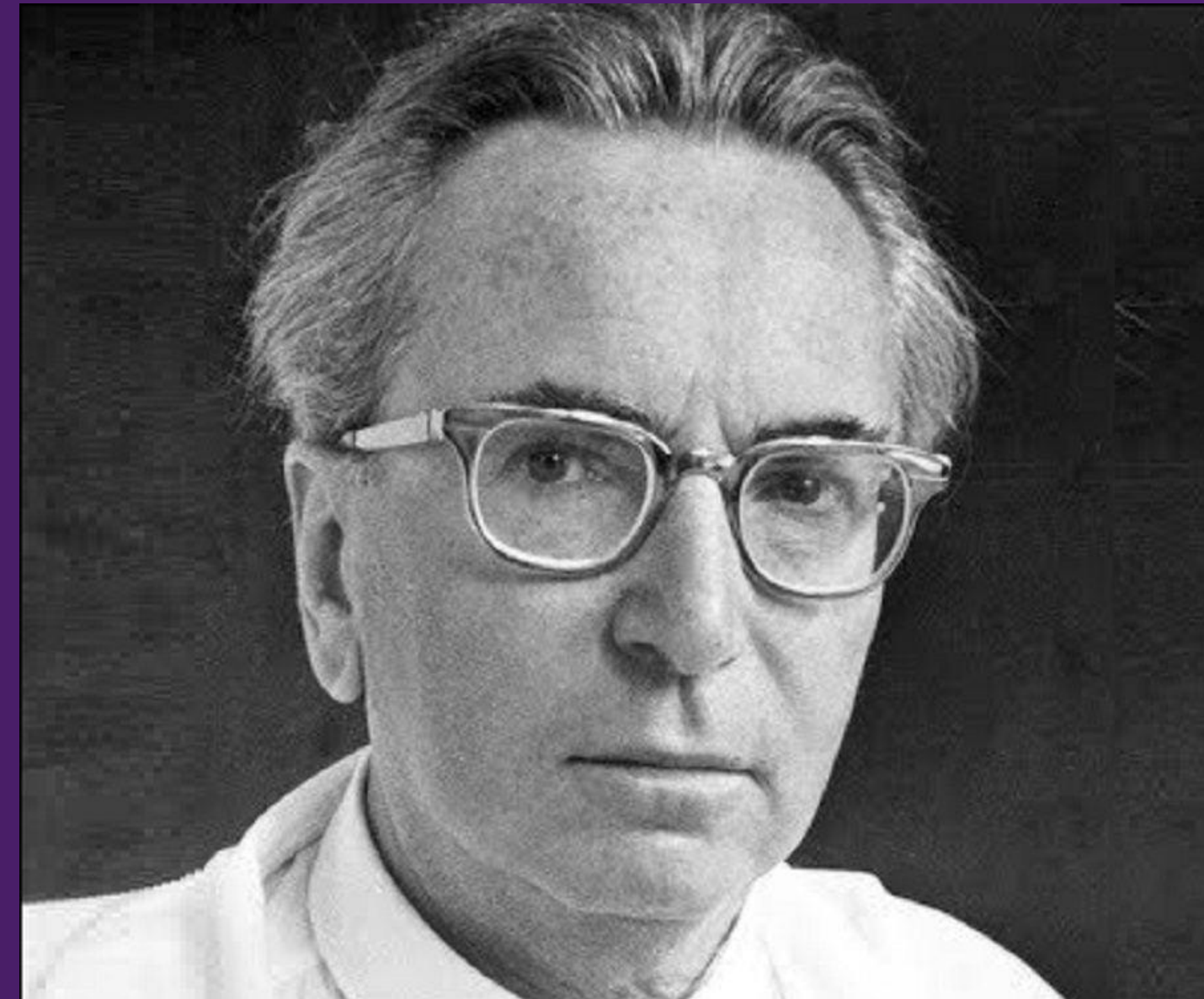


# What Were We Made For?

A Study in Ecclesiastes

“There is nothing in the world ... that would so effectively help one to survive even the worst conditions as the knowledge that there is meaning in one’s life. Despair is suffering without meaning.”



**Viktor Frankl**  
26 Mar 1905 – 2 Sept 1997

“Ecclesiastes is a lot like an octopus: just when you have all the tentacles under control – that is, you have understood the book – there is one waiving about in the air!”



**Craig Bartholomew**

3 Aug 1961 – Present

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

<sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

**II Timothy 3:16-17**

“The design of the book is to teach us to use with grateful hearts the things present and the creatures of God, which are bountifully bestowed upon us by God, without anxiety...”



**Martin Luther**  
1483–1546

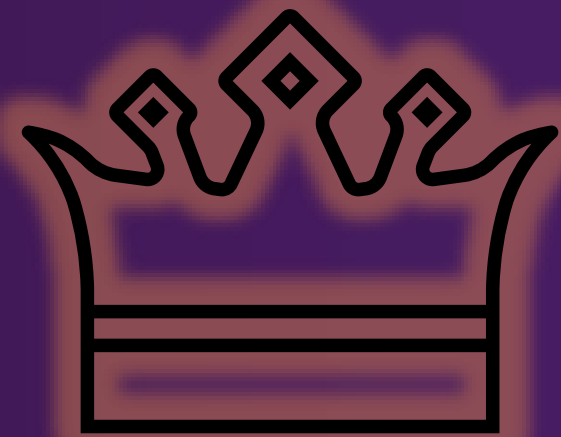
...about future  
temporal blessings;  
to have a quiet and  
tranquil heart,  
and a mind full of  
cheerfulness and  
contentment with the  
dealings of God”



**Martin Luther**  
1483–1546

The Author:

Solomon



# Why do we know Solomon is the Author?

1. Internal evidence: 1:1, 16; 2:9
2. Experiences in Ecclesiastes fit him (I Kings 3-4)



# Was Solomon Saved?

1. Would God have an un-redeemed man record Scripture?
2. Would God have an un-redeemed man build Him a Temple?

# Was Solomon Saved?

4. David wasn't concerned with his son's salvation (II Chron 22).
5. Could an un-redeemed man pray the way he did in II Chronicles 6?
6. I Kings 3:3

“If the world has  
your heart,  
why would you  
think that  
Heaven is your  
home?”



**Paul Washer**  
1961 – Present

“Sin is so wretched and powerful that, even in a redeemed person, it hangs on and contaminates his living and frustrates his inner desire to obey the will of God.”



**John MacArthur**  
19 June 1939 – Present

# The Hebrew Word “Qoheleth”

1. Translated “preacher” or “assembler” or “gatherer”
2. One who summons others to hear a message

<sup>27</sup> Behold, this is what I found,  
says the Preacher,  
while adding one thing  
to another  
to find the scheme of things—

**Ecclesiastes 7:27**

<sup>13</sup> The end of the matter;  
all has been heard.

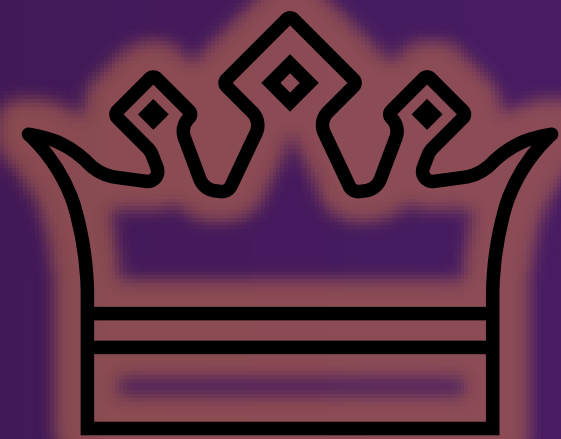
Fear God and keep his commandments,  
for this is the whole duty of man.

<sup>14</sup> For God will bring every deed into  
judgment, with every secret thing,  
whether good or evil.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**

# Ecclesiastes

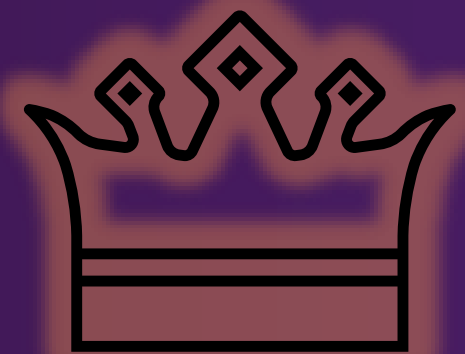
## The Setting and Date of Writing





# The Purpose & Other Themes:

To Convince Us of the Uselessness  
of Any World View *that does not*  
*include* Glorifying and Fearing God



<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—

**I John 2:15-17**

is not from the Father but is  
from the world.

<sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away  
along with its desires,  
but whoever does the will of God  
abides forever.

**I John 2:15-17**

“The tragic results of Solomon’s personal experience, coupled with the insight of extraordinary wisdom, make Ecclesiastes a book from which all believers can be warned but also grow in their faith. This book shows that if a person perceives...



**John MacArthur**  
19 June 1939 – Present

...each day of existence, labor, and basic provision as a gift from God, and accepts whatever God gives, then that person lives an abundant life. However, one who looks to be satisfied apart from God will live with futility regardless of his accumulations.”



**John MacArthur**  
19 June 1939 – Present

# The Key Word “Vanity”

1. From Hebrew *hebel*

(equivalent of Abel)

2. Means “breath, vapor”

# The Key Word “Vanity”

3. Like our efforts (1:14; 2:11, 17, 19), fruit of our labors (2:15, 21, 26), pleasure (2:1), life (3:19; 6:4, 12; 7:15; 9:9), youth (11:10), success (4:4), wealth (4:7-8; 5:10; 6:2), frivolity (7:6), popularity (4:16; 8:10), injustice (8:14), future events (11:8), everything (1:2; 12:8)

4 Man is like a breath;  
his days are like  
a passing shadow.

Psalm 144:4



<sup>14</sup> yet you do not know what  
tomorrow will bring.

What is your life?

For you are a mist

that appears for a little time

and then vanishes.

**James 4:14**

<sup>13</sup> As a father shows compassion  
to his children,  
so the Lord shows compassion  
to those who fear Him.

<sup>14</sup> For He knows our frame;  
He remembers that we are dust.

**Psalm 103:13-14**

“Here is the history  
of the grass –  
sown, grown,  
blown, mown,  
gone; and the  
history of man is  
not much more.”



**Charles Haddon Spurgeon**

19 June 1834 – 31 Jan 1892

“If I find myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”



**C. S. Lewis**

29 Nov 1898 – 22 Nov 1963

# I. Solomon's Presentation Regarding His Life (1:1-11) – A Narrator

A. General (1:1-3)

B. Specific (1:4-11)

## II. Solomon's Progression in His Life (1:12-6:9) – Back to the First Person

- A. There is vanity with human achievement (1:12-18).
- B. There is vanity with worldly amusements (2:1-11).
- C. There is vanity with worldly wisdom (2:12-17).
- D. There is vanity with work (2:18-26).

## II. Solomon's Progression in His Life (1:12-6:9) – Back to the First Person

- E. There is vanity with one-way thinking (3:1-8).
- F. There is vanity with pleasure (3:9-15).
- G. There is vanity with rejecting God's sovereignty (3:16-22).
- H. There is vanity with aloneness (4:1-16).
- I. There is vanity with vow making (5:1-7).

## II. Solomon's Progression in His Life (1:12-6:9) – Back to the First Person

J. There is vanity with wealth and honor  
(5:8-20).

K. There is vanity with having it all (6:1-9).



# III. Solomon's Prescription Based Upon His Life (6:10-12)

- A. Man can know His sovereign Lord (6:10-12).
- B. Man cannot know life's best route because his wisdom is limited (7:1-8:17).
  1. Lessons About Prosperity and Adversity (7:1-14)
  2. Lessons About Justice and Wickedness (7:15-24)

3. Lessons About Women and Folly (7:25–29)

4. Lessons About the Wise Man and the King (8:1–17)

C. Man does not know what will come after his death (9:1–11:6).

1. Lessons About Living Wisely (9)

a. Death is unavoidable (9:1–10).

b. Life is unpredictable (9:11–18).

## 2. Lessons about Folly (10)

a. Foolish Relationships (10:1-7)

b. Foolish Planning (10:8-11)

c. Foolish Speech and Thought (10:12-20)

## 3. Lessons about the Unknown (11:1-6)

D. Man should enjoy life, but not sin, because judgment will come to all (11:7-12:8).

E. Man must know what His commitment(s) should be (12:9-14).