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Ecclesiastes:
Finding Joy within the Frustrations of Life
1:1 to 12:14



In the main body of **Ecclesiastes**, **the Teacher himself** comes onto the stage, introduces **himself** and **his** quest for meaning, and then proceeds to scrutinize different aspects of life and experience to see if meaning is to be found. In the light of **his** independent search for this meaning, **he** keeps coming to the conclusion that all is **pointless** (**to see link click Ah – The Message of Ecclesiastes**). Regularly this conclusion is contrasted with the **"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (Isaiah 22:13; First Corinthians 15:32)"** passages, which call to mind the joyful appreciation of life that **he** had learned from **his** Jewish roots. The contradictory contrast that results from this opens up gaps in the reading, gaps that indicate the excruciating tension emerging from **the Teacher's** journey of exploration. Breakthroughs occur in **5:1-7** and **7:23-29**, but in both cases the breakthroughs, which illuminate the independent nature of **the Teacher's** search for meaning, are followed by passages full of despair and struggle. Resolution comes in **12:1-7** through "remembering" and "rejoicing" . . . but not apart from the struggles of life itself.[236]