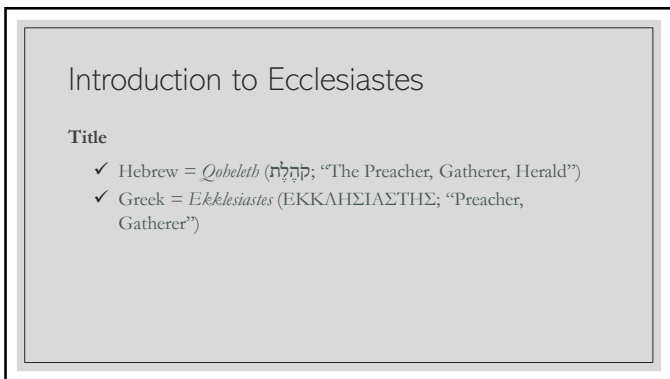


1



2



3

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

WHO—Authorship

- ✓ Debated, but Solomon (1:1)

WHO—Audience

- ✓ The nations (and Israel) at the end of Solomon’s reign.

4

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

WHEN

- ✓ Approximately 931 BC
- ✓ Solomon recounts a lifetime of experiences and personal familiarity with youth and old age.
- ✓ We assume that Solomon’s heart has already turned away from exclusive worship of Yahweh at this point (1 Kings 11:3).
Ecclesiastes is his repentance.

5

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

WHERE

- ✓ Very likely written in Jerusalem (1:1, 12, 16; 2:7, 9)
- ✓ **Very important**—Solomon reigns as the *potential long-awaited Messiah* to usher in the Kingdom of God and invite all the world to the God of Israel.
- ✓ Ecclesiastes is Solomon’s confession that he is **not** in fact the long-awaited Messiah and is **not** the complete fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant.
- ✓ Ecclesiastes is globally-directed to admit to the world that Solomon has failed and that the kingdom of God is not yet coming upon the whole world. In fact, difficult times are coming.

6

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

WHY

To recount to Israel and to the nations that a life of luxury and wealth completely devoid of the true God inevitably leads to vanity, and to confess that the king of Israel (Solomon) lived that life as proof that he is not the true Messiah and that the Kingdom of God will not yet rule over the nations, and thereby, to teach Israel and the nations that fearing God (i.e. desperately watching and waiting for His next revelation) is the only hope that mankind has to reverse the vanity of this world and restore the Garden of Eden.

7

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

HOW—Terminology

- ✓ Vanity (1:2 (5x), 14; 2:1, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 26; 3:19; 4:4, 7; 5:7, 10; 6:2, 4, 9, 11 (2x); 7:6, 15; 8:10, 14, (2x); 9:9 (2x); 11:8, 10; 12:8 (3x))
- ✓ “Under the sun” (1:3, 9, 12, 14; 2:3, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22; 3:16; 4:1, 3, 7, 15; 5:13, 18; 6:1, 11; 8:9, 15 (2x), 17; 9:3, 6, 9 (2x), 11, 13; 10:5)
- ✓ “Striving after the wind” (1:14; 2:11, 17, 26; 4:4, 6, 16; 6:9)
- ✓ Labor (or Toil; 1:3 (2x), 10, 11 (2x), 18 (2x), 20 (4x), 21 (2x), 22 (2x), 24; 3:9, 13; 4:4, 6, 8 (2x), 9; 5:15, 16, 18 (2x), 19; 6:7; 8:15, 17; 9:9 (2x); 10:15)

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Introduction to Ecclesiastes

HOW—Terminology

- ✓ Wisdom (or Wise; 1:12, 16 (2x), 17, 18; 2:3, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 (2x), 19 (2x), 21, 26; 4:13; 6:8; 7:4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12 (2x), 16, 19 (2x), 23 (2x), 25; 8:1 (2x), 5, 16, 17; 9:1, 10, 11, 13, 15 (2x), 16 (2x), 17, 18; 10:1, 2, 10, 12; 12:11)
- ✓ Heart (1:13, 16 (2x), 17; 2:1, 3 (2x), 10 (2x), 15 (2x), 20, 22, 23; 3:11, 17, 18; 5:2, 20; 7:3, 4 (2x), 7, 21, 22, 25, 26; 8:5, 9, 11, 16; 9:1, 3 (2x), 7; 10:2, 3; 11:9 (2x), 10)
- ✓ Fear of God (3:14; 5:7; 7:18; 8:12 (2x), 13; 12:13)

9

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

HOW—Literary Structure

- ✓ Introduction (1:1)
- ✓ Observing the Cycles of Life (1:2 – 2:26)
- ✓ Time (3:1–15)
- ✓ Waiting for Wisdom (3:16 – 5:20)
- ✓ **Living in Mystery Requires Fearing God (6:1 – 7:18)**
- ✓ Seeking for Wisdom (7:19 – 8:17)
- ✓ Eternity (9:1–10)
- ✓ The Ironic Cycles of Life (9:11 – 12:8)
- ✓ Conclusion (12:9–14)

The book's chiasm is designed around statements referring to "eating", "drinking", or "gladness" that act as milestone conclusions Solomon makes as he recounts his pursuits (2:24–26; 3:12–15; 5:18–20; 8:14–17; 9:7–10; 11:7 – 12:1).

10



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