

A WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE ECCLESIASTES

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Ecclesiastes is often called the most skeptical and problematic book in the Bible. The general tone of the book is one of pessimism that is summed up by the refrain, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." It expresses futility and emptiness in searching for the meaning of life, in this life. It is included in the canon because of its relationship with wisdom tradition of Solomon

Author referred to as Preacher or Teacher
Exact date of authorship unknown

Comparisons

Job: Isaac Hayes, Lou Rawls, Ray Charles, Etta James, Shirley Caesar,
Psalms: James Cleveland, Fannie Crosby, Richard Smallwood, Mahalia Jackson,
Kurt Franklin
Proverbs: Grover Washington, Roberta Flack, Count Basie, Duke Ellington,
Nancy Wilson,
Song of Solomon: Nat King Cole, Aretha Franklin, Dinah Washington, Johnny
Mathis, Patti Labelle
Ecclesiastes: BB King, Joe Williams, Sarah Vaughn, Billie Holiday, Hip-Hop

Lessons from Ecclesiastes

The Book of Ecclesiastes is a reminder to examine the things we give ourselves to, the things we get upset about, worry about and cut our lives short over because they are not worth the price. Before we become too engrossed in some things we should stop and ask one question "Is this (person, thing, or fight) worth the price I am paying for it?"

The essence of faith sometimes means we cannot always resolve life's contradictions and inconsistencies. Sometimes life does not have a fairy tale ending where everyone lives happily ever after (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon). The Book of Ecclesiastes asks us how open are we to other points of view that do not always fit our understanding of how things are supposed to turn out. Some clouds do not have silver linings. Faith means trusting God even when we do not understand, or when we do not see a silver lining and there is no pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

The essence of faith means sometimes we must admit we don't know the answers to some things and we may never know or understand, however we trust God. Even in eternity God's mind will still be God's mind and incomprehensible to human beings. We may understand some things better by and by but not everything completely. Some things may be clear but others things we may always be looking through a glass darkly (I Corinthians 13:12).