

## BIBLE READING FOR 2023

WEEK #33

ECCLESIASTES - SONG OF SOLOMON

08-13-23

Monday - Ecclesiastes 1-3

Wednesday - Ecclesiastes 8-12

Friday - Song of Solomon 5-8

Tuesday - Ecclesiastes 4-7

Thursday - Song of Solomon 1-4

**Ecclesiastes** is the fourth book of the five that are classified as poetry in the Old Testament and the last of the three writings referred to as wisdom literature. The name comes from the Greek word *ekklesiastes* and meant a gatherer or a convener of an assembly. The Hebrew word that *ekklesiastes* was translated from was *qoheleth* and meant a speaker or a preacher. So this book is the writing of a preacher, that was also a king in Jerusalem, proclaiming what he has learned from his experiences in life.

**Authorship** is a point of debate between those accepting Solomon as the author and those rejecting him in favor of an anonymous writer at a much later date. The book does not state the author's name so lengthy arguments are made by those on both sides of the issue. If it is the work of Solomon it is suggested that it was composed sometime toward the end of his life. On the other hand, at least some of those that cling to a different writer propose a date somewhere between 300 and 200 B.C.

**The theme** of Ecclesiastes is the vanity of life. This being true we must not misunderstand the book to be one of gloom and hopelessness concerning the futility of man's limited existence. The only life that is truly vain is that which is lived with no thought toward God. So we might more correctly state the theme of Ecclesiastes to be the vanity of life without God. The absolute necessity of considering God in everything we do is emphasized in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person."

**An outline** for Ecclesiastes:

- 1.) Vanity of life learned from experience and observation 1-6
- 2.) Counsel for living a meaningful life 7-12

**The Song of Solomon** is the last of the books of the books of poetry in the Old Testament and is also known as the Song of Songs. This very unique book is written in the form of a lyrical love song.

**The author** is stated to be Solomon and this book is thought to have been written during the Golden Age of Solomon's reign around 970-950 B.C..

**The theme** of the book expresses the value and beauty of true love between a woman and a man. To interpret it as some kind of allegory of God's love for Israel or Christ's love for the church appears unwarranted from the text.

**An outline** for the Song of Solomon: 1.) Love and marriage 1-4

- 2.) Struggling and growing in love 5-8

**Questions** for Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon:

- 1.) What do we learn about the author of Ecclesiastes in Eccl 1:1?
- 2.) In Eccl 2:1, with what did the writer test himself?
- 3.) According to Eccl 3:12, there is nothing better for man to do than what?
- 4.) What is the working man able to do in Eccl 5:12 that the rich man is not?
- 5.) Who is talked about in Song of Solomon 3:11 and what special day in his life is mentioned there?

**Answers** to questions for Week #32 – Proverbs 1-31:

- 1.) Wisdom and understanding.
- 2.) As an ox that goes to the slaughter.
- 3.) The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one who talks too much ruins his life.
- 4.) Make him slow to anger.
- 5.) Don't answer a fool according to his folly or you will be like him