



OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY III

POETS & PROPHETS



WISDOM LITERATURE

**WEEK 2: JOB, ECCLESIASTES, & SONG OF
SOLOMON**

PROTESTANT ENGLISH BIBLES

LAW	HISTORY	POETRY	PROPHETS	
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon	MAJOR	MINOR
			Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel	Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

CHRONOLOGY OF WISDOM LITERATURE

Genesis

1 & 2 Samuel

1 & 2 Kings

Job?

Psalms

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Song of
Solomon

???

2000 BC

1050

1000

950

931

722

586

JOB

FAITH TESTED BY SUFFERING

**WHY DO THE
RIGHTEOUS SUFFER IF
GOD IS LOVING AND
ALL-POWERFUL?**

JOB'S CONTRIBUTION TO WISDOM

“The book of Job tells how one man suddenly awakened to the anarchy rampant in the world, yet his attachment to God outlived the ruin of his tidy system.”

~ Moishe Greenburg

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-book-of-job/>

JOB'S CONTRIBUTION TO WISDOM

“While so much human experience is predictable in the way Proverbs expresses it, there is also mystery... He does not reveal to us the whole picture of his will...”

(Goldsworthy, According to Plan, p. 176)

JOB'S CONTRIBUTION TO WISDOM

“...The book of Job explores the problem of this hidden order and how wisdom may find its greatest expression in the humble recognition that humans are puny creatures, and that God’s loving kindness may be expressed in ways that we simply cannot grasp.”

(Goldsworthy, According to Plan, p. 176)

CLASS DISCUSSION

How would you summarize the book of Job?

What do you find most challenging from Job?

How can the book of Job help someone who experiences suffering?



BibleProject

BOOK OF JOB OVERVIEW VIDEO

LESSONS FROM JOB

1. Suffering is a part of life
2. There are times when the person who is suffering may not fully understand the reason(s) why he/she is suffering
3. Righteousness is rewarded; sin is judged
4. There is not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence between sin and judgment or between righteousness and reward

LESSONS FROM JOB

5. Not everyone suffers in the same way
6. There is no such thing as “innocent suffering,” yet, the “innocent” suffer
7. Suffering may have a greater significance than just punishment for sin

LESSONS FROM JOB

8. The individual who is suffering should calmly accept his/her suffering as being part of the will of God and then deal with that suffering without indulging in self-pity or seek escape in a fantasy world.
9. The person who is suffering has a legitimate right to feel hurt, pain, anger, or frustration
10. God is not required to explain His reasons for allowing, or even causing, suffering.

B. Davis, Class Notes: Genesis- Song of Solomon

ECCLESIASTES

CONFRONTING FUTILITY WITH WISDOM

ECCLESIASTES: BACKGROUND

- **Author** ~ The “preacher,” or “teacher”
(Hebrew ~ *qohelet*) often ascribed to Solomon
- **Date(s)** ~ 900’s B.C.
- **Key term** ~ A key word in Ecclesiastes is ***vanity*** (38x; Hebrew ~ *hebel*), scope of meaning: “absurdity, frustration, futility, meaningless, nonsense, emptiness, & vapor.”

ECCLESIASTES: THEME

“The theme of Ecclesiastes is the necessity of fearing God in a fallen, and therefore frequently confusing and frustrating, world.”

(ESV Study Bible, *Introduction to Ecclesiastes*)

ECCLESIASTES: OVERVIEW

Thesis: “All is Vanity”	Proof: “Life is Vain”	Counsel: “Fear God”
<i>1:1-11</i>	<i>1:12-6:12</i>	<i>7:1-12:14</i>
Declaration of Vanity	Demonstration of Vanity	Deliverance from Vanity

Based on Walk Thru the Bible, Wilkinson & Boa

ECCLESIASTES: DECLARATION

Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

(Ecclesiastes 1:2 ESV)

Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity.

(Ecclesiastes 12:8 ESV)

ECCLESIASTES: DECLARATION

**Vanity of vanities,
vanity of vanities! All**

**Vanity of vanities,
is vanity.**

“The Hebrew literary form ‘X of X’ indicates a superlative and intensifies an idea. For example, ‘Holy of Holies’ is the most holy place, the ‘King of kings’ is the greatest king, and the ‘Song of Songs’ is the best of songs.”

(Encountering the Old Testament, Arnold &
Beyer, p. 305)

EVIDENCE OF FUTILITY

- Repetitive cycles of the natural order (1:4-11)
- More knowledge leads to more sorrow (1:12-18)
- Seeking physical pleasures leave us empty (2:1-3)
- Accumulating money, women, & success is like chasing the wind (2:4-11)
- Death comes for everyone (3:16-22)
- Even human relationships can disappoint (4-5)

ECCLESIASTES: COUNSEL

Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do. Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head. Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun...

(Ecclesiastes 9:7–10 ESV)

ECCLESIASTES: COUNSEL

... because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

(Ecclesiastes 9:7–10 ESV)

ECCLESIASTES: COUNSEL

The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

(Ecclesiastes 12:13–14 ESV)

ECCLESIASTES: SUMMARY

“Satisfaction in life can only be found by looking beyond this world...Wisdom involves seeing life from a divine perspective and trusting God in the face of apparent futility and lack of purpose. Life is a daily gift from God and it should be enjoyed as much as possible.”

(Wilkinson & Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, p. 170)

SONG OF SOLOMON

THE BEAUTY OF ROMANTIC LOVE

SONG OF SOLOMON: BACKGROUND

- **Author** ~ Traditional view is that Solomon wrote it, or perhaps someone else in Solomon's honor.
- **Date(s)** ~ 900's B.C.
- **Key term** ~ A key word in Song of Solomon is **love** as is expressed in a myriad of ways throughout this poetic song between the king and the Shulamite bride.

INTERPRETIVE ISSUE

“[Song of Solomon] is notoriously difficult to understand. Commentators throughout the centuries have disagreed over several basic questions of interpretation: Is this a single poem... or an anthology of multiple, independent love poems? How many main characters are there? What is Solomon’s role in the Song? ... How do we relate this Song to Christ?”

~ Kyle Dillon, *“Is the Song of Songs about Sex or Jesus?”*

INTERPRETIVE ISSUE

“The Song [of Solomon] is a bold and positive endorsement by God of marital love in all its physical and emotional beauty. This interpretation does not mean that the book has no spiritual illustrations and applications. It certainly illustrates God’s love for His covenant people Israel, and anticipates Christ’s love for His bride, the church.”

(Wilkinson & Boa, p. 178)

SONG OF SOLOMON: OVERVIEW

Falling in Love	United in Love	Struggling in Love	Growing in Love
<i>1:1-3:5</i>	<i>3:6-5:1</i>	<i>5:2-7:10</i>	<i>7:11-8:14</i>
Courtship	Wedding	Problem	Progress
Fostering of Love	Fulfillment of Love	Frustration of Love	Faithfulness of Love

Based on Walk Thru the Bible, Wilkinson & Boa

SONG OF SOLOMON: KEY VERSES

I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me.

(Song of Solomon 7:10 ESV)

SONG OF SOLOMON: KEY VERSES

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly despised.

(Song of Solomon 8:6–7 ESV)

SONG OF SOLOMON: POETIC STYLE

- Uses imagery like a fountain, garden, or wildlife to express the nature of their love
- Uses imagery of towers, flocks of goats, fawns, doves, fruit, honey, milk, etc. to describe physical beauty.

How Solomon saw Abishag



Your eyes are like doves
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
Your lips are like a scarlet thread
Your temples are a slice of a pomegranate
Your neck is like the tower of David
Your breasts are like two fawn gazelle
(Song of Solomon 4:1-5)

The Song of Solomon Illustrated

(For our literalist friends.)

"How beautiful you are, my darling,
how beautiful you are!
...Your eyes are like doves behind
your veil...
...Your hair is like a flock of goats...
...Your teeth are like a flock of
newly shorn ewes...
...Your lips are like a scarlet
thread...
...Your temples are like a slice
of pomegranate...
...Your neck is like the
tower of David... built
with rows of stones
on which are hung a
thousand shields...
...Your two breasts are
like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle
Which feed among the
lilies...
...Your lips, my bride,
drip honey... honey and
milk are under your tongue,
And the fragrance of your
garments is like the
fragrance of Lebanon...
...Your navel is a round goblet...
Your belly is like
a heap of wheat...



...from
Song of Solomon
Chapters
four and
seven.

SONG OF SOLOMON: POETIC STYLE

- Uses imagery like a fountain, garden, or wildlife to express the nature of their love
- Uses imagery of towers, flocks of goats, fawns, doves, fruit, honey, milk, etc. to describe physical beauty.
- Uses passionate language to express the anticipation, longing, & fulfillment of romantic love.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Why do you think God would include a book like Song of Songs in the Bible?



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