



“CHASING THE WIND”

DSBC
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Study: Book of Ecclesiastes

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INTRODUCTION

All who study the Book of Ecclesiastes remark that it is unlike any other OT book. They say that it has no parallel in any other book of the wisdom literature. Wisdom literature of the Bible consists of these five books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is often misunderstood because it speaks of the things of the world and uses reverse logic to make its points. “Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind.” (2:11)

It emphasizes the fact that human values and goals and ambitions are MEANINGLESS apart from God. A reference to God is made 32 times in the book.

The Hebrew word for meaningless is (hebel; vanity). It is used 38 times along with “under the sun” that is used 29 times.

Ecclesiastes is designed to challenge the believer’s intentions of choosing to live apart from God’s will.

- What is the purpose of your values, goals, and ambitions of life without God engaged in them?
- How do you believe these things will bring you happiness in life apart from God?
- Is the daily grind grinding you down?
- How big a part does God and His word play in your daily decisions and processing of problems?

The doctrinal point of the book is that you can’t make sense out of life apart from God. God wants to provide you with a satisfying life. “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” (3:11)

There is nothing of lasting value in this world apart from an intimate relationship with God. This point is made in the Epilogue (12:8-14). “Now all has been heard; Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” (12:13)

Ecclesiastes is relevant for every generation of Christians who are CHASING THE WIND of empty pursuits. If we are CHASING THE WIND of **vanity of vanity, all is vanity**, then the Book of Ecclesiastes is our wake-up call.

Many Christians think the Book of Ecclesiastes is too pessimistic to study. Someone described a pessimist as a man complaining about his suspenders while wearing a belt. There is only one section of the book that does not use the word VANITY. **It is the section of proverbs (9:13-11:6)**. “In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs.” (12:9)

The traditional author is Solomon who wrote late in his life after wasting years CHASING THE WIND of empty pursuits while in reversionism. Martin Luther was among the first recorded to believe that Solomon didn’t write it.

He regretted straying from God’s teaching and warned young people about it in the last two chapters of his book (11:7-12:7- Remember you Creator in your youth).

The Hebrew title is **qoheleth (Preacher, Teacher)**. It refers to an official speaker of an assembly who would present a topic and lead a discussion from different points of view and then draw a spiritual conclusion. The Greek Septuagint translated it as (ekklesia) and English Bible translated it as Ecclesiastes.

Solomon referred to the teachings of Ecclesiastes as “goats” and “nails” given by the One Shepherd (12:10-11). They were wise sayings designed to prod one’s thinking and sometimes painfully in order to provide stability and to give direction regarding the futility of CHASING THE WIND.

The Book of Ecclesiastes has been divided into the following five sections for this study.

- Prologue (1:1-3)
- Search for meaning of life (1:4-2:24)
- Sayings from the search (3:1-12:7)
- Special proverb section (9:13-11:6)
- Epilogue (12:8-14)

Our study of the book will consist of the following nine texts entitled, “CHASING THE WIND.” It is important to notice that the phrase, CHASING THE WIND, dominates the first six chapters of the book. This phrase is used 11 times. The only chapter of the six that chasing the Wind is not mentioned is chapter 3 (March of Time).

- Introduction (Prologue – 1:1-3)
- 1:12-18 (14,17)
- 2:1-11 (11)
- 2:12-17 (17)
- 2:18-26 (22,26)
- 4:1-16 (4,6,16)
- 5:13-20 (16)
- 6:1-9 (9)
- Conclusion (Epilogue - 12:8-14)

Today’s text will examine the Prologue of Ecclesiastes by the following three homiletical points (1:1-3).

- Preacher, the man (1:1)- Solomon’s study of life apart from God (1 Kings 3:6-14; 4:29-34)
- Preacher, the message (1:2) – Six statements of living in reversionism
- Preacher, the meaning of life (1:3) – Simple question about meaning of life. **“There is nothing of lasting value in this life apart from God.”** (Matt.6:19-21; 1 Tim.4:8)

Chasing the Wind is looking for happiness in all the wrong places. Ecclesiastes is condemning the popular materialistic and humanistic thinking of achieving happiness from the world. Hebrew lexicon describes CHASING THE WIND as “fruitlessness of all human enterprise and endeavor.” (Pg.210)