

## A Study Outline for Ecclesiastes (from the ESV Study Bible)

- I. Introduction and theme (1:1-3)
- II. First catalog of vanities (1:4-2:26)
  - a. Vanity of the natural world (1:4-11)
  - b. Vanity of wisdom and knowledge (1:12-18)
  - c. Vanity of pleasure, possession, accomplishment (2:1-11)
  - d. Vanity of wisdom (2:12-17)
  - e. Vanity of labor (2:18-26)
- III. Poem: a time for everything (3:1-8)
- IV. Fear God, the sovereign one (3:9-15)
- V. Second catalog of vanities (3:16-4:16)
  - a. Vanity of mortal life (3:16-4:3)
  - b. Vanity of labor (4:4-12)
  - c. Vanity of wisdom (4:13-16)
- VI. Fear God, the holy and righteous one (5:1-7)
- VII. Life “Under the Sun” (5:8-7:24)
  - a. Injustice (5:8-9)
  - b. Greed vs. contentment (5:10-6:9)
  - c. Wisdom for living “under the sun” (6:10-7:24)
- VIII. The heart of the problem: sin (7:25-29)
- IX. More on life “under the sun” (8:1-12:7)
  - a. Wisdom in dealing with foolish authorities (8:1-9)
  - b. The importance of fearing God (8:10-13)
  - c. The limits of human knowledge (8:14-17)
  - d. Unpredictability of life, certainty of death (9:1-6)
  - e. Finding enjoyment as circumstances allow (9:7-10)
  - f. Unpredictability of life (9:11-12)
  - g. Paths of wisdom and foolishness (9:13-11:6)
  - h. Aging and the vanity of mortal life (11:7-12:7)
- X. Final conclusion and epilogue (12:8-14)

## A Study Outline for the Song of Songs

- I. Song of Solomon 1:1-3:5 – The Courtship
- II. Song of Solomon 3:6-5:1 – The Wedding
- III. Song of Solomon 5:2-8:14 – The Marriage

## Old Testament Core Seminar



### Class 14: Ecclesiastes & the Song of Songs

#### ECCLESIASTES

##### Context

Who is *Qohelet* (the “Preacher?”)

##### The First Floor: Everything is Vanity

*The lens of Genesis 3*

The thesis that opens and closes the book (1:2, 12:8): “vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.”

Hebrew word translated vanity: *hevel*.

- 11:10: youth and the dawn of life are *hevel*.
- 2:21: the wise leave their legacy to the undeserving (*hevel*)
- 8:14: righteous and wicked treated the same (*hevel*)

Illustration: poem about ceaseless cycles in 1:4-11.

Qohelet’s assessment of all human endeavor, given up-front:

*“And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.”*

– Eccl. 1:13-14

Wisdom is *hevel* (1:18)

Pleasure is *hevel* (2:1-11)

Why is all *hevel*?

- Death (3:18-20). No pleasure lasts.
- We were built for something more (3:11)

*Throughout Ecclesiastes, when Qohelet pronounces that everything is hevel, he is looking at all of life through the lens of Genesis 3.*

*We need Qohelet's help in learning to look at our lives through this lens, so that we don't invest this-worldly goods with otherworldly hopes.*

### **The Second Floor: Everything is a Gift from God**

*The lens of Genesis 1-2*

*There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind. – Ecc. 2:24-26*

If everything is a gift, then everything is here for us to enjoy.

### **The Third Floor: Everything Has Eternal Significance**

*The lens of God's final accounting*

*"Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment." – Ecc. 11:9*

## **THE SONG OF SONGS**

### **Context**

A book about marriage? Or God's love for his people?

### **Theme**

*The Song of Solomon sings of the son of David, who is the ideal king of Israel, who is the seed of the woman, seed of the Abraham, seed of Judah, seed of David, who enjoys uninhibited, unashamed intimacy with his beloved, in a garden that belongs to him.*

### **The Courtship**

"Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires."

### **The Wedding**

### **The Marriage**

### **The Song of Solomon in light of Genesis 3**