

- a. 6:1-5...the emphasis is that no matter how much one has, or how well off one may seem to be, one is no better than the state of the soul. The soul-state really determines the degree of meaning to all else. If it is neglected, one's very birth is wasted. Pretty strong language but when dealing with the problems of materialism that is probably necessary.
- b. 12:1-7..the poem of life indicates that all aspects of life are subject to proper respect of the Creator. We are all wearing out and the emphasis is on a fondness and devotedness to the one who created us. This is the primary thrust...all others follow it at some length.
- c. 9:1-6 ..the emphasis is that the reality to which one's life is in the hand of God...that is the degree to which it takes meaning. The physical bears in itself the reality that it will one day be no more...in the hand of God it recognizes this and subordinates itself to the things that are truly lasting.
- d. Conclusion:

This message is regularly reflected in the devotional literature of the Bible. You can see graphic statements on it in the ministry of Jesus in Matthew 6. The heart of the prophetic condemnation in the Old Testament is grounded in this, to some extent, as the Judaeans forgot their God and thought only about themselves.

4. Life Requires a Strong Dependence on Providence

This, too, we will treat rather briefly. The writer of Ecclesiastes is not a fatalist but he knows that the Deity controls and that we are not in the place of being "masters of our destiny." Men err in this regard rather often and easily but we should be alert to the facts. At the same time we are not mere deists that abstractedly speak of a great leading power. As theists we see a God of personality who relates to us as Father and listens to us as God. All of these aspects are not seen in Ecclesiastes but what is seen is the strong dependence on a Divine power.

Scriptures

Observations

3:8-13

We cannot know all that God does and cannot bring orders on Him to do one thing or another. We may yield and believe in His providence. We can guarantee nothing in our own strength but under His providence we may accept what comes. The swift may not win the race...we will allow God to order the decision of the contest.

6:9-10 (?)

7:18-29

11:1-6

12:13-14