

## Purpose

To teach us how to apply divine wisdom to daily life, to live with the end in mind

## Meaning of Ecclesiastes

The word in both Hebrew and Greek indicates a person who holds or addresses an assembly, similar to “a preacher” (see *1:1*).

## Penman

It is generally believed that Solomon, “the Preacher,” King of Israel, is the author. The book gets its name from the word *ekklesia*, referring to an assembly or *koheleth*, referring to the one who calls, gathers, or speaks.

## Recipients

The people of Israel, particularly the youth, even his own son (*12:12*)

## Date Written

In the latter years of Solomon’s reign (930 BC)

## Key Verses

“The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commands, because this applies to every person, for God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.”  
*Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14*

## An Overview (12 Chapters)

- Solomon’s Personal Experience (*1:1-2:26*)
- Solomon’s General Observations (*3:1-5:20*)
- Solomon’s Practical Counsel (*6:1-8:17*)
- Solomon’s Final Conclusion (*9:1-12:14*)

## Major Themes

- *Vanity*: Used 37 times to describe the activities of human life, vanity is defined as “deficient, fruitless, pointless, meaningless, or a waste of time.” Finding fulfillment in life apart from God is vanity.
- *Under the Sun*: These three words tip us off to Solomon’s vantage point. He is making observations about life from a human perspective, as naturalists or humanists would today. Therefore, many of his comments do not line up with biblical doctrine. Thus, we must be careful not to build our theology on this book but look at it in light of all Scripture.
- *Judgment*: Because there is a “test” at the end of the “course,” it should cause all students to pay attention to what really matters. God’s judgment causes us to live with the end in mind.