

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

The conclusion of the matter



Halifax YW 2008

Conclusion : 2 Actions & 2 Reasons



“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of [duty] man, For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”

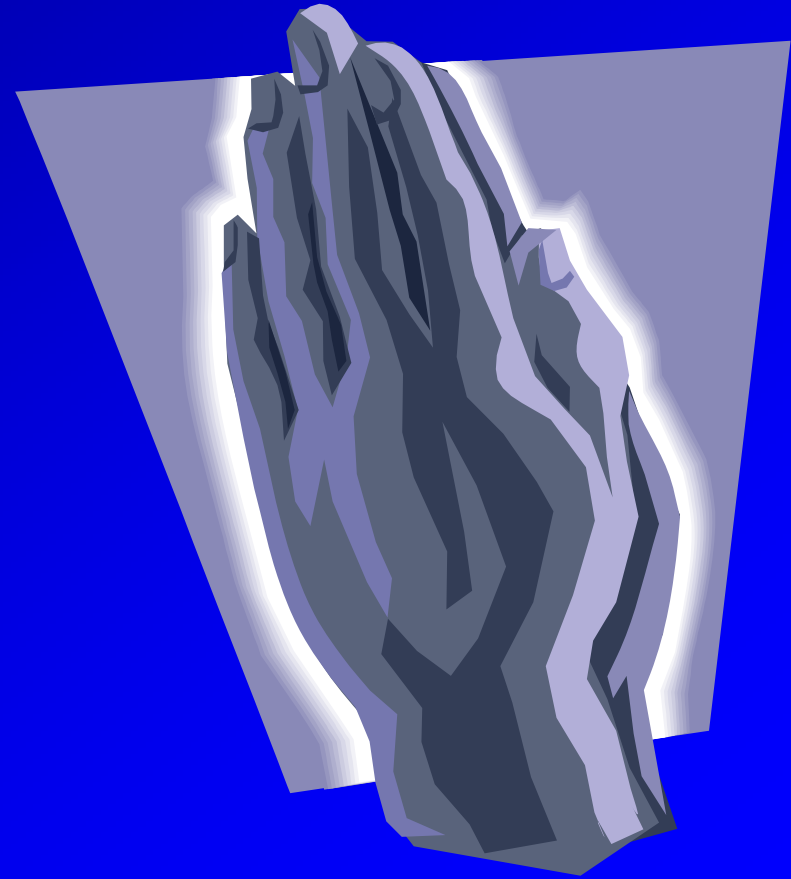
Ecclesiastes 12v13-14 : [NIV]

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| WHAT? | (1) Fear God |
| | (2) keep commandments |
| WHY? | (1) whole of [duty] man, |
| | (2) judgement |

If you don't mean it, don't pray it!

Ecclesiastes 5 [AV]:

- v4 When thou vowest a vow to God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.
- v5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."



Worked Example

Q1 :In Eccl 12v1 Qoheleth asks us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth but he also asks us to imagine something. What does he ask us to imagine being?



A1 :What its like to get old

Me, growing old? I imagine that!



ILLUSTRATION	MEANING
v2 The sun, light, moon stars be darkened	Memory slow down
v3 The keepers of the house shall tremble	Weak arms and hands
v3 The strong men shall bow themselves	Legs begin to bow
v3 The grinders cease and are few	Pass the denchers!
v3 The windows are darkened	Eyes grow weak
v4 Door shut in streets (few grinders)	Loose lips - no teeth

Me, growing old? I imagine that!



ILLUSTRATION	MEANING
v5 Shall rise up at the voice of a bird	Early to bed, early to rise
v5 Daughters of music brought low	Pardon?
v5 Shall be afraid of that which is high	Scared of heights
v5 Fears shall be in the way	Bring me my Zimmer!
v5 The almond tree shall flourish	White hair
v5 Grasshopper shall be a burden	No strength to carry

Me, growing old? I imagine that!



ILLUSTRATION	MEANING
v5 Desires shall fail	Sexual interest fails
v6 Silver cord is loosed	Spine weakens
v6 Golden bowl is broken	Mind/Brain is lost
v6 Pitcher broken at the fountain	Heart begins to fail
v6 Wheel broken at the cistern	Veins and arteries weaken
v7 Dust returns from whence it came	Death

Worked Example



Q3 :Why do you think that Qoheleth thought that the exercise which you have just completed might be useful in deciding whether to fear God?

Remember to do!



“Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife and the Lord remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son.”

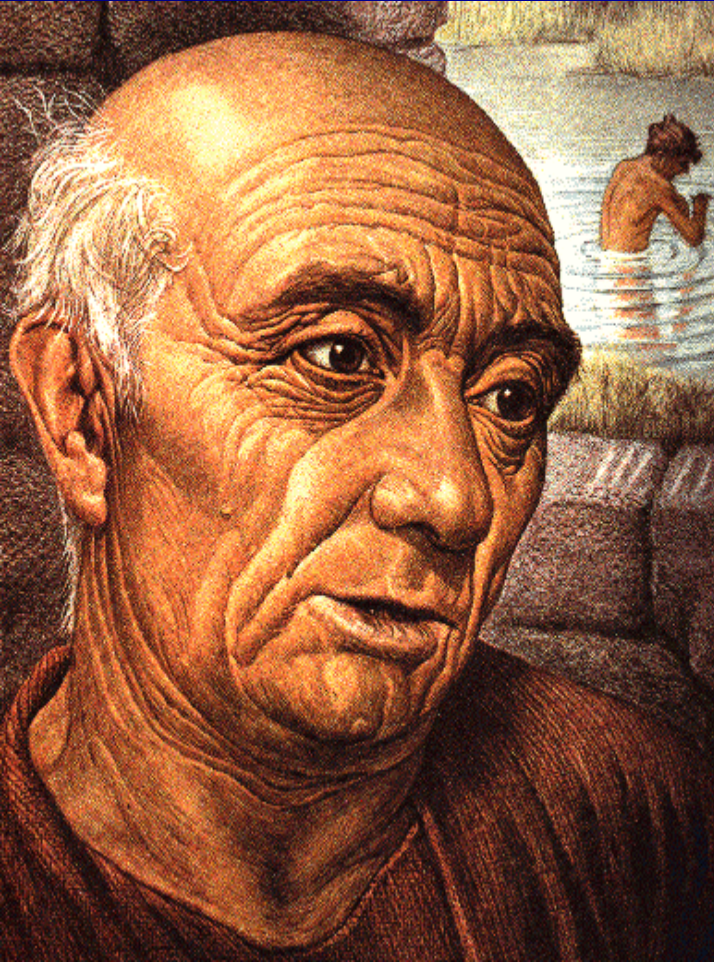
1 Samuel 1v19-20 : [NIV]

“But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God for it is he that giveth thee power...And it shall be that if thou do at all forget...and walk after other Gods and serve them...that ye shall surely perish.”

Deuteronomy 8v18-19 : [AV]



Remember to do!



Psalm 137:

v1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

v5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.
V6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

Me, growing old? I imagine that!



ILLUSTRATION	MEANING
v5 Desires shall fail	Sexual interest fails
v6 Silver cord is loosed	Spine weakens
v6 Golden bowl is broken	Mind/Brain is lost
v6 Pitcher broken at the fountain	Heart begins to fail
v6 Wheel broken at the cistern	Veins and arteries weaken
v7 Dust returns from whence it came	Death

The Structure of Ecclesiastes

<p>Conclusion 1 [Eccl 2v24-26]</p>	<p>"there is no good in man that he should eat and drink and make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God"</p>
<p>Conclusion 2 [Eccl 5v18-20]</p>	<p>"it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink and to enjoy the good of all his labour...which God giveth him: for it is his portion."</p>
<p>Conclusion 3 [Eccl 8v12-15]</p>	<p>"I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat and to drink and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life which God giveth him under the sun."</p>



- Total Life, Walter Kaiser
- Princeton Review (1857)

Ecclesiastes : A book with a reputation!

Depressing!

Miserable!

Pessimistic!

Fatalistic!

Poorly
structured!

Written by a
bitter &
broken man



Who says Ecclesiastes is miserable?



Ecclesiastes 9:

v7 "Go eat your food with gladness
and drink your wine with a joyful
heart"

v9 "Enjoy life (lit. see life) with your
wife whom you love..."

v10 "Whatever your hand finds to do,
do it with all your might..."

"So whether you eat or drink
or whatever you do, DO IT
ALL for the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10v31 ; [NIV]

Do ALL to the glory of God!



Emptiness



Senselessness



Hopelessness



A final word from Paul on the matter...

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying this is written

Death is swallowed up in
victory

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the LORD.”

1 Corinthians 15v54&58 : [AV]

