

## Old Testament Survey - **Ecclesiastes**

**Author:** Solomon (1:1,12; 12:9 cf. 1 Kings 4:32; Talmudic tradition)

**Date:** c. 935 B.C. (late in his reign)

**Theme:** Vanity; Life lived apart from God is futile emptiness.

### **Outline:**

- I. Introduction: The Futility of all Human Endeavor. (1:1-11)
- II. The Futility of Human Achievement Demonstrated. (1:12-ch.6)
  - A. Personal Experience. (1:12-ch.2)
  - B. Personal Observation. (3-6)
- III. Limitations of Human Wisdom. (7-11:6)
  - A. Man does not know the plan of God. (7,8)
  - B. Man does not know his own time or that to come. (9-11:6)
- IV. Conclusion: Live Joyously & Responsibly in the Fear of God. (11:7-12:14)
  - A. Call to live joyously & responsibly. (11:7-12:7)
  - B. Final advice: fear God & Keep His commandments. (12:8-14)

### **Key Chapters & Verses**

**1 & 2** The Futility of life apart from God. (Futility of Wisdom, Pleasure, Materialism, & labor)

1:2 "All is vanity...says the preacher." Solomon, the wisest, richest, most influential king in Israel's history looks at "life under the sun" and from the human perspective, and declares it to be futile & empty.

**12:11-14** "The conclusion when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments..."  
The vanities of life can only be comprehended through a proper relationship with God.

### Detailed Outline

- I. Introduction: The Futility of all Human Endeavor. (1:1-11)
  - A. Introduction 1-3
  - B. Illustration 4-11
- II. The Futility of Human Achievement Demonstrated. (1:12-ch.6)
  - A. Personal Experience. (1:12-ch.2)
    - 1. Vanity of Wisdom (1:12-18)
    - 2. Vanity of Pleasure (2:1-3)

3. Vanity of Materialism & Hedonism (2:4-17)

4. Vanity of Accomplishments (2:18-23)

5. Conclusion: Be Content (2:24-26)

B. Personal Observation. (3-6)

1. God's Immutable Program (3)

a. An Appointed Time for Everything (3:1-11)

b. God's Plan Unknown to Men (3:12-22)

2. The Inequalities of Life (4)

a. The Evil of Oppression (4:1-3)

b. The Folly of Hard Work (4:4-12)

c. The Folly of Fame (4:13-16)

3. The Insufficiency of Human Religion (5:1-7)

4. The Insufficiency of Wealth (5:8-20)

a. Wealth does not satisfy (5:8-12)

b. Wealth brings problems (5:13-17)

c. Wealth comes from God (5:18-20)

5. The Vanity of Life (6)

a. Vanity of Wealth (6:1-2)

b. Vanity of Children (6:3-6)

c. Vanity of Labor (6:7-9)

d. Vanity of Desires (6:8)

e. The Brevity of Life (6:10-12)

### III. Limitations of Human Wisdom. (7-11:6)

#### A. Man does not know the plan of God. (7,8)

1. Wisdom & Folly Contrasted (7:1-14)

2. The Wisdom of Moderation (7:15-18)

3. The Strength of Wisdom (7:19-29)

4. Submission to Authority (8:1-9)

5. The Wicked will be Judged (8:10-14)

6. Man Cannot Understand (8:10-17)

#### B. Man does not know his own time or that to come. (9-11:6)

1. All Men Will Die (9:1-6)

2. Man's Reward (9:7-9)

3. Live Wisely While You Can (9:10-18)

4. Various Proverbs (10:1- 11:6)

### IV. Conclusion: Live Joyously & Responsibly in the Fear of God. (11:7-12:14)

#### A. Call to live joyously & responsibly. (11:7-12:7)

1. Rejoice in Life, especially in Youth (11:7-10)

2. Remember God before You get Old (12:1-8)

#### B. Final Conclusion: Fear God & Keep His commandments. (12:8-14)

## Old Testament Survey

### **Song of Solomon**

(Also known as “Song of Songs” or “Best of Songs” from Hebrew, and “Canticles” from the Latin meaning “songs”)

**Author:** Solomon (1:1,5; 3:7,9,11; 8:11-12)

**Date:** Probably written early in his reign (971-931 B.C.)

**Theme:** Love & Marriage: God's favorable view of love and marriage is demonstrated by the wooing and wedding of the Shulamite Shepherdess by King Solomon.

#### **Outline:**

- I. Falling in Love.      1-3:5      (Courtship)
- II. United in Love.      3:6-5:1      (Wedding)
- III. Struggling in Love.    5:2-ch.6      (Conflict & Resolution)
- IV. Growing in Love.    7,8      (Living in Love)

Note: From the time of the ancient Jews this book has been interpreted in some allegorical fashion, and while the story is a beautiful picture of God’s enduring love for His people, allegorical interpretation is subjective and lacking in evidence. This book is better to be seen as an historical record in poetic form of Solomon’s romantic relationship with the Shulamite woman and thus demonstrating God’s positive endorsement of marital love.

#### Detailed Outline

- I. Falling in Love.    1-3:5    (Courtship)
  - A. The Bride’s Longing (1:1-8)
    - Her longing for Solomon (1:2-4a)
    - Daughters of Jerusalem (1:4b)
    - Her Insecurity (1:5-7)
    - Daughters of Jerusalem (1:8)
  - B. Expressions of Mutual Love (1:9-2:7)
    - Solomon’s Praise of the Shulamite (1:9-10)
    - Daughters of Jerusalem (11)
    - Her Admiration of Him (1:12-14)
    - His Praise of Her (1:15)
    - Her Admiration of Him (1:16-17, 2:1)
    - His Praise of Her (2:2)
    - Her Admiration of Him (2:3-6)
    - Refrain (2:7)
  - C. The King’s Visit (2:8-17)
    - She Remembers Solomon’s Earlier Visit (2:8-17)

D. The Bride's Dream (3:1-5)

She Misses and Looks for Him (3:1-3)

She Finds Him (3:4)

Refrain (3:5)

II. United in Love. 3:6-5:1 (Wedding)

A. Wedding Procession (3:6-11)

B. His Praise for the Bride's Beauty (4:1-15)

C. The Marriage is Consummated (4:16-5:1)

III. Struggling in Love. 5:2-6:13 (Conflict & Resolution)

A. The Bride's Dream of Separation (5:2-8)

Daughters of Jerusalem (5:9)

B. Praise for the Groom's Handsomeness (5:10-16)

C. Search for Her Beloved

Daughters of Jerusalem ask where he is? (6:1)

She tells where to find her beloved (6:2-3)

D. Solomon Praises the Beauty of the Shulamite (6:4-9)

Daughters of Jerusalem (6:10)

E. Solomon's Departure (6:11-12)

The Daughters of Jerusalem plea for her return (6:13a)

IV. Growing in Love. 6:13b -8:14 (Living in Love)

A. Solomon Continues His Praise of the Shulamite (6:13b-7:9)

B. The Bride's Desire to Travel with Him (7:10-13)

C. The Bride's Desire to Take Him to Her Home (8:1-4)

Daughters of Jerusalem (8:5a)

D. The Journey & Homecoming (8:5b-14)

A Picture of Love (8:5b-7)

Brothers' Protection (8:8-9)

The Shulamite's Garden (8:10-11)

Solomon wants to hear her voice (8:12)

She urges him to hurry to her (8:13)