

Ecclesiastes

Sunday School Lessons

Why am I here?

Ecclesiastes

“Why am I here?”

Lesson 1

Ecclesiastes 1



Introduction

I. The Writer of *Ecclesiastes*.

A. The Preacher (vs. 1 & 12). The word “preacher” appears eleven times in the Bible. Seven of these times are in *Ecclesiastes*. Twice at the beginning, once in the middle, and three times at the end of the Book. (1:1, 1:12, 7:27, 12:8, 9, & 10)

B. The other 4 times are in the New Testament:

a. *Romans 10:14* – Refers to a Missionary.

b. *I Timothy 2:7* – Refers to the Apostle Paul.

c. *I Timothy 1:11* – Refers to the New Testament Preacher.

d. *II Peter 2:5* – Refers to Noah.

C. The Son of David (vs. 1)

D. King (vss. 1 & 12)

E. Over Israel (vs. 12)

F. In Jerusalem (vs. 1 & 12)

G. It must be King Solomon because he is the only one that fits every detail of the description. See also *Ecclesiastes 12:9*.

Here it says he was responsible for many proverbs.

H. Many of the Bible critics make up the name Qoheleth.

Qoheleth is just the Hebrew word for “preacher”. Unbelieving Bible critics don’t want Solomon to be the writer so they make up this name. When you read a commentary, and it says

Qoheleth wrote it, you can throw it in the trash! You can be sure the writer will be correcting the book quite a bit!



II. Date Written.

A. About 977 B.C., toward the end of King Solomon's reign.

B. King Solomon lives around 1000 B.C., so the book was written at this time.

C. According to Joel 3:6, the Greeks had access to it in about 800 B. C.

Joel 3:6 “The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.”

D. Most scholars place the writing of Joel around 400 to 500 B. C. However, some place it back as far as 800 B. C.

The reason for the later date is to get rid of the idea that the Greek philosophers had access to *Ecclesiastes!*

E. The Greek philosophers start showing up around 500 B. C. after having access to the writings of the wisest man that ever lived. All philosophies are attempts by men to figure out what life is all about. They, however, try to do it without the revelation that God has revealed in the Bible!

III. Its Place in the Bible.

A. One of the Wisdom Books:

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

B. Compares to the Bible Books of

Job, Colossians, and James.

C. Should be mastered by two groups:

Preachers and college bound young people.

IV. The Theme of *Ecclesiastes.*

It is King Solomon's last will and testament. It contains what he learned in life. There is no indication that he got right with God. It reminds me of a chain-smoker who is dying of lung cancer and is warning others not to smoke! It is full of

half-truths and partial revelations. He doesn't have the completed New Testament, so his conclusions are to be taken in the light of the revealed New Testament. Be very careful when getting doctrines out of Ecclesiastes. The key verse in understanding the book is *Ecclesiastes 1:3* “**What profit hat a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?**”

B. Solomon answers all philosophical questions about the meaning of life 500 years before any philosopher shows up.



C. Dead-end Philosophies - All dead-end philosophies produce:

1. **Agnostics** - Don't Know if there is a God.

2. **Skeptics** - Aren't sure if there is a God.

3. **Humanists** – Man is god.

D. Dead-end Philosophies

a) **Materialism** – *Belief in no spirit or soul. There is only physical matter. It was developed into communism by Karl Marx.*

b) **Existentialism** - *Belief that people produce their own beliefs. "Whatever you think is right for you" This belief replaces the Bible with opinions.*

c) **Pragmatism** - *Belief that whatever works best is good. This is the American way of life. Dewey*

changed the public school system to this philosophy.

d) **Hedonism** - *Pleasure is the highest goal in life. The "playboy" lifestyle. Promoted by Hollywood, Alcohol, and the advertising media.*

e) **Idealism** - *Opposite of materialism. Only ideas are real.*

f) **Utilitarianism** - *Whatever is best for the majority. Democracy. Mob rule.*

g) **Realism** - A reaction to idealism. What you see is what you get.

h) **...ect.** - "The bigger the belfry the more room for the bats!"



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