

Theme : What's it all about? (A study in Ecclesiastes)

A most extraordinary answer!



Halifax YW 2008

An extraordinary answer : Ecclesiastes 2v11-

Man's days are
sorrow and his
travail grief (v23)

I hated life (v17)

My heart was
vexed (v22)

My work was
grievous (v17)

I saw a great evil
(v21)

I hated my labour
(v18)

My heart despaired
(v20)

The ultimate question

Solomon profile:

Age : 80

Lifetime Earnings : £205billion

Personal fortune : £13.6billion

Family : unnumbered (1000's)

Power & respect : unrivalled



The ultimate question



Q: "For all of the effort invested in this life what does one get in return?"

(Paraphrase Eccl 1v3)

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The ultimate question



Q: "For all of the effort invested in this life what does one get in return?"

(Paraphrase Eccl 1v3)

A: "Then I looked on all the works my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do... and behold all was VANITY and vexation of spirit and there was no profit under the sun!"

Eccl 2v11 [AV]

All is vanity!

Hebel : (ST H1892)

- Vanity (AV)
- Meaningless (NIV)
- Futility (NJB)

Strong's suggestions:

- Emptiness
- Transient
- Unsatisfactory

Keyword : used 37 times by Q



The ultimate question



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

Ecc1 1v3 [AV]

A: "Behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit and there was no profit under the sun!"

Ecc1 2v11 [AV]

Q: "For all of the effort invested in this life what does one get in return?"

(Paraphrase Ecc1 1v3)

A: "Everything in this life is meaningless! There are no returns!"

(Paraphrase Ecc1 2v11)

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity! (Ecclesiastes 1v2)

Psalm 39v5 (AV):

"Behold, thou hast made my says as a handbreadth,
And mine age is as nothing before thee:
Verily every man at his best state it altogether VANITY."

James 4v14 (AV):

"What is your life? It is even a VAPOUR THAT APPEARETH FOR A LITTLE TIME AND THEN VANISHETH AWAY."



The ultimate question



Q: "What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh **under the sun?**"

Ecc1 1v3 [AV]

A: "Behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit and there was no profit **under the sun!**"

Ecc1 2v11 [AV]

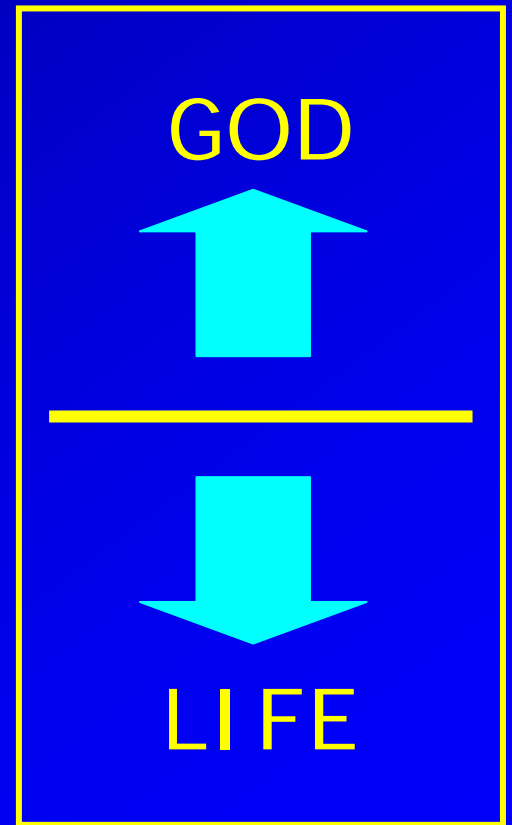
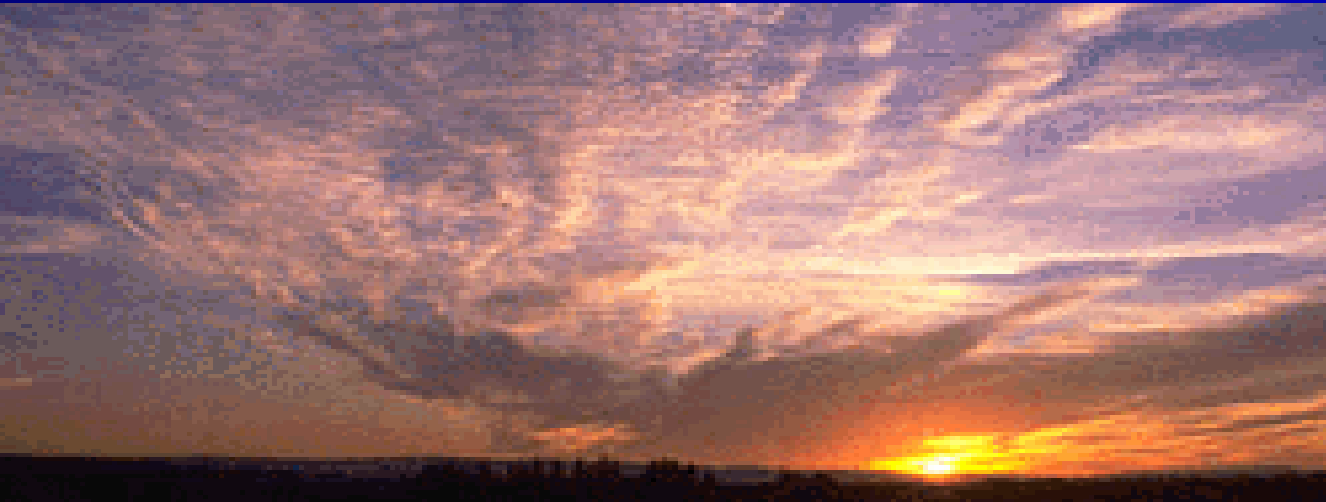
R1: "Therefore I hated life because the work that is wrought **under the sun** is grievous unto me."

Ecc1 2v17 [AV]

R2: "What hath a man of all his labour... wherein he hath laboured **under the sun?** For all his days are sorrows and his travail grief... This is vanity."

Ecc1 2v22-23 [AV]

Code breaking : "Under the sun"



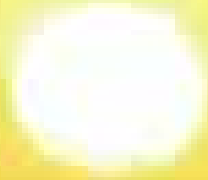
"Under the sun..."

- The context of Qoheleth's investigation
- Used by Qoheleth only (29 times)

"In this life...under the sun"

- Eccl 6v12, "...what is good for man in this life...under the sun"
- Eccl 9v9, "...thy portion in this life which thou takest under the sun"

The answer to life's question when God is!



" There is no (inherent) good in man that he should eat and drink and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God. For who can eat, or who can hasten apart from him."

Ecclesiastes 2 v24-25 (AV)
(corrected)

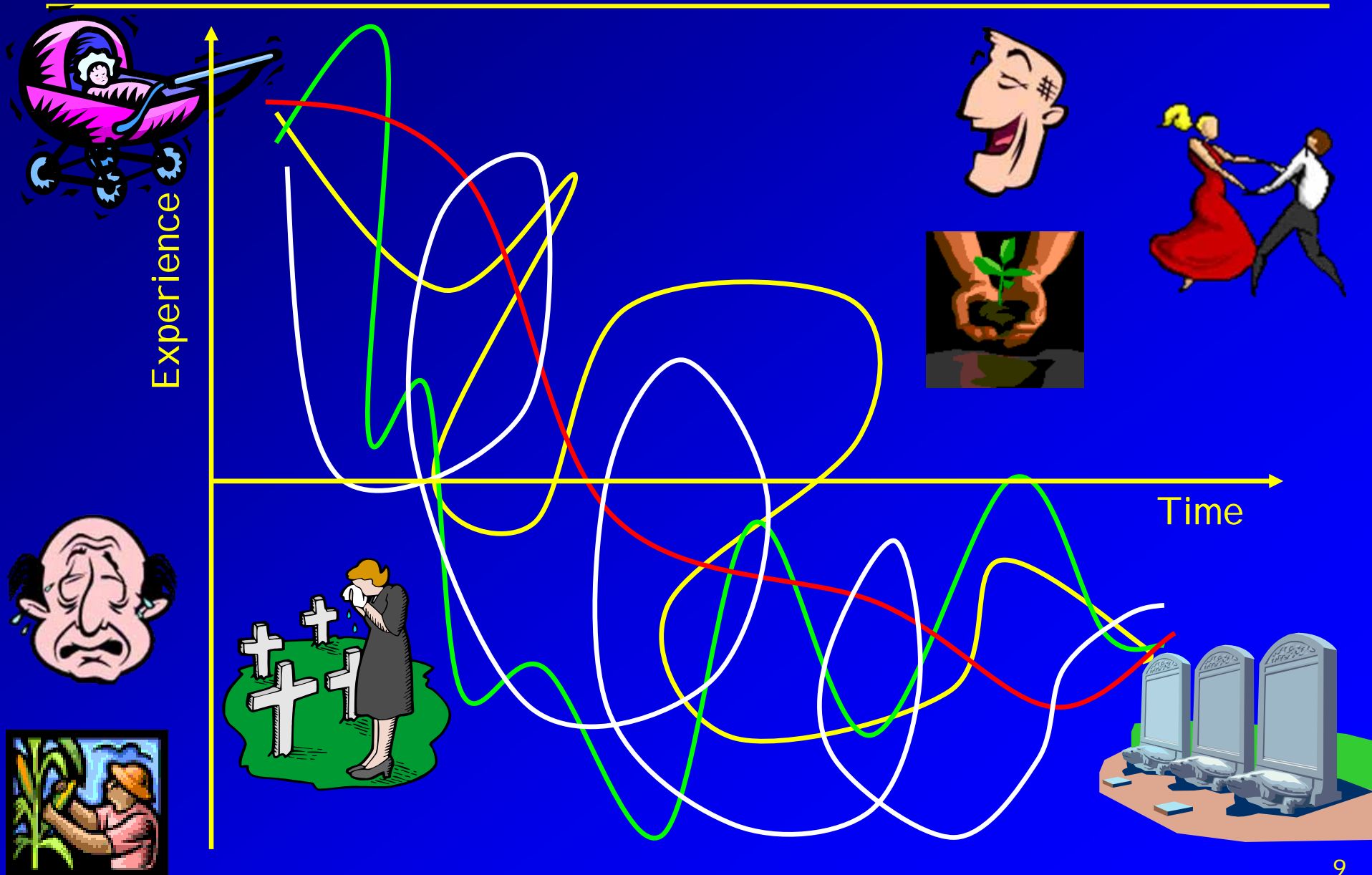
Joy – a gift from God in itself!



“This also I saw is from the hand of God; for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?”

Ecclesiastes 2v24-25 [NRSV]

The journey of life (Ecclesiastes 3v1-9)



Joy – a gift from God in itself!

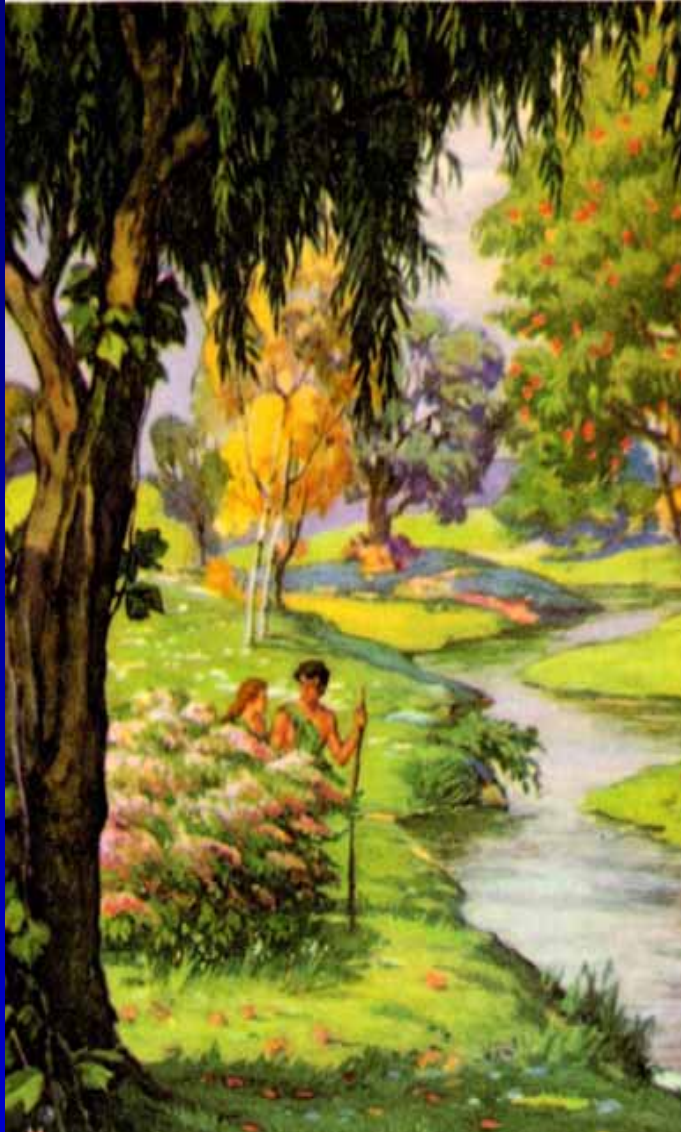


“I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can fin out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.”

Ecclesiastes 3v10-11 [AV]

“world” = Eterntiy
Olam [ST H5769]

Dissatisfaction or Peace – which is it to be?



“ And God said, “Let us make man in our **image**, after our **likeness**..So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.”

Genesis 1 v 26-27 [AV]

- image = physical appearance (angels)
- likeness = “mental make-up”
ability to conceive the eternal
capable of faith

Joy – a gift from God in itself!



“I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can fin out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.”

Ecclesiastes 3v10-11 [AV]

Dissatisfaction or Peace – it's your choice!

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

John 14v27 [AV]

