

Under the Sun

Ecclesiastes

Under the Sun Introduction

Under the Sun Introduction

- What would it really take to satisfy you?
 - Money
 - Love
 - Honor
 - Power
 - Intelligence

Under the Sun Introduction

- Would any of these things make you happy?
 - Money
 - Love
 - Honor
 - Power
 - Intelligence

Under the Sun Introduction

- What if you could have it all?
 - Money
 - Love
 - Honor
 - Power
 - Intelligence

Under the Sun Introduction

- What if you could have it all?
- Solomon did.
- He had it all.
- And he wrote this book to tell us what it was like.

Under the Sun Introduction

- Hebrew Title: *Qoheleth* or *Koheleth* – meaning *preacher* or *teacher* – one who speaks to an assembly.
- English Title: **Ecclesiastes** – is from a Latin word that means about the same thing.

Under the Sun Introduction

- Solomon is now near the end of his life and is speaking to anyone who will listen.
- We have no record of him reading it to his people – but it is easy enough to picture that.

Under the Sun Introduction

- The key word in the book is:

Vanity – used 37 times

- Meaningless(ness), pointless(ness), useless(ness), waste, nonsense

Under the Sun Introduction

- The key phrases in the book are:

under the sun – 29 times

on, upon, or to the earth – 8 times

under heaven – 3 times

Under the Sun Introduction

You do not have to go outside the Bible to find the merely human philosophy of life. God has given us the book of Ecclesiastes, the record of all that human thinking and natural religion has ever been able to discover concerning the meaning and goal of life.

*– Henrietta Mears (1890 – 1963),
Christian Educator*



Under the Sun Background

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- Solomon was extremely wise, but that was not the whole story of his life.
- Read **1 Kings 11:4-8**. (We'll put in on the screen.)

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1 Kings 11:1-8 (ESV) Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, ² from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, “You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love.

Under the Sun Background

1 Kings 11:1-8 (ESV) ³ He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart.
⁴ For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.

Under the Sun Background

1 Kings 11:1-8 (ESV) ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done.

Under the Sun Background

1 Kings 11:1-8 (ESV) ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. ⁸ And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

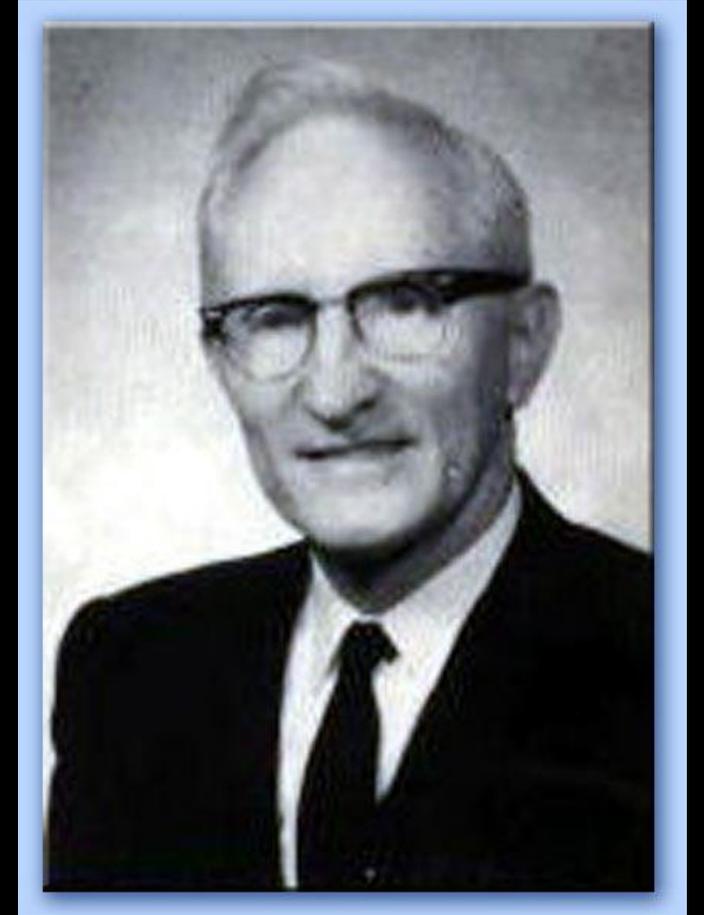
Under the Sun Background

- Solomon ended his life with earthly honor.
- But he had a half-hearted relationship with the Lord.
- In this book he tells us where it got him.

Under the Sun Background

It is the message that everything on earth, even at its best, is fleeting and unsatisfying, and that the heart of man was made for God and will not find rest and satisfaction till it finds realization in Him who is changeless, absolute, and permanent.

*– Merrill F. Unger (1890 – 1963),
Christian Educator*



Under the Sun Ecclesiastes

- These chapters will give us a clear summary of the book.
- Ecclesiastes 1, 2, 3 & 12

Under the Sun

Conclusions

Under the Sun Conclusions

The Teacher has shown us the perplexities and frustrations of living life with a purely earthly perspective. Such a life can only be described as meaningless. Those who experience joy in the labour of their hands are those who accept their life as a gift from God.

*– Dr. Tewoldemedhin Habtu,
Africa International University*



Under the Sun Conclusions

- Solomon is not trying to ruin all our hopes and dreams.
- He is trying to point us to the One that gives our hopes and dreams their ultimate meaning.
- Our truest satisfaction needs to be in God alone.

Under the Sun Conclusions

- Any goals and aspirations we may have:
 - Education
 - Career
 - Relationships
 - Accomplishments
- These need to be brought into order before God and under his final authority.

Under the Sun Conclusions

- Like Solomon, we may know the Lord, yet still try to keep our focus on earthly things.
- This will cause our Christian life to be unfruitful.
- We then risk coming to the end of our lives and finding life meaningless.

Under the Sun Conclusions

A form of secularism known as materialism has infected even those who do not explicitly reject religion. It has affected Christians in the West and its influence is spreading to Africa, leaving many Christians lukewarm or indifferent to their faith ...

*– Yusufu Turaki,
Jos Theological Seminary, Nigeria*



Under the Sun Conclusions

People's lives are dominated by their desire for worldly pleasures and bodily comforts, and revolve around money, possessions and the things of the world rather than spiritual values. This is an inevitable consequence of the failure to love God above all else.

*– Yusufu Turaki,
Jos Theological Seminary, Nigeria*



Under the Sun Conclusions

- Fear God first.
- Love God first.
- Let him bring your life into order and give you the life you were meant for.
- That is what gives life meaning.

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

- Solomon saw that all of his earthly pursuits left his life empty in the end.
- The New Testament shows us that earthly pursuits alone will also leave us bankrupt in eternity.

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

- **Luke 9:25 (ESV)** For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Romans 3:21-26 (ESV) ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ...

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Romans 3:21-26 (ESV) ... ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins ...

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Romans 3:21-26 (ESV) ... ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Romans 4:16 (ESV) ¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all [Abraham's] offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- Faith is the opposite of personal accomplishment.
- A gift puts us at the mercy of the giver.