

The Times of Our Lives:
The Wisdom of Solomon

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By
Marjorie A. Younce



Illustrations
By
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“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be;
and that which is done is that which shall be done:
and there is no new thing under the sun.”

Ecclesiastes 1:9

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2016918858

ISBN: 978-0-9833648-4-9

First Printing: 2016

HERITAGE BIBLE CHURCH
P.O. Box 573
Walnut Grove, MN 56180
Dr. Max D. Younce, Pastor
Web: www.heritagebbc.com

Printed in the USA By
Morris Publishing
3212 E. Hwy. 30
Kearney, NE 68847
800-650-7888



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About this Book

This book was originally intended to be a book of poetry based on the famous “Time Poem” of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

As I read the Book of Ecclesiastes, its author, King Solomon, stepped right out of its pages. In person! You remember him from Sunday School. When he became King of Israel, he went to the Tabernacle to pray. God said to him in a dream, “Ask what I shall give thee.” Most other men would have asked for riches, but Solomon asked for an understanding heart. That is the good about him that we heard in Sunday School.

“And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; (11)

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. (12)

And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days” (1 Kings 3:11-13).

Happily ever after, right? No. This is not Camelot, and the tale of a mythical King Arthur. There will be no “Happily ever-aftering” here. We find out Solomon is only human, and very like the rest of us. There is no “Once upon a time,” that ends up “happily ever after,” in real life.

Solomon looked back, and beckoned to the rest of his dysfunctional family, and some supporting characters, all of whom found their way into this book. Let’s hope we can all take a bow when the curtain falls on our final page.

When you finish the book I hope you will know the answers to questions like: How were people saved during Old Testament times, Who was King David talking about when he said, “What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?” Who was Shimei? Why was King David so adamant that Solomon should execute Joab? There will be many situations experienced by Solomon and his family, that modern families experience today. Then, again, there will some that modern families will not experience. Praise the Lord for that!

This book has everything going for it that the world loves. It is drawn from the lives of the first three kings of the Nation of Israel, and has love, hate, court intrigue, enemies of the righteous, salvation, and prophecy.

A passage from the Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3:1-8, has the dubious distinction of topping the music charts as a result of being included in a song by composer, Pete Seeger. But, this book will not make the “Best Seller” list. Why? Because it is truth taken strictly from the Bible.

The context of this book is taken from 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and the Book of Ecclesiastes. There is a cross-reference in the back for every verse in Ecclesiastes. Surprisingly, Ecclesiastes 9:14,15 is not a parable, as many think. It is the historical account of 2 Samuel 20:13-22. It is similar to what the Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12:2, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, ...". The "man" Paul was speaking about was himself.

Solomon penned the Proverbs, one or two of the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. Many literary quotes have been taken from Ecclesiastes. Although Solomon wrote many other books, none exist today, except those in the Bible.

The life of King David is the only one, exhaustively, examined from the time of his childhood until death. It is an open book like no other. Even his state of mind is revealed in the Psalms, like a diary open to our review. How would our lives look if subjected to this scrutiny?

The Apostle Paul tells that we are to learn from the life experiences related in the Old Testament.

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (11)

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (12)

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. "

(1 Corinthians 10:11-13).

You say, "Well, what about the life of Christ?" Now, you are talking about the Author of the Bible, and His story extends from "In the beginning God," the very first verse of Genesis, to "...Even so, come, Lord Jesus," in Revelation 22:20, and to the last "Amen," of Revelation 22:21.

Most of the life experiences of Solomon, and his extended family, are common to mankind. I pray we can learn from them.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Yes, there are some poems worked in...

The book is definitely enhanced by Rachel York's stunning art work. She is a married, stay-at-home mother of two children, and a dedicated Christian who is active in her church, the Good News Bible Church of Cohasset, Minnesota. We thank the Lord for her.

My husband, of 62 years, is Dr. Max D. Younce, the pastor of Heritage Bible Church.

From both Rachel and I, please enjoy your trip into one of the most exciting times in Biblical History.

The Anvil of God's Word

Last eve I paused before a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime.
And looking in, I saw old hammers on the floor,
Worn by the beating years of time.

“How many anvils have you had,” said I,
“To wear and batter all these hammers so?”
“Just one,” said he, then with a twinkle in his eyes,
“The anvil wears the hammers out you know.”

And so I thought, the anvil of God's word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon.
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone!

Source unknown



“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: (28) And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” (Matthew 6:28,29)

Introduction

Time Taken in Biblical Context

Our Bible has two sections, the Old Testament (Genesis to Malachi), and the New Testament (Matthew to Revelation). The Bible is one book of Scripture, with a total of sixty-six books, forty different authors, living at different times, in different parts of the world, most of whom did not know each other. They were written down, from the time God gave Moses the Pentateuch to write down, by inspiration; until the Book of Revelation was given, by inspiration, to the Apostle John, in approximately 96 A.D. God's Word is only inspired in the original text. The Pentateuch is made up of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. There are no inspired translations.

Taken in context, there is not one contradiction of Scripture to be found in the entire Bible. A text is a particular verse, or passage. To determine, with accuracy, what your text is teaching from God's Word, you must also read what the preceding verses, and the following verses have to say. They are called the "context." You do not set a verse aside by itself. That is what the Apostle Peter meant when he said,

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20).

When an archaeologist lays out a "dig," he first stretches out a grid of string, and then carefully measures, and photographs, each layer going down. When an artifact is found, "in situ," meaning "in the place where it should be found," a wealth of information about the artifact can be gleaned from the area surrounding it.

We should never enter any book in God's Word, especially Ecclesiastes, without investigating our text "in situ," or the surrounding context,

Further, we learn from the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, given to the Apostle John in about 96 A.D., that our Scriptures are now complete, and nothing is to be added or taken away.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: (18)

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18,19).

When verses are quoted, they should be explained. And they shall be...later, in Chapter Eleven.

Since the Bible is “one book” of Scripture, the Old Testament is not to be used without added light from the New Testament. The New Testament is not to be used without consulting the Old Testament. We often say, “The New is in the Old concealed. In the New, the Old is revealed. The Scriptures are one unit, working together as a whole, and contain all that God wants man to know.

Our study will begin with the Book of Ecclesiastes, and branch out.

One very famous preacher said, in his commentary on Ecclesiastes, “Solomon knew nothing of the New Testament.” Ah, but, Solomon was one of those people that we read about in the Old Testament, to whom God spoke personally. He did not have the New Testament Scriptures to read, but he knew the Author well, and the Author knew where to find him!

The name of the book, Ecclesiastes, means “assembly, or one who convenes an assembly.” It comes from the Greek word, “ecclesia,” which in the New Testament means “assembly, or church.” In Hebrew the title is Koheleth, and it also stands for the speaker in the book, King Solomon.

A. R. Faussett explains it this way.

“The Hebrew title of the book is Koheleth, which the speaker in it applies to himself. “I the Preacher (Koheleth) was king over Israel in Jerusalem” (Ecclesiastes 1:12).

It means an Assembler, or Convener of a meeting, and a Preacher to such a meeting. Solomon was endowed with inspired wisdom especially fitting him for the task. The Orientals delight in such meetings for grave discourse. “The Preacher” taught the people knowledge, orally;”

“And there came of all people to HEAR the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom” (1 Kings 4:34).

“And she (Queen of Sheba) came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart” (2).

“Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that HEAR thy wisdom” (8).

“And all the earth sought to Solomon, to HEAR his wisdom, which God had put in his heart” (1 Kings 10:2, 8, 24).

In the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon paints a verbal picture of such an assembly of learned Jewish people. Picture Solomon, lecturing in the royal robes of the oriental monarch. His robes must have had threads of every hue, trimmed with gold. Remember, our Savior pointed to the “lilies of the field,” as an example of the beauty of Solomon’s raiment, and said,

“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:” (28).

“And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these” (Matthew 6:28-29).

Get the picture?

In this assembly, he is taking the part of “the Preacher,” or “Debater” in a court of logic. The premise to be debated is, “What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?” The “man under the sun” is the natural man, the lost person who is living for himself, and not God, or, a believer who is not yielding to the Holy Spirit, and just living for himself. Who better to speak on this subject than the wisest man on earth who had everything, but “blew it” in the end?

It is reasonable to assume that since “the world” was aware of Solomon’s God-given wisdom, it also became aware of the sinful life he led in his old age. He wrote his own epitaph in these words,

Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary (perfumer) to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.

(Ecclesiastes 10:1).

There is only one life,
T’will soon be past.
Only what’s done
For Christ will last.

The Preacher

The very first verse in the Book of Ecclesiastes says, "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem." King Solomon cast himself as a "Preacher" of long ago. Here are some words about a preacher in our time.

He may walk a little slower;
But, his voice is plainly heard,
When he brings the Sunday Sermon
Taken from God's Holy Word.

If you don't know you're going to Heaven,
You've heard the truth you must believe.
Accept Christ, now! Without delay!
And eternal life you will receive."

He explains each verse in context,
Gives each meaning in its place,
Divides the Word of Truth rightly,
So, each one can grow in grace.

Let us bow for closing prayer.
"Thank you, Lord, for eternal life.
Bless those who came to church today;
As they go out to a world of strife.

And at the end of every message,
He deftly "pulls in the strings."
For those who are without Christ,
The Gospel he clearly brings.

I pray they know your perfect peace;
So, if they are called Home tonight,
They'll wake up in Heaven with You,
In that Land Where There Is No Night."

"All men are sinners, bound for Hell.
Our works won't pay the price!
Only our Savior's precious blood
Makes the perfect sacrifice.

He silently prays as he walks to the back,
To meet each person at the door;
If someone failed to accept Christ today,
They'll come back to hear it once more.

No sinner can ever enter Heaven.
It's a glorious perfect place.
You may be good;
but, you're not perfect!
The only way in-- is Grace.

Oh, His steps may be a little slower;
But, he still can be plainly heard,
As he delivers the Gospel message
So clearly from God's Word.

...Marjorie A. Younce

The moment you believe Christ died for you,
He marks your sin debt fully paid;
With His Righteousness to your account.
The guarantee of eternal life is made.

What Time is It?

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

To every *thing there is* a season,
And a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die;

A time to plant, And a time to pluck up
That which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones,
And a time to gather stones together;

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose;

A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

Many have sunk deeply into this passage of Scripture, and have come up “very dry.” This is not a schedule that God has marked out for us, and we are simply robots keeping step with a gigantic plan. It is simply just the “way things are.” Just like lightning, everything has a positive, and a negative. Every cause has a consequence. That is life. We are born, and then, unless the Lord decides to call the church home at the Rapture, we shall die. It’s not complicated. It’s just the way things are.

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2).



For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; (11) The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; (Ecclesiastes 2:11,12)

God knows the “things that are going to happen, if the things that have happened, didn’t happen.” That is foreknowledge. He would not be an infinite God if He did not know the end from the beginning. (Isaiah 46:10). God is “not the author of confusion,” so He gives time to man so that man will know that he lives in a world of order, and not a world of chaos. (1 Corinthians 15:3).

God gave us the seasons immediately after the flood.

“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. (Genesis 8:22)

As Solomon points out, “There is a certain time to plant, and a time to pluck up” or clean out your field. If you plant in the wrong season, such as winter, your crop will not grow. It’s just how things work.

God has set our universe in order, and all things are held together by the power of His Son, The Living Word, Jesus Christ.

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (2) Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” (Hebrews 1:2, 3).

Time begins with man, and ends with man. After Satan’s destruction of Earth, God recreated it for mankind. With our universe ticking along like clockwork, God generally allows our actions to proceed to their conclusion, good or bad. Actions have consequences. That’s just the way things are.

But, at times, God does step in to alter events, if He so wills. For instance, he may chasten a Christian who is making Him an open shame, and take him home to Heaven sooner than he expects. Because God is all-powerful, we can never rule out the miraculous. That is why we pray.

There are eight dispensations, or periods of time, laid out in Scripture, so that man knows he can expect certain things to happen in the future, and realize that time is passing by. All eight dispensations are part of the Kingdom of God, an island in God’s Sea of Eternity. Teaching the Dispensation Principle is not the purpose of the book, so, we will just name them. They are:

- First: Innocence – From Creation to Expulsion
- Second: Conscience – From the Expulsion to the Flood.
- Third: Human Government – From the Flood to the Tower of Babel
- Fourth: Promise – From the Call of Abraham to Bondage in Egypt
- Fifth: Law – From the Exodus to the Cross.
- Sixth: The Church Age of Grace – From Pentecost to the Rapture.
- Seventh: Seven-Year Tribulation – From the Rapture to the Second Coming of Christ.
- Eighth: The Kingdom – From the Second Coming to the Great White Throne Judgment.

A dispensation is a period of time in which God deals with mankind concerning his sin, and his responsibility to God. Now, mankind can look in God's Word, and realize that Calvary is over, Christ has made the payment for the world's sin, and we are somewhere in the Church Age. Man now has a way to measure the passing of time.

What time is it? It is "Church Age Eleven Forty-Five," and waiting for the upward call of the Rapture.