

## II. Introductory Notes to Ecclesiastes

- A. Some relevant matters not discussed in detail but just given in broadly outlined formula. This is not our special interest but is important in the background material for the book.

1. Authorship:

I will argue for the traditional view. Archer, INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT, gives a nice summary. Other views will be quickly mentioned. My feeling is that the force of the personal material in the book argues for the traditional view and every other idea must depend on external materials and comparisons.

2. Date:

Late 10th century BC...traditional dating. Items in the book that are supposed to suggest a later dating are usually assumptions...particularly when it comes to the assessment of vocabulary.

3. Occasion of writing:

A wise man comes to his senses, I think. This is also rather traditional and this is one of the things that makes my courses dull...too much tradition. But I see no sense in changing the ideas for the sake of novelty.

4. The intended audience:

Everyone..particularly those interested in establishing values in life.

5. An outline:

This is not an easy book to outline, but I suggest the following:

Prologue: 1:1-11  
 First Discourse 1:12 -chapter 2  
 Second Discourse chapters 3-5  
 Third Discourse chapters 6 -8:15  
 Fourth Discourse chapters 8:16-12:7  
 Epilogue 12:8-14

Other outlines are common and some seek to arrange the book in connection with poems, prose, proverbial sections. I also have outlined it in 14 separate section headings...but that does not look wise to me now. The above is what I prefer. What hampers it is the repetition of key items in each discourse. That does not interfere with the meaning, just with the structural development. Within the outlined materials will be found a number of interesting language and literary features. But a simple outline is always preferable and this one is simple.