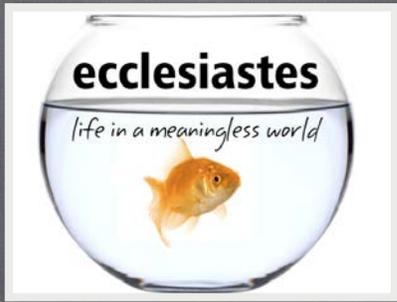


# ECCLESIASTES

Book of Meaninglessness of Life without God



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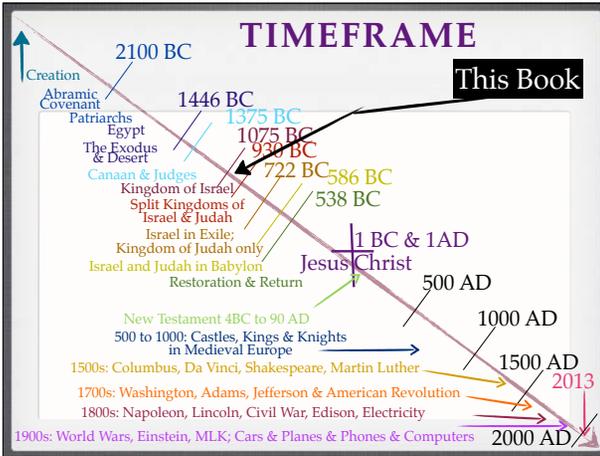
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## TIMEFRAME



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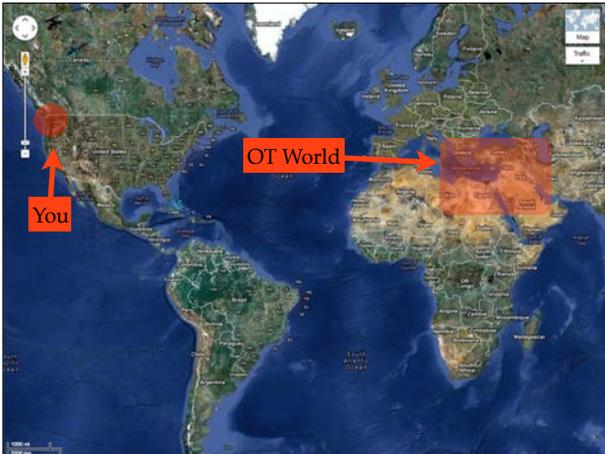
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### TYPE OF BOOK

- Moses' Torah / Pentateuch
- History
- Poetry & Wisdom ✓
- Major (Long-book) Prophets
- Minor (Short-book) Prophets

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### AUTHOR

- Probably King Solomon
- Wise
- The Preacher (1:1, 1:12)
- I Kings 3: 9-12
- II Chronicles 1:12

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## READERS & RECIPIENTS

- everyone?

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## STORYLINE

- 1 "Life appears to be futile and perplexing"
- 2 Wisdom, laughter, women, wine, wealth, wisdom, foolishness, time, social relationships, religious relationships (empty prayers, vows) are meaningless
- 3 Fun and pleasure are foolish--they're pointless and short,
- 4 You should enjoy the blessings and troubles in your life
- 5 Good life is only! found by revering God. Everything else is pointless, meaningless, vanity.

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## Major OT Themes found in this Book:

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1. God is Love
2. God Creates
3. Israel (we) are supposed to be God's Obedient Servants
4. Israel (we) are Sinful
5. God is Angry with His People for Rejecting Him
6. God Forgives and Blesses those who Follow Him
7. Israel (we) are God's Chosen Examples
8. God Speaks through His Prophets
9. God is Always with His People
10. God is Just and Merciful
11. God Keeps His Promises
12. Israel (we) are Redeemed and Restored by the Blood of Christ
13. Israel (we) are JoGoFd
14. Israel (we) will Inherit the Kingdom of God

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## THEOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION

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- "It teaches that great accomplishments and earthly possessions alone do not bring lasting happiness. True satisfaction comes from serving God and following His will for our lives." CBH110
- "But another important truth from Ecclesiastes, which we often overlook, is that life is to be enjoyed. 'Every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor--it is the gift of God' (3:13)" CBH 110

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## SECULAR CONTRIBUTION

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- Turn, Turn, Turn
- The Byrds
- Chapter 3

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## KEY VERSES

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- 12: 13-14
- It's the answer to the point of life.
- Copy these verses and remember them.

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## REQUIRED READING

- Chapters 1, 3, 12

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## WHEN TO TURN HERE

- Why am I here?
- What is God's Plan for me?
- Why does God let bad things happen to good people?

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## LUTHER SAYS:

- "For Qahal means a congregation assembled together, that which in Greek is called ekklesia..."
- "Now this book ought really to have a title [to indicate] that it is written against the free will. For the entire book tends to show that the counsels, plans, and undertakings of men are all in vain and fruitless, and that they always have a different outcome from that which we (Christians) will and purpose. Thus Solomon would teach us to wait in confident trust and to let God alone do everything, above and against and without our knowledge and counsel."
- LSB 1048

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### MR. MARTIN SAYS:

- This is an emotional book. The frustration of the author is balanced by the comfort we find in God.
- "Life without God is empty--the only rescue from such emptiness comes from God as He brings us to fear, love, and trust in Him and His Word" LSB 1048

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### LIFE LESSONS FROM ECCLESIASTES

- Ecclesiastes:
- 12:13 "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man".
- I personally find a comfort in this. All the struggles and relationships and guilt and emotions that we feel each day become meaningless, as we remember that our only job is to Fear God and Keep His Commandments. It might make you upset, though--all those other things you do every day are pointless.
- How does this idea make you feel? Does Ecclesiastes bring you comfort or pain?

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### ACTIVITIES

- 2. In verse 1:1, we see that this book was probably written by a literal son of David. Who do you think is most likely the author of Ecclesiastes?

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■ 3. As the author looks back on his life, he finds that he has not lived a good life. He has spent his life chasing hopes and dreams. But, in the end, what word does he use to describe a life full of chasing hopes and dreams? He uses the same word seven times: in 1:14, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26, 4:4, 4:16, and 6:9.

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■ 4. The song "Turn! Turn! Turn!" written by Pete Seeger, and recorded by The Byrds in 1964 begins, "To everything, (turn turn turn), there is a season, (turn turn turn), and a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to be born, a time to a die, a time to plant, a time to reap, a time to kill, a time to heal, a time to laugh, a time to weep." This is taken almost word for word (from the King James version, at least) from which chapter of Ecclesiastes?

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■ 6. In the end, the author of Ecclesiastes shows us that he has found the real meaning of life. He feels bad that much of his life was wasted in vain pursuits: trying to become rich, successful, popular, wise. In the last two verses of the book, he gives us his advice. You've probably heard them before in chapel, or in church. Write them down here:

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■ 7. At different times in our lives, we turn to different books of the Bible. For example, in times of pain we often turn to the Pauline Epistles to find God's peace in Paul's powerful faith. Or, in times of joy we turn to Psalms to read about David's close relationship with God. In times of oppression, we turn to Exodus to read about God's deliverance and promise. When we feel that life is unfair, we might turn to Job. Identify a situation in your life in which you would turn to Ecclesiastes.

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