

6. The Vocabulary:

A Hebrew student's dream: replete with hapax legomena, Aramaisms, and unusual meanings for words you thought you knew.

7. The Nature of the Book

a. Characteristics

- (1) earthy language
- (2) human experimentation
- (3) logical inference
- (4) realism
- (5) controlled pessimism

b. Claims:

- (1) empirical analysis
- (2) all encompassing (the affairs of life)
- (3) logical progression
- (4) careful research
- (5) spiritually guided

The characteristics and claims nicely support one another.

c. Content:

Poetry, Prose, Aphorisms, rhetorical questions, spiritual allusions.

8. The Theme:

The essential theme, stated negatively, is simply... "Nothing is meaningful if God is not in it." The more positive thrust is "to fear God and keep his commandments" for this is the way in which His presence and power are known in the realm of our existence. The theme is emphasized by the three phrases:

"vanity of vanities" a superlative way of saying nothing could be more empty than this.

"under the sun" a locative expression that denotes the world of our activities and life span

"vexation of spirit" in a sense telling something of the inner conflict in which we often find ourselves embroiled.

The thrust is that our days are limited, our strengths are not nearly what they should be for achieving our ends, and the challenge of just living is overwhelming. The plus or minus of this scheme depends directly on the relation we bear with the Deity. Our satisfaction in life is dependent on God and not on our dabbling or attaining.