecclesiastes 1:12-13, 16

What did he conclude from his pursuit?

Ecclesiastes 1:17-18

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Foolish Pleasure (2:1-16)

What did he try next?

Ecclesiastes 2:1-2

What ways did he test this possibility?

Ecclesiastes 2:3

Ecclesiastes 2:4-6

Ecclesiastes 2:7-9

Ecclesiastes 2:10

What did he conclude from this pursuit?

Ecclesiastes 2:11

If all is meaningless, is there any difference between living wisely or in foolish pleasure?

Ecclesiastes 2:13-14 (12-16)

Life Without Purpose (2:17-23)

How did the Teacher feel after considering all he had learned?

Ecclesiastes 2:17

What made the situation worse?

Ecclesiastes 2:18-19

What do we achieve from all of the hard work and effort of our lives?

Ecclesiastes 2:22-23

The Purpose of Life (2:24-26)

What positive conclusion did the Teacher make?

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25

Why is a relationship with God so important?

Ecclesiastes 2:26

What, then, is the purpose of our lives?

Ephesians 2:10

God's Plan for Life (3:1-14)

How has the timeless God set things in place for the lives He's given us?

Ecclesiastes 3:1

What range of times has God given us?

Ecclesiastes 3:2-8

How are we to understand this life in such a wide range of times?

Ecclesiastes 3:11a

Are we constrained by these times?

Ecclesiastes 3:11b

So what are we to do in the times of this life that we know?

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

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Time of Life (3:15-22)

- What is frustrating about the freedom that God has given us in this range of time?
Ecclesiastes 3:16
- Does this mean that God doesn't care?
Ecclesiastes 3:17
- So is it a matter of being patient and waiting for God's justice?
Ecclesiastes 3:19
- Should we focus ourselves on the future time when God's justice will prevail?
Ecclesiastes 3:21-22

Enjoying This Life (4:1-16)

- How easy is it to enjoy this life with its range of times?
Ecclesiastes 4:1-3
- If we are going to enjoy this life through what we do, should we work as hard as we can?
Ecclesiastes 4:4-6 (4-8)
- Where can we best find enjoyment in this life?
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Guidelines for Life (5-11)

- How does the Teacher begin this section of guidelines for life?
Ecclesiastes 5:1, 7b
- What guideline does he give about dealing with God that Jesus elaborated?
Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 (Matt 5:33-37)
- What is a common mistake of people who look at this life as all that they have?
Ecclesiastes 5:10 (8-17)
- How does this differ from those who put their trust in the eternal God?
Ecclesiastes 5:18-20
- Should we work hard and sacrifice things now so we can enjoy things in the future?
Ecclesiastes 6:2, 12 (1-12)
- As we put our trust in God, will He make our lives straight and trouble-free?
Ecclesiastes 7:13-14
- Will it be better if we focus on being as perfect as possible? If not, should we just ignore righteousness?
Ecclesiastes 7:15-18
- What should we focus on in our relationship with God if we are to avoid extremes?
Ecclesiastes 8:15 (15-17)
- What are examples of how we are to enjoy the life God has given us?
Ecclesiastes 9:7
Ecclesiastes 9:8
Ecclesiastes 9:9
Ecclesiastes 9:10 (1 Cor 10:31)
Ecclesiastes 9:12

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Don't Wait (11:7-12:7)

After a couple chapters filled with proverbs, how does the Teacher wrap things up?

Ecclesiastes 11:8 (7-10)

Shouldn't we spend our younger years working hard so we can enjoy life in our latter years?

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Why would later years be *days of trouble ... when you will say, "I find no pleasure in them?"*

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

*Days of trouble
Before sun, light, moon, stars grow dark
Keepers of the house tremble
Strong men stoop
Grinders cease because they are few
Those looking through the windows grow dim
Doors to the street are closed
Sound of grinding fades
Rise up at the sound of birds
Their songs grow faint
Afraid of heights
Dangers in the street
Almond tree blossoms
Grasshopper drags himself along
Desire no longer is stirred*

Final Conclusions (12:8-14)

What prompted this entire discussion?

Ecclesiastes 12:8

Why was the Teacher qualified to raise and answer this question?

Ecclesiastes 12:9-10

Should we continue to dig deeper into this question?

Ecclesiastes 12:11-12

What is the bottom line?

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Closing Prayer

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,

a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,

a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain,

a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,

a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,

a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.