

Ecclesiastes

A Glimpse of Vanity: Wisdom as We Wait for Heaven

1) Recognize the Vanity of Life (1:1-11)

The Argument: "All is Vanity!" (1:1-3)

The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

- ² Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.
³ What does man gain by all the toil
at which he toils under the sun?

The Reasons that "All is Vanity" (1:4-11)

- ⁴ A generation goes, and a generation comes,
but the earth remains forever.
⁵ The sun rises, and the sun goes down,
and hastens to the place where it rises.
⁶ The wind blows to the south
and goes around to the north;
around and around goes the wind,
and on its circuits the wind returns.
⁷ All streams run to the sea,
but the sea is not full;
to the place where the streams flow,
there they flow again.
⁸ All things are full of weariness;
a man cannot utter it;
the eye is not satisfied with seeing,
nor the ear filled with hearing.
⁹ What has been is what will be,
and what has been done is what will be done,
and there is nothing new under the sun.
¹⁰ Is there a thing of which it is said,
"See, this is new"?
It has been already
in the ages before us.
¹¹ There is no remembrance of former things,
nor will there be any remembrance
of later things yet to be
among those who come after.
-
- Endless Cycle of the World (v. 4-7)*
- No Satisfaction in the World (v. 8)*
- Nothing (Really) New in the World (v. 9-10)*
- No Remembrance of People in the World (v. 11)*

Psalm 90:10-12: ¹⁰ The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. ¹¹ Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? ¹² So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

James 4:13-15: Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit" — ¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

2) Receive Life as a Gift and Not Gain (2:24-26)

There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵ for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶ For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

3) Realize the Certainty of Death (7:1-6)

A good name is better than precious ointment,
and the day of death than the day of birth.

² It is better to go to the house of mourning
than to go to the house of feasting,
for this is the end of all mankind,
and the living will lay it to heart.

³ Sorrow is better than laughter,
for by sadness of face the heart is made glad.

⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

⁵ It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise
than to hear the song of fools.

⁶ For as the crackling of thorns under a pot,
so is the laughter of the fools;
this also is vanity.

4) Remember Your Creator & Judge & Savior (11:8-12:8, 12:14)

⁸ So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

⁹ Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

¹⁰ Remove vexation from your heart, and put away pain from your body, for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

12 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, "I have no pleasure in them"; ² before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain, ³ in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows are dimmed, ⁴ and the doors on the street are shut— when the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low— ⁵ they are afraid also of what is high, and terrors are in the way; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and desire fails, because man is going to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets— ⁶ before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, ⁷ and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. ⁸ Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity.....

¹³ The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

[Philippians 1:21](#): ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

[1 Corinthians 15:56–58](#): ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.