

An Introduction to Ecclesiastes: Week One

- **Two Opening Quotes**

1. “This book is one of the more difficult books in all of Scripture, one which no one has ever completely mastered.” Martin Luther
2. “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable...”

- **Key Words Frequently Used in Ecclesiastes**

1. W_____ or W_____ (53 times)
2. G_____ (40 times)
3. V_____ (38 times)
4. S_____, as in “under the s_____” (33 times)
5. T_____ (33 times)
6. P_____ (7 times)

- **Further Reflections on These Words**

1. The Hebrew word most often translated p_____ in Ecclesiastes (Qoheleth or Koheleth) is found only here in the O_____ T_____ (Ecclesiastes 1:1, 2, and 12, 7:27, 12:8,9 and 10). It comes from a verb meaning to a_____, so the Preacher could be seen as the one who assembles p_____, in this case, to impart w_____ (hence NIV renders the word Teacher).
2. What case can be made that the author (preacher) of Ecclesiastes was Solomon? What case can be made that it was not?
3. Proverbs 9:10 tells us that w_____ begins with the f_____ of the Lord and u_____ requires a knowledge of (relationship with) God. The f_____ of G_____ is often emphasized in Ecclesiastes (3:14, 5:7, 7:15-18, 8:12-13, 12:13).

4. It is absolutely essential to have a clear d_____ of the word that is usually translated v_____ (Hebrew word hebel) if one is to understand Ecclesiastes. The word has been rendered in many even more d_____ ways. In keeping with other portions of God's Word, we will translate hebel as a m_____ b_____ (Psalm 39:5 and 11, Psalm 144:4, Job 7:7, Psalm 37:20, Psalm 102:3 and 11, James 4:14, Isaiah 40:6-8).
 5. In what sense is toil and life under the sun futile? In the sense that it is only t_____. Ecclesiastes 1:2 can be paraphrased: "Breath of breaths. Everything is temporary."
- **A Theme for Ecclesiastes**

If you fear God, even this temporary breath of a life under the sun can be lived wisely and joyfully. (Ecclesiastes 2:24-26)
 - **Three More Introductory Questions to Answer**
 1. What things in this life are identified in Ecclesiastes as mere hebel?
 2. Does a belief in covenant theology help us understand Ecclesiastes?
How?
 3. Where is Jesus (the gospel) in Ecclesiastes?