

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

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[0:00] Now we turn to the Word of God, Ecclesiastes. I'll read the first chapter. The words of the teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem.

! And generations go, but the earth remains forever.

The sun rises and the sun sets and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north.

Round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full.

To the place the streams come from, there they return again. All things are wearisome, more than one can say.

[1:09] The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing. What has been will be again. What has been done will be done again.

There is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, look, this is something new? It was here already, long ago.

It was here before our time. There is no remembrance of men of old. And even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow.

I, the teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heaven.

What a heavy burden God has laid on men. I have seen all the things that are done under the sun. All of them are meaningless.

[2:09] A chasing after the wind. What is twisted cannot be straightened. What is lacking cannot be counted. I thought to myself, look, I have grown and increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me.

I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge. Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom and also of madness and folly.

But I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind. For with much wisdom comes much sorrow. The more knowledge, the more grief.

Raise your hand if you've ever read Ecclesiastes and have been confused and perplexed by what you read.

The rest of you should read it sometime. Reading Ecclesiastes, it's like getting punched in the face and kissed on the lips at the same time.

[3:28] It's a flower delivery man delivering you flowers or whatever your favorite thing is and him punching you in the stomach. And still giving you your present.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, hopefully you will be. You'll have a good idea of what I'm trying to say when we get through with this book. Ecclesiastes swings between morbid introspection and joy.

And at the end, you don't know what you've been through, but you know you liked it. It was good for you to have gone through the experience of reading Ecclesiastes.

So what can we say about Ecclesiastes? It's a strange book. The teacher says some strange things. Let me just listen to a few of these gems.

You don't have to turn there. You can if you want. Ecclesiastes 2.17 So I hated life because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me.

[4:34] All of it is meaningless. Chasing after the wind. So I hated life. Ecclesiastes 3.18 And I also thought, as for men, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals.

Man's fate is like that of the animals. The same fate awaits them both. As one dies, so dies the other. Ecclesiastes 6.8 What advantage does a wise man have over a fool?

What does a poor man gain by knowing how to conduct himself? The implied answer is no advantage. Ecclesiastes 7.15 In this meaningless life of mine, I have seen both of these. A righteous man perishing in his righteousness and a wicked man living long in his wickedness. Do not be over-righteous. Neither be over-wise.

Why destroy yourself? So is he really saying not to be too righteous or too wise? Ecclesiastes 7.28 While I was still searching, but not finding, I found one upright man among a thousand, but not one upright woman among them all.

[5 : 50] Well, that should be fun when we get there. Ecclesiastes 8.14 There's something else meaningless that occurs on earth.

Righteous men who get what the wicked deserve, and wicked men who get what the righteous deserve. This, too, I say is meaningless. So I recommend pleasure. And this is my personal favorite.

Ecclesiastes 10.19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes life merry, but money is the answer to everything. So take that.

And, well, you can see why people call Ecclesiastes the black sheep of the Bible. It's the sore thumb that's sticking out. The teacher has written some of the most paradoxical, confusing, perplexing, frustrating.

It's the most frustrating book in all the Bible. And it shows in all the different interpretations that scholars and preachers and frat boys have put on the book.

[7 : 04] Some people have called the teacher an unbeliever. Some scholars don't say that, but they say Ecclesiastes is to show us how wrong worldly wisdom is.

And he really isn't saying anything that is true. And that's a very popular way to look at him.

Schofield, of the famous Schofield Bible, said this about Ecclesiastes in his introduction.

It is the best that man, apart from redemption, can do and does not anticipate the gospel.

Schofield thought that Ecclesiastes was just human reasoning. And it was apparently the only book in the Bible that doesn't point to Jesus.

Other scholars modify that view somewhat. So they're not saying that it's totally an unbelieving perspective. They say that the beginning and the end are orthodox.

[8 : 10] And the middle is a man wallowing in unorthodox human wisdom. Others think the author is a nihilist, so there is no meaning.

There's really nothing to life. There's no point to it all. Or maybe he's a cynic, saying, well, okay, I can grant you the fact that maybe there is a meaning, but we can't know it.

Others say he's a hedonist. Life is pointless, so live it up. You've got one time around, you better enjoy it. And I'm not going to take any of those interpretive directions.

Ecclesiastes is God's word. And it's inspired. And I believe that every word of Ecclesiastes is for our good. It gives us God's wisdom so that we can live God-honoring lives in the situations that we find ourselves in presently.

The book isn't a foil to show us how bad worldly wisdom is. It's not, God doesn't need to write a whole book in his Bible to show us how dumb the world can be.

[9 : 17] Because we know that. We need to be able to escape it. And Ecclesiastes helps steer us away from worldly kind of wisdom. Well, as I said, Ecclesiastes is wisdom literature.

So, picture a brick wall. And the bricks are solid. They don't change. They're immovable. And our lives are this wall.

And God's commands are those bricks. So we're building our life with those commandments. They don't change. But sometimes, you know, life doesn't fit into all those commandments.

We don't have a clear commandment about what we should be doing. And so that's where wisdom literature is so helpful. It fills in the gaps. It's like the concrete that oozes in between the bricks.

And so it gives us something to live on when we don't have a clear word from the Lord. It helps us in those situations. So wisdom is the concrete that holds our lives together, that helps us to obey God's commandments in those situations that it's very difficult.

[10 : 25] Well, Proverbs is the classic wisdom book. And it teaches us principles about how to live. It gives us directions about when living isn't black and white, but it's all these different shades of gray.

How do you live? Well, Proverbs, when you take it in and you embrace it, it teaches you how to live in those situations. The problem is that life doesn't work the way Proverbs says it's going to work

sometimes.

And you know that. When we preach Proverbs very frequently on lunch and Sundays, and you'll hear this frequently, that this isn't a promise.

This is just a general principle. It's not necessarily always going to be true. And the problem is, what happens when it's not true, and it's your life?

And you know, it's really easy to say from the pulpit, and it's easy to say to your child when you're telling them these things, that this isn't the way it is, and life isn't always fair, and it doesn't always work this way.

[11:38] But it's really frustrating when it happens to you. So when you get fired, and the wicked man at work keeps on working.

When you wreck your car, and your neighbor wins \$50,000, and he doesn't care about God at all. What about all the exceptions?

And life is full of exceptions. And this is where Ecclesiastes is so important and so helpful. It teaches us how to live when life is full of exceptions.

When you are in that situation. When life is frustrating and incomprehensible, and you're pulling your hair out, and you can't make sense of it. So when the puzzle pieces just don't go together, Ecclesiastes helps us.

It dives deep into that problem, the problem of sin, that is more than just my actions. It's ruining our world. Ecclesiastes dives deep into the cosmic problem of sin, and he does it in a lot more honesty than what we're used to.

[12:53] And so it has a lot more tang, a lot more sauce, than what we're used to. And that's why sometimes, it sounds like he's almost an unbeliever. And the fact is, he's just being more honest than what we are normally with ourselves.

He's just telling us how it is, and he's not going to let us have any pat, easy answers. We're not going to be able to just stick a band-aid on this problem.

But hopefully when you, when this whole series is over, you're going to see that this book is perplexing, it's confusing, it's difficult, but the author's wisdom is absolutely vital for our lives.

It's vital for our sanity. If we're going to keep living in this world in a way that pleases God, we need to understand what this book is saying, and we need to live it out. And so he's going to take us deep into that cosmic problem of sin, and he's going to show us how when we're living there, when we're living in the morass of it all, how to actually be happy, how to be joyful in that situation.

And so he's going to teach us how to sit at God's feet as confused as confused can be, and still with a smile on our face, and still be happy with what is going on, or at least still trusting him that he knows what is best, even though he's not telling me the why and the reasons for it.

[14:23] So let's look at verse 1. The words of the teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem. Traditionally, that has been understood to be Solomon.

Jewish rabbis thought that Solomon wrote this book at the end of his life when he repented from turning away from the Lord. The problem is that there's no biblical evidence to suggest that Solomon ever did repent.

The only reference that we get from Solomon, about Solomon in his old age is 1 Kings 11.4. As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord as God.

And as you read Ecclesiastes, it really doesn't sound like a man repenting from his sin. It's not like he fell into idolatry and now he's coming out of it.

It doesn't sound like that. The author does talk about how he spends his life building things, and they're magnificent, and making gardens, and he has a harem and everything. But at the end, he's sad, not that he actually did those things, but in the end, they were meaningless.

[15:38] They were pointless. And there is a difference. There is a difference. And for that reason, I don't think we can read Ecclesiastes as some sort of deathbed repentance of Solomon.

But just because Ecclesiastes doesn't fit into that sort of scenario, it doesn't mean that Solomon wasn't the author. He could be. We're not sure. Another alternative that a lot of people believe and think is that maybe this is just a wise man who's donning a psalmonic robe, personality, just for a little bit to teach us a lesson.

And that could be it. That happened a lot in the ancient Near East, where just a wise man would pretend to be the king and tell their story and a way to teach us a lesson.

That happened a lot. And that might explain why so much of the book, later on especially, the author is complaining and mourning the problems of the government and the bureaucracy and oppression and the problems that come with those things.

Either way, we're going to keep moving on here. The debate about authorship boils down to this. Either Solomon is distancing himself from this book by not saying he's the author and he's distancing himself from being king and taking a completely objective stance on himself and his failures as a king or he's a wise man for a time taking on a psalmonic personality just to teach us a lesson.

[17 : 19] It isn't clear. It isn't clear at all. And I can't tell you how much sleep I've lost over this and wrestled with it for months.

And I'm not exaggerating. But there's just no satisfactory answer. Sometimes I am convinced this is Solomon and then sometimes I am just as convinced it's not.

And I don't know. All I can say is this. If you like easy, straightforward answers, Ecclesiastes is not the book for you.

Either way, this is the good news. Either way, the lessons at the beginning are very clear. They're very obvious of what he's trying to get across. And whoever the human author is, we don't want to miss this.

God is the divine author. Every word is his word. And so we can rest secure in knowing this that whoever wrote this humanly, God was the one standing behind it.

[18 : 19] And these are the words that he is telling us and we need to hear them. So let's look back again at verse 1. The words of the teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem.

Ecclesiastes is the collection of the words of the teacher. In Hebrew, the word teacher is koaleth. Koaleth means assembler. Assembler.

And it's likewise, very unclear. What is he assembling? The NIV proposes that he's assembling people to preach to and so they call him the preacher.

Other versions, the ESV, the King James, or excuse me, the NIV calls him the teacher. ESV calls him the preacher. So is he teaching students? Is he assembled students and now he's teaching them?

Is he assembled the people and now he's preaching to them? Some people think that he's assembling these wise sayings and so he's this kind of sage. No one knows what the best way to translate this is.

[19 : 23] Some think it's his real name. It's his proper name. Sinclair Ferguson calls him the pundit. Another person calls him the professor. And it's really unclear what we should make of him.

If this is Solomon, he's using this title to sort of back away so when we read this, we're not thinking the stereotypical Solomon. It's whoever he is.

He's God's teacher for us. I think that's the point. He's one of those wise men that Jesus sent to Jerusalem and that they were to hear but they never did hear.

Well, I'm going to go just along with the book and call him Koaleth. Koaleth, that's what it is in Hebrew and that works and that sort of avoids the problems.

So let's move on to verse 2. And here's the theme of Ecclesiastes. Meaningless, meaningless, says Koaleth. Utterly meaningless.

[20 : 27] Everything is meaningless. Now, literally in Hebrew it says, Havel. Havel, Havel, everything. Havel of Havels, everything is Havel. And I think the NIV does an okay job of translating this.

But there's a problem. Koaleth is not saying that everything is meaningless. It's not all meaningless in some sort of post-modern way, in the way that we think of the word.

And so there is some danger when we just translate it just like that. because the idea is, yeah, there's kind of this idea of meaningless, but it has different nuances.

And sometimes in the book it's used, you can tell it's being used differently. And so it can mean things like this. Vanity. Empty. Feudal.

Absurd. Useless. Breath. Vapor. Ephemeral. Short-lived. Temporary. Ignomantic. Incomprehensible. Perplexing.

[21 : 33] And just downright frustrating. That's what that word includes. All those things where you're confused and you don't know what's going on and it's frustrating and at the same time you know it's just going to fly away and you can't get a hold of it.

It's chasing after the wind. Thankfully, the New Testament is actually very helpful in understanding what the Koaleth is going after.

Turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8. Paul uses the equivalent Greek word in this chapter and this really sheds light on what Koaleth's problem is and his theme.

So we're going to read chapter 8 verse 18 and we'll read through 21. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed for the creation was subjected to frustration and that's our word. To frustration not by its own choice but by the will of the one who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

[23:00] So this creation that we live in this world that we live in has been subjected by God to frustration and that is what Koaleth is talking about.

That's our word. It's this bondage to decay that we're living in and so Havel is the curse of God on creation. It's God's verdict for our sin.

Because we have sinned we will live in this kind of world. And so Havel is what it means to live east of Eden. When Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden that is where they went.

And so here we are we're outside of the garden and life is cursed and it's difficult and it's fleeing away and it's very confusing and it's frustrated and God has done it.

And so now maybe you can understand what he is saying in Ecclesiastes 1 verse 2.

[24:02] This is a cry of a frustrated man. A frustrated wise man wrestling with the reality of what it means to live in a fallen world.

And so he says Havel Havel utterly meaningless. And literally Havel of Havels. And that ratchets it up another level. Jesus is the king of kings.

That means he is the highest king. And song of songs is the greatest of all songs. And Havel of Havel is the epitome. The highest frustrating confusing thing.

It's vanity of vanities. And so one person translated it or at least interpreted it and they said soap bubbles of soap bubbles. So you've done the dishes and you see the soap bubbles there.

What happens you have the nice layer of soap bubbles and then there's another soap bubble just attached to it. It goes so quickly. In the second it's popped. And that's what our life is.

[25:09] It's the epitome of fleeting perplexing frustration. So Kolef goes on in verse 3 and he asks the all-important question.

This is the question that's going to drive this book. And he says what does a man gain from all of his labor at which he toils under the sun?

What does a man gain from all of his labor at which he toils under the sun? If everything is completely Havel if it's all vain and it's all fleeting and it's all cursed and frustrated and confused then what does man get for his work?

Do you ever ask yourself that question? Tomorrow morning you're going to go to work just like you did Friday and a thousand other times for what?

You say why am I going? What am I gaining out of this? Is this making any lasting difference? And we've all had those Havel moments when we wake up and say what is the point?

[26:20] I'm lying here and I'm going to do the same thing that I just did. What's the point of all this labor that I'm toiling under the sun? And that's the question that Ecclesiastes is going to make us wrestle with.

And I use the word wrestle on purpose because when we think we have an easy way out he's going to bring us back and he's going to make us keep wrestling more and more.

He's not going to let us escape and think oh this isn't about me. This isn't what I have to deal with. He's going to pull us in and he's going to say you have to face this. So now we turn to Coalesce Poem.

And this is the poem about where everything is Havel. Verse 4 Generations come and generations go but the earth remains forever.

The sun rises and the sun sets and it hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and it turns to the north and around and around it goes ever returning on its course and all streams flow into the sea.

[27:25] Yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from there they return again. So do you see the frustrating monotony of it all?

And it's almost absurd. You need to picture the sun and it's going around and it's coming up and it's going down and then it's hurrying around to the other side so it can do it all over again. Well didn't you just do that?

Yeah. I'm on my way. I'm going to do it again. I'm excited about it. I'm hurrying after it. And the wind is doing the same thing. It's going around and around and around and it goes and no one knows where it stops.

And all the streams flow into the sea but the sea is never full. And the water evaporates and then it moves on to land and then it rains and it fills into the streams and then it goes back to where it started.

And that is what our life is like. We rush around, we get up, we lie down, we get up, we lie down, we drive to work, we drive home, we drive to work, we drive home, we work, we work, we work, and work is never satisfied.

[28 : 39] We never come to an end of it. We cook and we clean and we cook and we clean and then we cook and we clean and you wash and you dry and you fold and you put away and next week you'll do it all over again.

And so our lives, it's like nature. It's busy, we're busy at work, but the problem is we're not the sun, we're not the wind, we're not the water, we're people and the monotony of it is so tiring.

Look at verse 8. All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear it's full of hearing.

what has been will be again, what has been done will be done again. And this is our life. This is what God has put on us.

This is the havel of monotony. And so do you hear the frustration? If you're not hearing coalesced pain in his heart in this, you're not hearing it right. So think about it again.

[29 : 49] Tomorrow morning your alarm clock is going to go off and it's going to go off too early and you're going to wake up and you're going to dig a hole that you just filled the other day. And you're going to copy, paste, copy, paste.

You're going to make MRI boards and you're going to grade another paper. Just like you did on Tuesday. And just like you're going to do on Wednesday. And just like you're going to do on Thursday.

And day after day and week after week. And what has been will be again. And what is done will be done again. And it's enough to make you say with Kohler, this is so tiring.

What does man gain from all this labor that he's doing? The laundry pile, it gets all done. And then I have to do it again. It never stays finished for very long.

And when I fix a car, another car pulls in behind it and I have to fix it again. and you ask, do I ever get to do anything new? Do I get to do anything different?

[30 : 54] And the answer is no. So Kohler makes the problem even harder to deal with in verse 10. Is there anything of which one can say, look, there is something new.

It was here already long ago. it was here before our time. The problem of monotony cannot be solved by mankind.

We cannot work ourselves out of this problem. Because sinful men can't make anything new.

Science is always trying to figure out a way out of the monotony of life.

They're trying to solve the problem of sin, but it can't. Because sinful men can't solve the problem of sin. They can't make anything new. And then the entertainment industry, what does it build around? It's built on we'll give you something new, and you'll be able to escape for a time. We'll be able to solve the problem of the boredom of your life. But after a while, all the movies look the same, and all the music sounds the same, because there's nothing new under the sun.

[32 : 10] Can anyone say, look, here's something new. Here's something new. This will get us out of the whirlwind of monotony that we're in. No one could say that. It's never happened, and it never will happen.

Sinful men cannot cannot make anything new. So, ideas get cycled, and they get recycled, and philosophies try to fix the problem of sin and the problem of Havel, and it's all futile, and that's life under the sun.

That's life living with Havel. So, one time, a distinguished professor at Westminster in Philadelphia, he came running up the aisle of Chapel.

So, they're in the middle of Seminary Chapel, and he comes running up, and nothing but his underwear on, and he's saying, I found it! I found it! He'd been working on this big problem. It was racking his brain. He figured it out, and now he says, I found it! This is it! This is the solution to this riddle, and it broke his brain.

[33 : 23] I mean, he's better now, but there he was. It had physically broken him, and so there he was, his mind raving, not to dismiss him, but if he would have handed that to Coleth, Coleth would have said, sorry, that's not new.

There's nothing new. This has already been done. You've just reinvented the wheel. And Coleth says that's our life.

Generations come and generations go. It was here already long ago. We reinvent the wheel over and over again. One generation gets on the stationary bike, and they run on it, and they go as fast as they can, and it kills them.

And then the next generation gets on the stationary bike and says, you know what? We're going to make some real progress here, and they go as fast as they can, and then they die, and the next generation comes. And that's how it is.

You see how verse 11 ends it. There's no remembrance of men of old, and even those that are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow. So we hurry about, we strive after progress, and verse 11 says, we die, and then we're forgotten.

[34 : 52] So that's it. That's it. I'm not getting anywhere, and then at the end I die. I'm on a roller coaster with three loops, and then at the end I crash, and that's it.

Yeah. And our projects, and our discoveries, and our achievements, and our accomplishments are buried with us, and no one remembers us anymore. So we're just like a stone thrown into a lake, and there's the ripples, and the lake is still, and we're gone.

And so if that is the case, then what does man gain from all of his labor under the sun? Now perhaps you're saying, and this is what I would be saying, but what about Jesus?

What about God? I've been saved. Doesn't that, doesn't my life have meaning and purpose now? It does, in a certain way.

Isn't this just for an unbeliever? Doesn't Jesus fix this whole problem? Well, let me just say for now, if you are a Christian, there's going to be a great temptation when you're reading this book and when you're hearing this to read it and say, this isn't about me.

[36 : 18] Not anymore. This isn't my life. And we can easily say that, you know what, Jesus, he came and died, and now all my life has meaning and purpose, and it's wrong to think like Koholeth is thinking.

This whole book is just wrong. I shouldn't be going there, I shouldn't be thinking like that. It's going to be tempting to say that and to think that and to think that his feelings, his experience is sinful and that in every situation, it's never wrong to be frustrated or something like that or perplexed.

Well, let me just ask you a question. Christian brother, Christian sister, do you really escape the monotony of life? Just because you are a Christian.

Is your laundry any different? Is your government any different? Is your jail or your job really any different?

That's funny. The answer is no. The answer is no. No one gets a free pass.

[37 : 39] If you're a Christian, you don't get a free pass. Your laundry is the same as the unbelievers. Your job is just as monotonous and frustrating as the unbelievers.

neighbors. And the government that you live under is just as cursed as the unbelieving neighbors. You live in a sin-sick world, just like your neighbors do.

And that's what he's saying. At the end, all your work, you're going to die. And it's going to have very little significance after that, at least on this earth.

The problem is if we too easily dismiss Kohler and his problem, you're going to miss actually what Jesus does for us.

You're going to miss the point of the book. Ecclesiastes says life is monotonous, and it's cursed, and it's confusing, and it makes you want to pull your hair out sometimes. But you can still know joy.

[38 : 48] You can still be happy in this situation. You can find real joy when you have almost had enough, when you're at the end of your tether.

See, there is a way to live. There is a wisdom that Kohler is going to give us to show us that when we are completely frustrated with this sinful world, and we're in the middle of this gut wrenching

confusion, that we can actually trust God.

in it. And we can find joy in God, in what he's giving to us. And if you dismiss Kohler's problem, then you're going to diminish what Jesus really did on the cross.

Because Jesus is the answer. Jesus is what Kohler is pointing to at the end, what Ecclesiastes is pointing to.

But he's only going to show us Jesus in a very silent way. He's going to rub our face in our sin, and he's going to rub our face in our failure and the inability of humans to solve the problem of sin.

[40:06] And do you want to hear how Ecclesiastes ends? At the end, Ecclesiastes does not tell us how to get rid of Havel. It doesn't tell us.

There's this deafening silence. And we're like, at the end, he's going to give us the whole sum of the matter for us. And there's still something lacking.

Because his advice doesn't make it better. It makes it more livable. it helps us have joy. But it doesn't make things right.

And that's what Jesus does. He makes it all right. He's the someone that Ecclesiastes is pointing to. Because at the end, Ecclesiastes is pointing away from itself and saying, we need someone to take us back into the garden.

Because it's not right out here. This isn't home for us. And that's what Jesus does. Ecclesiastes leaves us longing for Jesus. And we want him to take us back.

[41:18] To take us back to save us from this nightmare that we're living in. In the meantime, he's going to tell us how we should live in this life. He's going to tell us how we can find joy.

But the whole time, it's pointing to Jesus and saying, we need someone to save us. And that's what Jesus does. On the cross at first, and then in his second coming when he's going to bring us back into the garden, so to speak.

So this week, as you're digging the hole, that you're going to fill in again the next day, let it move you to say, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Come quickly.

And if you do that, you will have understood at least partially the message of Ecclesiastes. That things are not right, but Jesus is going to make them right on the last day.

Amen. So let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for the Lord Jesus. Thank you that he is our mighty Savior, our mighty deliverer, that he was the seed of the woman that would crush Satan's head.

[42:23] And thank you that he is coming again. Thank you that he came and he became a man, and he died for our sins, the sins that we commit in this body. And he has already begun this deliverance from sin.

But we're still here. And the creation is still frustrated. And it's still in bondage to decay. And we find ourselves trapped here.

And so it makes us long for Jesus and his return, because we know that he is going to solve all these problems. He's going to solve the monotony of life.

And he is going to put death to death. And he is going to give us life. So I pray that you would set our hearts on him, that you would give us true wisdom, the wisdom that Ecclesiastes is trying to teach us.

And as we find ourselves living in this life, will you help us to live wisely? to trust you, to fear you, and all of these things.

[43:35] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.