

Welcome to

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chapel
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Simply teaching the Word simply



Through The Bible

Session 23

Ecclesiastes &

Song of Solomon

From the miracle of our origin to the mystery of our destiny

Old Testament

Torah - 5

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

The Law

Poetical Books - 5

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Songs

Major Prophets - 5

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel

Historical - 12

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

In the land

Post Exile History

Minor Prophets - 12

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

God's 'How to' Series

- 'The Wisdom Literature'
 - *Job - How to suffer*
 - *Psalms - How to pray*
 - *Proverbs - How to act*
 - *Ecclesiastes - How to enjoy*
 - *Song of Solomon - How to love*

Oswald Chambers



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Theme of the book

- How to live life 'under the sun'
- Is life just vanity?
 - Solomon uses this word 38 times
 - “emptiness, futility; a vapour that vanishes quickly and leaves nothing behind.”

Theme of the book

- The Jewish writer Sholom Aleichem once described life as:
 - *“a blister on top of a tumor, and a boil on top of that.”*
- The American poet Carl Sandburg compared life to:
 - *“an onion—you peel it off one layer at a time, and sometimes you weep.”*
- British playwright George Bernard Shaw said that life was:
 - *“a series of inspired follies.”*

Theme of the book

- Solomon's conclusion:
 - Life Is a School: Learn your Lessons.
 - Life Is a Stewardship: Fear God

The Book of Ecclesiastes

- The Quest by **Personal Experiment** 1 – 2
 - Search for wisdom and pleasure
- The Quest by **General Observation** 3 – 5
 - Ills and enigmas of human society
- The Quest by **Practical Morality** 6 – 8
 - Material things cannot satisfy the soul
- The Quest **Reviewed and Concluded** 9 – 12
 - Vanity of Vanities: All is vanity

Outline of the book

- **Ecclesiastes 1**

- Introduction. “Is Life Worth Living?” Vanity or Victory? The Cycles of Life.

- **Ecclesiastes 2**

- The Futility of Wealth. The Certainty of Death. Yet, Enjoy Life!

- **Ecclesiastes 3 - 4**

- Look up. Look within. Look ahead. Look around. Enjoy Life!

Outline of the book

- **Ecclesiastes 5 - 6**
 - Don't Rob the Lord. Don't Rob Others. Don't Rob Yourself.
- **Ecclesiastes 7 - 8**
 - Wisdom Makes Life Better and Helps Us See Life Clearly. The Problem of Evil.
- **Ecclesiastes 9 - 10**
 - Meeting Your Last Enemy: Death. The Danger of Folly.

Outline of the book

- **Ecclesiastes 11 - 12**
 - Life Is an Adventure: Live by Faith.
 - Life Is a Gift: Enjoy It.

The best the world can offer:

- Try wisdom 1:16
- Try pleasure 2:1
- Try entertainment 2:2
- Try architecture 2:4
- Try gardening 2:5-6
- Try cattle 2:7
- Try music & art 2:8
- Try philosophy 2:12
- Try ritualism 5:4
- Try wealth 6:2
- Try reputation 7:1

10 I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly...

John 10:10

24 But life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God’s mighty kindness and love.

The Living Bible

Acts 20:23-24



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 1

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

Ecclesiastes 1:1-3

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:58

4 One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.

Ecclesiastes 1:4-5

- This is true, so how are you going to live life?

9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.

10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

Ecclesiastes 1:6-7

- The worlds first meteorologist?
- The hydro cycle summerised in c1000 B.C.
- No other writings of antiquity are so full of scientifically verifiable facts

8 All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 1:8-9

- Significant in regard to Biblical prophecy
- We have many 'models' given depicting what shall be
 - Nimrod / Nebuchadnezzar / Antiochus IV

IO Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

II There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

Ecclesiastes 1:10-11

12 I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

15 That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

Ecclesiastes 1:12-15

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

17 And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18 For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

Ecclesiastes 1:16-18

An unrolled scroll of the Book of Ecclesiastes, showing Hebrew text. The scroll is set against a dark background. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The scroll is unrolled from a wooden handle on the left. The text is arranged in columns, with some words highlighted in yellow. The scroll is unrolled from a wooden handle on the left. The text is arranged in columns, with some words highlighted in yellow. The scroll is unrolled from a wooden handle on the left. The text is arranged in columns, with some words highlighted in yellow.

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 2

¹⁵ Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.

¹⁶ For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.

Ecclesiastes 2:15-16

12 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

16 When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

Psalm 73:12-17



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 3

A Time For Everything

20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21 Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

Ecclesiastes 3:20-21

- A clear distinction between humans and animals



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 4

9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 5

Reverence Before a Holy God

¹ Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

² Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: **therefore let thy words be few.**

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2

4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

5 Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay.

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 9

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

- If it be for just 5 minutes, let it be done well

Oswald Chambers

- Do everything as unto the LORD

Apostle Paul

An open scroll of the Book of Ecclesiastes, showing Hebrew text. The scroll is unrolled from a wooden handle on the left. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The background is dark, making the scroll stand out.

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 10

8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

Ecclesiastes 10:8

- The LORD puts a hedge of protection around those whose hearts are His
 - Ref: Job 1:10
- The LORD looks to strongly support those whose hearts are completely His
 - Ref 2 Chron 16:9



The Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 12

¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

God's 'How to' Series

- 'The Wisdom Literature'
 - *Job - How to suffer*
 - *Psalms - How to pray*
 - *Proverbs - How to act*
 - *Ecclesiastes - How to enjoy*
 - *Song of Solomon - How to love*

Oswald Chambers

An unrolled scroll of the Song of Songs, featuring Hebrew text. The scroll is set against a dark background, and the text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The scroll is unrolled from a wooden handle on the left. The text is arranged in columns, and the scroll is slightly curved, showing the depth of the unrolling. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the scroll and the wood of the handle.

The Song of Solomon

a.k.a Song of Songs

Song of Solomon

- A Celebration Of Married Love
 - *“Addresses, instead of being dialogues are frequently sustained monologues, soliloquies or apostrophes” (S. Yoder).*

Song of Solomon

- A Celebration Of Married Love
 - *"The book is a wedding song containing recollections of the antenuptial experiences of Solomon and Shulamite. The events mentioned are not recorded as having occurred in the order stated but depict the emotions of the lovers in times of union and separation" (J. Raven).*

Song of Solomon

- A Celebration Of Married Love
 - "It is perhaps the most difficult and mysterious book in the entire Bible. A cursory glance at the Song's history of interpretation reveals a diversity of opinion unequalled in the study of any other Biblical work. (Chuck Missler)

Song of Solomon

- It has been interpreted as:
 - An allegory and/or an extended type,
 - A drama involving either two or three main characters,
 - A collection of Syrian wedding songs in which the groom played the role of a king and the bride played the role of a queen
 - A collection of pagan fertility cult liturgies
 - An anthology of disconnected songs extolling human love

Song of Solomon

- The cast of characters includes:
 - Solomon the king.
 - Shulamite, a country maiden of northern Israel who by her beauty and purity filled Solomon with love for her and helped him see the original beauty of monogamous love in marriage.
 - The daughters of Jerusalem, the maiden court attendants.
 - Her brothers at her native home.

Song of Solomon

- The history of interpretation of this book from earliest times has been a long apology to account for its place in the canon of scripture.
- On the surface there is no indication within the book of any connection with religion. God's name is mentioned only once and that indirectly.
- No book has provoked more controversy than this.

Song of Solomon

- Yet C.H. Spurgeon & D.L. Moody listed this book as their favourite in the Bible!
- John Gill preached 122 sermons on this book in the early 1700's.
- Bernard of Clairvaux wrote 86 sermons on the first two chapters (being interrupted by death).
- Origen wrote 12 volumes on it.

Song of Solomon

- During the persecutions of the Reformation period this little book provided great comfort to the victims. It is said that there are more quotations from the Song of Songs on the tombstones of the Covenanters in Scotland than from any other book of the Bible.

Song of Solomon

- It is not mentioned in the New Testament.
 - Yet a number of allusions can be cited
 - “The well of living water” (John 4)
 - “The veiled woman” (1 Corinthians 11)
 - “The precious fruit” (James 5:7)
 - “The spotless bride” (Ephesians 5:27)
 - “Unquenchable love” (1 Corinthians 13:8)
 - “Love strong as death” (John 15:13)
 - “Ointment poured forth” (John 12:3)
 - “Draw me” (John 6:44)
 - “The Shepherd leading His flock” (John 10:4, 5, 27)
 - “Fruits of righteousness” (Philippians 1:11).

Song of Solomon

- Not grasping its meaning, many have questioned its right to be in the sacred canon. It claims the highest credentials for its authenticity.
- It is the only book of the Bible with love as its sole theme.

Song of Solomon

- It has no direct messianic message.
 - Yet the underlying picture is of a king, leaving His place to come and claim his bride
 - Then departing for a time, only to come again to receive her to himself
- Rabbis saw it as depicting God and Israel
- Early Christian scholars saw it depicting Christ & His Bride
 - Shulamite is the feminine form of Solomon; hence we have the prince of peace and the daughter of peace.

Song of Solomon

- Song of Solomon and the Hebrews:
 - The Jews placed the Song among the holiest of all their books. They compared Solomon's writings to the temple: Ecclesiastes being the outer court, Proverbs being the holy place, Song of Solomon being the holy of holies.
- *“In the entire world there is nothing to equal the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel. All the writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is most Holy.”*
 - Rabbi Akiba *Mishnah Yadaim 3:5*

Song of Solomon

- Twenty-one varieties of plants and 15 species of animals are mentioned by Solomon. He was renowned for such knowledge [1 Kings 4:33](#)
- It is one of the shortest books of the Old Testament with only 117 verses.
- 470 Hebrew words (47 of which appear only in this book)

The Story of the Book

- The husband and father were apparently passed away, but there was a mother and at least two sons and two daughters.
- The older daughter, called Shulamite, is the “Cinderella” of the piece.
- Her brothers did not appreciate her and foisted hard tasks upon her, denying her the privileges that a growing girl might have expected in a Jewish home.

The Story of the Book

- “My mother’s sons were angry with me.”
(Half-brothers?)
- “Mine own vineyard I have not kept.” She had no opportunity to look after herself.
- She was sunburned but naturally comely.
- One day she encounters a handsome stranger-shepherd, who views her as without blemish.
- Friendship ripens to affection, and finally, love.

The Story of the Book

- He promises to return and make her his bride.
- Her brothers, sceptical, regard her as deceived by this stranger.
- He is gone a long time. She would dream of him in the darkness; she trusted him.
- One day a glorious cavalcade arrives, and the attendants announce, “The King has sent for you.”

The Story of the Book

- In obedience, she responds. When she
- looks into the face of the King...
- ...behold the King was the shepherd who had won her heart:
- “I am by beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.”

Structure of the Book

- The thrill of new love (1:1-3:5).
- Rejoicing in marriage (3:6-5:1).
- Separation and reunion (5:2-8:14).

Structure of the Book

- Act One - "The Mutual Love of Solomon and the Shulamite" (1:2-2:7):
 - First Scene: The women's chamber of the royal palace (1:2-8):
 - The bride, sings of her love for Solomon (1:2-4a):
 - Her attendants respond (4:4b).
 - The bride continues (1:5-7).
 - Her female attendants encourage her to seek the king (1:8).

Structure of the Book

- Act One - "The Mutual Love of Solomon and the Shulamite" (1:2-2:7):
 - Second Scene: The royal banquet room (1:9 - 2:7).
 - Solomon praises her beauty (1:9-11).
 - The bride recalls their pleasant meeting (1:12-14).
 - Solomon sings his love for her (1:15).
 - The bride sings of their place of romance (1:16-2:1).
 - Solomon responds (2:2).
 - The bride relates her emotions of love (2:3-6)
 - The bride's refrain to her maidens (2:7).

Structure of the Book

- Act Two: "The Mutual Seeking and Finding of the Lovers" (2:8-3:5):
 - First Scene: Back at her abode,
 - She sings of the episode of her love (2:8-17).
 - The bride sings of his coming to take her with him (2:8-17).
 - Second Scene: (3:1-5):
 - The bride dreams that she had lost her lover.
 - She searches until she finds him.
 - Her refrain (3:5).

Structure of the Book

- Act Three: "The Wedding & Nuptial Celebration" (3:6-5:1):
 - **First Scene: (3:6-11):**
 - The bridegroom comes. The courtmaidens view it from the portals of the bride's chambers (3:6-10).
 - The bride invites the maidens to share the joy of their vows (3:11).
 - **Second Scene: (4:1-5:1):**
 - Solomon's love song, in the bridal chamber as they lavish their love upon one another (4:1-15),
 - The bride responds (4:16).
 - Solomon, sings to the guest at the wedding feast (5:1).

Structure of the Book

- Act Four: "Love Separated but Reconciled Again" (5:2-6:9):
 - First Scene: The bride relates her sorrowful dream to her maidens in their parlor (5:2-6:3):
 - The bride speaks (5:2-8).
 - The maidens respond (5:9).
 - The bride poetically describes Solomon (5:10-16).
 - The maidens question her (6:1).
 - The bride responds (6:2-3).
 - Second Scene: They are reconciled (6:4-9).
 - Solomon praises her beauty (6:4-9).

Structure of the Book

- Act Five: "The Beauty of Shulamite Celebrated" (6:10-8:4):
 - First Scene: The bride and her companions converse together (6:10-7:5):
 - The maidens praise her (6:10).
 - The bride muses about her family and home (6:11-12).
 - The maidens urge her to stay (6:13a).
 - The bride replies in modesty (6:13b).
 - The maidens describe her beauty in dance (7:1-5).

Structure of the Book

- Act Five: "The Beauty of Shulamite Celebrated" (6:10-8:4):
 - Second Scene: Solomon and Shulamite share joy together (7:6-8:4):
 - Solomon revels in her beauty (7:6-9).
 - The bride sings to her lover as they return to her old home-place (7:10-8:3).
 - The bride sings her refrain to her companions (8:4),

Structure of the Book

- Act Six: 'The Lovers Together in the Country of Shulem (8:5-14):
 - First Scene: Love pledged (8:5-7),
 - The maidens introduce the lovers (8:5a).
 - Solomon reminisces as they stroll in her native community (8:5b).
 - The bride pledges her love (8:6),
 - Solomon responds (8:7),

Structure of the Book

- Act Six: 'The Lovers Together in the Country of Shulem (8:5-14):
 - Second Scene: At her parents' home (8:8-14):
 - The bride sings to her brothers of the past (8:8).
 - The brothers respond to her (8:9),
 - The bride sings to Solomon of her purity (8:10-12).
 - Solomon requests her to sing (8:13).
 - The bride sings him her song (8:14).

Beneath The Text

- “There are those who feel that this lyric poem deals primarily with the subject of Biblical lovemaking”. (Fruchtenbaum)
- The love relationship between a man and a woman—the courtship, the wedding night, and the subsequent sexual adjustments of the young couple—all are fruitfully treated.
- So explicit are these aspects that because of its erotic content, the rabbis forbade the book to be read by anyone under the age of 30.

Beneath The Text

- “Here is romantic love for married couples that exceeds our greatest dreams and expectations. Here is a manual on sex that beats all secular viewpoints on how a man and a woman should make love”. (Missler)
- “Sensuous love with erotic overtones is God’s intent for the marriage relationship. The distortion of that relationship has no doubt abased this dimension of life, but that does not justify placing such experience - or Scripture’s Song about it— into the ‘inactive file’ of living.” (Glickman)

Lessons To Remember

- 1. Love is strong as death (8:6).
- 2. Jealousy is cruel as Sheol (8:6),
- 3. Many waters cannot quench love (8:7).
- 4. Love cannot be bought with money (8:7).
- 5. Intimate Love is a divine gift from God.
- 6. God invented sex! (Heb. 13:4)

Lessons To Remember

- 7. As we reflect on this beautiful celebration of married love, let us remember the divine relationship Christians share as the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:22-33)
 - from Genesis to Revelation we see the Shepherd who came from heaven's highest glory down to this dark world that He might woo and win a bride for Himself. He went away, but He said, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself."

A Challenge to All

- How far have we gone in our relationship to Christ?
- “Don’t awaken love till he please”
- Don’t start the process if you are not prepared (able) to go all the way!
- How committed are you?
- Have you experienced the unspeakable pleasure of the most intimate embrace with your Beloved?



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