

"It is an invitation to take cheer and joy out of blameless pleasures. Yes enjoy whatever you see or desire, but in the midst of your enjoyment remember that God will review the quality of your pleasures and the manner in which you enjoy yourself." Kaiser, p. 117

That this is the correct interpretation is clearly supported by the subsequent description of old age and death, the lessening of pleasure! See 12:1-7 "...when thou shalt say I have **no pleasure** in..."

III. Wisdom Speaks, telling you to fear God and rejoice.

What should a wise man do facing the brevity of non-enduring life?

We must win souls, give to missions, and pray. That goes, or should go, almost without saying . **But what this passage is really saying is, enjoy your temporal things in a spiritual way.**

So, enjoy your job, visit your friends, play with your kids, tip the waitress, eat more ice cream, go boating, fish, shop, golf. Enjoy life. It is a gift from God. Have people over for a cookout; that is not unspiritual, that is wisdom.

A. You need more proof? 9:4,5 This is not naturalism, deism, or skepticism. This is not carnal short-sighted worldliness.

This means their time *here* has passed. **In this sense"the dead know nothing"**. This is not a metaphysical statement about the question of the afterlife but a practical assertion that their "days under the sun are over". [Duane Garrett, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, S.O.S, 331]

B. Behold a practical, notably joyful, redemptive marriage. 9:7-9

1. Get up, dress up, fix up, Proverbs 5:19?
2. Deuteronomy 24:5 Note the connection between a well grounded marriage and successful warring.

C. Do not be dispensationally stalled: this is not merely the proper and hope of an *earthly people*. I Timothy 6:17

The Joy of the Lord According to Solomon.

The book of Ecclesiastes is a *wisdom* book; "**wisdom**" is mentioned 28 times, "**wise**" 25 times, and "**wisely**" once. This book and this human author are often associated with pessimism and backsliding. It is true that Solomon failed miserably later in life. Yet he wrote this book by inspiration of the Spirit of God and it is a great spiritual wisdom book.

God made Solomon wise for Jesus' sake. Solomon built the Temple which is essentially a picture gallery full of The Lord Jesus Christ. Solomon's God given wisdom was missionary wisdom. It drew the mission field to Jerusalem. There the visitors were confronted with redemptive wonders, namely the fabulous temple, and the extraordinary wisdom of King Solomon. One example of this is the Queen of Sheeba, I Kings 10:1-10.

Proposition

When we **fear God as Solomon instructs** us to we will enjoy life the way God intends us to. We can "use this world, as not misusing it."

The Holy Spirit guided Solomon's wisdom search¹ enabling Solomon to draw conclusions about what he saw "under the sun".

Ecclesiastes is not a simple book, but we will follow a simple outline. I. Wisdom Seeks. II. Wisdom Finds. III. Wisdom Speaks, summoning you to fear God and rejoice evermore.

I. Wisdom Seeks.

A. Solomon seeks the answer[s] for **a good question**. 1:3 "profit" that which can be kept, retained, "under the sun" where you are now.

¹ Solomon is made wise by God, I Kings 3:5,9-12. "The words of the wise... are given from one shepherd [Ecclesiastes 12:11]". That shepherd is found in Psalm 23:1 & John 10:11. It was the "Spirit of Christ" which moved upon the O.T. writers and superintended their writing.

1. It is an extensive search. 1:13 [No quick or trite answers]
2. Solomon was qualified for the search. 1:16
3. Solomon had a worthy goal. 2:3

B. Solomon is a baffled teacher. [Walter C. Kaiser divides this section outlining it as follows, page 47 *TOTAL LIFE*]

1. The restlessness of life are illustrated 1:4-11
2. The pleasures of life are tested. 1:12-2:11
3. The purposes of life are examined. 2:12-23
 - a. 1:14,17 "vanity and vexation" or "striving after wind"
 - b. 2:11 more "vanity and vexation" or "striving after wind"
 - c. 2:17 "like a cat chasing his tail"
 - d. 2:18 nothing permanent!
 - e. 2:19 who will inherit it?
 - f. No rest in the pursuit of the permanent, "*under the sun*"

C. Solomon sees God's hand. 2:24-26

1. God "exercises" people toward fearing Him.
2. God draws men by giving and taking their temporal joys.
3. Joy is a gift from our good sovereign God.

D. It is impossible to understand Ecclesiastes if you are wrong on what "vanity" means.

1. Vanity does not mean "meaningless" as the N.I.V. renders.
 2. Vanity does not mean *worldly, boastful, proud*, either.
 3. Vanity means "**non-enduring**"
- James says that our lives are like a "vapor" here and gone; "**non-enduring**". Keep this definition for vanity and Ecclesiastes will be clearer and clearer to you.

II. Wisdom Finds.

Why do men and women sometimes feel that trying to get meaning out of life is like chasing the wind without satisfaction or rest?

Why do they "take no rest in the night"?

A. The answer is partially found in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. There are 29 mentions of "time". Yet every human being was made for "eternity" and God bares witness of that fact in their heart 3:11.

1, How should you live in light of the changes—3:13,14?

REJOICE

The words for "joy" and "gladness" occur 17 times in Ecclesiastes.

Joy and gladness are gifts from God now, for those who fear God. Some of these joys are only available briefly so get them now.

That's wisdom.

illustration: Schiltz Beer "you only go around once in life, so go for the gusto" That is woefully false. Hebrews 9:27 says we go around twice and the second is the one that matters most.

On the other hand it is true that as far as life under the sun is concerned. You have life briefly, just once. Then it is gone never to return as we now know it.

2. Notice Ecclesiastes 11:9: Notice how this theme of rejoicing now, enjoying life now, runs straight through the book.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

B. Is this mockery? Is he daring the young man to be worldly? Is he scoffing at the young man for "doing his own thing"? Is he threatening: "young men in the hands of an angry God"?

no

