

## Ecclesiastes/Kohelet notes

an unusual book

the name- Ecclesiastes/Kohelet

Solomonic authorship?

Wisdom literature- a bit of an intro. Save the major one for Proverbs.

Some things about wisdom lit.- little emphasis on Jewish particularism. God is present, but almost at a deist level. No emphasis on mitzvot or sacrifice.

1:1 The words of Koheleth son of David, king in Jerusalem.

1:2 Utter futility! -- said Koheleth -- Utter futility! All is futile!

1:3 What real value is there for a man In all the gains he makes beneath the sun?

1:4 One generation goes, another comes, But the earth remains the same forever.

1:5 The sun rises, and the sun sets -- And glides back to where it rises.

1:6 Southward blowing, Turning northward, Ever turning blows the wind; On its rounds the wind returns.

1:7 All streams flow into the sea, Yet the sea is never full; To the place [from] which they flow The streams flow back again.

1:8 All such things are wearisome: No man can ever state them; The eye never has enough of seeing, Nor the ear enough of hearing.

1:9 Only that shall happen Which has happened, Only that occur Which has occurred; There is nothing new Beneath the sun!

1:10 Sometimes there is a phenomenon of which they say, "Look, this one is new!" -- it occurred long since, in ages that went by before us.

1:11 The earlier ones are not remembered; so too those that will occur later will no more be remembered than those that will occur at the very end.

1:12 I, Koheleth, was king in Jerusalem over Israel.

1:13 I set my mind to study and to probe with wisdom all that happens under the sun. --  
An unhappy business, that, which God gave men to be concerned with!

1:14 I observed all the happenings beneath the sun, and I found that all is futile and  
pursuit of wind:

1:15 A twisted thing that cannot be made straight, A lack that cannot be made good.

1:16 I said to myself: "Here I have grown richer and wiser than any that ruled before me  
over Jerusalem, and my mind has zealously absorbed wisdom and learning."

1:17 And so I set my mind to appraise wisdom and to appraise madness and folly. And I  
learned -- that this too was pursuit of wind:

1:18 For as wisdom grows, vexation grows; To increase learning is to increase heartache.

Why is it Solomon?

2:1 I said to myself, "Come, I will treat you to merriment. Taste mirth!" That too, I found,  
was futile.

2:2 Of revelry I said, "It's mad!" Of merriment, "What good is that?"

2:3 I ventured to tempt my flesh with wine, and to grasp folly, while letting my mind  
direct with wisdom, to the end that I might learn which of the two was better for men to  
practice in their few days of life under heaven.

2:4 I multiplied my possessions. I built myself houses and I planted vineyards.

2:5 I laid out gardens and groves, in which I planted every kind of fruit tree.

2:6 I constructed pools of water, enough to irrigate a forest shooting up with trees.

2:7 I bought male and female slaves, and I acquired stewards. I also acquired more cattle,  
both herds and flocks, than all who were before me in Jerusalem.

Please note: this text may not be shared or reproduced without the written permission of the Darshan  
Yeshiva.

2:8 I further amassed silver and gold and treasures of kings and provinces; and I got myself male and female singers, as well as the luxuries of commoners -- coffers and coffers of them.

2:9 Thus, I gained more wealth than anyone before me in Jerusalem. In addition, my wisdom remained with me:

2:10 I withheld from my eyes nothing they asked for, and denied myself no enjoyment; rather, I got enjoyment out of all my wealth. And that was all I got out of my wealth.

2:11 Then my thoughts turned to all the fortune my hands had built up, to the wealth I had acquired and won -- and oh, it was all futile and pursuit of wind; there was no real value under the sun!

Anti-Apocalyptic book. Ending: a cop out? An addition?

12:8 Utter futility -- said Koheleth -- All is futile!

12:9 A further word: Because Koheleth was a sage, he continued to instruct the people. He listened to and tested the soundness of many maxims.

12:10 Koheleth sought to discover useful sayings and recorded genuinely truthful sayings.

12:11 The sayings of the wise are like goads, like nails fixed in prodding sticks. They were given by one Shepherd.

12:12 A further word: Against them, my son, be warned! The making of many books is without limit And much study is a wearying of the flesh.

12:13 The sum of the matter, when all is said and done: Revere God and observe His commandments! For this applies to all mankind:

12:14 that God will call every creature to account for everything unknown, be it good or bad. The sum of the matter, when all is said and done: Revere God and observe His commandments! For this applies to all mankind.

Association with Sukkot

Please note: this text may not be shared or reproduced without the written permission of the Darshan Yeshiva.