

ECCLESIASTES 2 NOTES

In Chapter 2, the Preacher shifts from having shared examples about meaningless from nature and his pursuit of wisdom to the external pursuit for joy and meaning that he embarked on. In general, he pursued:

Pleasure
Possessions
Accomplishments
And he held great power

Yet, none of this yielded satisfaction. In fact, the realization that all that he built could wind up in the hands of someone who did not toil, was a source of great despair for him.

Near the end of the chapter though, the Preacher does shift to a more positive tone. He concludes or proposes that...

*“There is nothing better than that he should eat drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also I saw, is from the hand of God; for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?”
2:24-25*

Several key points:

We do not ‘gain’, meaning have anything left over from our pursuits of leisure and work. However, we can FIND meaning in these things. Not to be cliché but the joy is in the journey, not in waiting for it to bring us somewhere.

Also, the joy is rooting in recognizing that all that have an experience is a gift from God.

COMING IN CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3 is going to repeat and emphasize these themes, but with a different approach. In this next chapter the preacher uses a poem to illustrate the fullness of all things “good” and “bad” that are part and parcel with living.

He asserts that “He (God) has made everything beautiful in its time.” and that people have been given a sense of the eternal but lack the capacity to grasp it.

Things to consider:

What would be distinctive characteristics of us, if we truly believed everything had its own time and place?

How does having a sense of the eternal, but not the ability to fully grasp it shape our faith?
How is fear of God, a good and desirable trait?