

Ecclesiastes Bible Study

Nothing new under the sun. Ancient wisdom for our postmodern world.

Concordia Bible Institute October 15, 2018

Preliminaries:

Name: Ecclesiastes (*Qoheleth*)—Teacher or Preacher

Author: Solomon (reigned 970-931 B.C.)

Place in the Bible: First of the Five Megilloth, read at Feast of Tabernacles;
Poetical, Wisdom

Theme: Life without God Is Meaningless (Vanity)

Outline: Prologue (1:1-11)
Life under the Sun (1:12-6:12)
Life under God (7:1-12:8)
Conclusion (12:9-14)

Prologue (Ecclesiastes 1:1-11):

Without God, everything is vanity.

Life under the Sun (Ecclesiastes 1:12-6:12):

Wisdom is vain (1:12-18).

Pleasure is vain (2:1-11).

Both the wise and foolish die (2:12-17).

Human labor is in vain (2:18-23).

God alone gives meaning (2:24-26).

There is a time for everything (3:1-8).

What God does lasts forever; he will judge (3:9-22).

Oppression, toil, friendlessness mar life under the sun (4:1-16).

Stand in awe of God (5:1-8)

God alone give life joy (5:9-6:12).

Life under God (Ecclesiastes 7:1-12:8):

Wisdom opposes folly (7:1-24).

Sin corrupts relationships (7:25-29).

Respect human authorities (8:1-9).

Often the wicked prosper under the sun (8:10-17).

Both the righteous and the wicked die (9:1-6).

God encourages his people to enjoy life (9:7-10).

God encourages his people to follow wisdom (9:11-18)

Solomon offers godly proverbs (10:1-20).

Follow your God-given vocation (11:1-8).

Always remember your Creator (11:9-12:8).

Conclusion (Ecclesiastes 12:9-14):

Fear God and obey his commandments.

Books of Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh

Torah

Pentateuch

- Bereshit (בְּרֵאשִׁית, literally “In the beginning”)—Genesis
- Shemot (שְׁמוֹת, literally “Names”)—Exodus
- Vayikra (וַיִּקְרָא, literally “And He called”)—Leviticus
- Bəmidbar (בְּמִדְבָּר, literally “In the desert”)—Numbers
- Devarim (דְּבָרִים, literally “Things” or “Words”)—Deuteronomy

Nevi'im

Former Prophets

- (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ / Yĕhōshúa')—Joshua
- (שׁוֹפְטִים / Shophtim)—Judges
- (שְׁמוּאֵל / Shmū'ēl)—Samuel
- (מְלָכִים / M'lakhim)—Kings

Latter Prophets:

- (יְשַׁעְיָהוּ / Yĕsha'āyāhū)—Isaiah
- (יְרֵמְיָהוּ / Yirmyāhū)—Jeremiah
- (יְחֶזְקִיֵּאל / Yĕkhezqiēl)—Ezekiel

The Twelve Minor Prophets “The Twelve” are considered one book.

- (הוֹשֵׁעַ / Hōshēa')—Hosea
- (יוֹאֵל / Yō'ēl)—Joel
- (עָמוֹס / 'Āmōs)—Amos
- (עֹבַדְיָה / 'Ōvadhyāh)—Obadiah
- (יוֹנָה / Yōnāh)—Jonah
- (מִיכָה / Mīkhāh)—Micah
- (נַחֻם / Nakhūm)—Nahum

- (תְּבַקוּק / Khāvḥakûk)—Habakkuk
- (צְפַנְיָה / Tsəphanyāh)—Zephaniah
- (חַגַּי / Khaggai)—Haggai
- (זְכַרְיָה / Zkharyāh)—Zechariah
- (מְלֶאכִי / Mal’ākḥî)—Malachi

Ketuvim

Ketuvim (כְּתוּבִים, “Writings”)

The three poetic books

- Tehillim (Psalms) תְּהִלִּים
- Mishlei (Book of Proverbs) מִשְׁלֵי
- Iyyôbh (Book of Job) אִיּוֹב

The Five Megillot (*Hamesh Megillot*). These books are read aloud in the synagogue on particular occasions, the occasion listed below in parenthesis.

- Shīr Hashīrīm (Song of Songs, or Song of Solomon) שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים (Passover)
- Rūth (Book of Ruth) רוּת (Shavuot)
- Eikhah (Lamentations) אֵיכָה (Tisha B’Av)
- Qōheleth (Ecclesiastes) קֹהֵלֶת (Sukkot)
- Estēr (Book of Esther) אֶסְתֵּר (Purim)

Other books

- Dānî’ēl (Book of Daniel) דָּנִיֵּאל
- ‘Ezrā (Book of Ezra—Book of Nehemiah) עֶזְרָא
- Divrei ha-Yamim (Chronicles) דְּבַרֵי הַיָּמִים