

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES; LIFE “UNDER THE SUN”

Evidently toward the end of his long and prosperous reign as King of Israel, Solomon wrote a summary of his life experiences and the conclusions he had drawn from them in the book of Ecclesiastes. Study this summary below:

A. Introduction to the Book:

1. Look up the word “vanity” in a dictionary, and write its meaning as used in Ecclesiastes 1:2:

2. What question does Solomon seek to answer in this book? Ecclesiastes 1:3

(Note: This is a question philosophers of all ages have sought to answer: “What is the chief good in life? What will really satisfy man’s heart?” Notice how Solomon sought to answer it.)

B. Solomon’s Search for the Chief Good in Life: Read Ecclesiastes 1 - 2

1. In searching for the chief good in life, Solomon tried a number of things. List below the things he tried, and his conclusion about each of them:

- a. 1:4-8, 1:9-11 _____
- b. 1:13-16, 1:17-18 _____
- c. 2:1, 2:2 _____
- d. 2:3 _____
- e. 2:4-6 _____
- f. 2:7-8 _____
- g. 2:10 _____
- h. 2:12 _____

2. What did Solomon’s discoveries concerning these things cause him to do? Ecclesiastes 2:17, 20

3. What did he conclude that all these things brought to man? Ecclesiastes 2:23

C. Solomon’s Observations concerning the Chief Good in Life: Ecclesiastes 3-6

1. As Solomon looked about him, he saw others also seeking for the chief good in life. List the things they tried, and Solomon’s conclusions about them:

- a. 4:4a, 4:4b-6 _____
- b. 4:8a, 4:8b _____
- c. 4:9-12, 7:26-28 _____
- d. 5:1-6, 5:7 _____
- e. 5:10a, 5:10b _____
- f. 5:13, 5:14-16 _____

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g. 6:2a, 6:2b _____

h. 6:7-9a, 6:9b _____

2. What did Solomon say about all these things? Ecclesiastes 6:11-12

D. Solomon's Conclusion Concerning the Chief Good in Life: Ecclesiastes 7 - 12

1. In Chapters 7 - 11, Solomon listed many things that are good for men, but warned again that all of these are vanity. What is the last of these? Ecclesiastes 11:10 - 12:8

2. After considering every area of man's life, what did Solomon finally conclude was the chief good in life - the one thing that would satisfy man's heart? Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

QUESTIONS FOR ME TO THINK ABOUT:

1. Is my life empty and meaningless, in spite of all I have, do, and enjoy? See Mark 8:34-38

2. Who can bring true satisfaction? John 4:13-14, 15:10-11.
