

Qoheleth / Ecclesiastes: Between Fundamentalism and Post Modernity

In imitation of the gay epic of Gilgamesh, Qoheleth's literary genre is a pseudo-autobiography of a great king¹. The author utilizes the figure of King Solomon (970-931 B.C.), son of David (1010-970 B.C.) as literary fiction, to demonstrate his conclusion that "under the sun" all is "vanity" (1:2; 12:8). Qoheleth, a wise "professor" of youth in Jerusalem's court, probably wrote Ecclesiastes between 400 and 200 B.C., since the book shows influences of Greek culture which greatly affected Palestine after 450 B.C., especially after triumph of Alexander the Great (333 B.C.). Although recent studies of the linguistic evidence suggest the possibility of an earlier Persian date (539-333),² in recent decades the majority prefer a later Hellenic date (333-200 B.C.).³

Craig Bartholomew emphasizes the parallel expression "a striving after the wind" not as indicating "without meaning" but rather "ungraspable, incomprehensible" and thus concludes that *hebel* is best translated "enigmatic," or "ungraspable, incomprehensible" and in some contexts "ephemeral" (Eccl. 11:10).

Bartholomew also seeks to show that Ecclesiastes presents "an ironical exposure of...an autonomous epistemology that seeks wisdom through personal experience and analysis without the glasses of the fear of God" (2009:94-95) and is therefore repeatedly stymied by the enigmas of life.

His "two Qoheleths" solution leads him to read a text like 8:10-17 as involving two voices: the Greek philosophical voice of "autonomous epistemology" learning from one's own experience without reference to faith presuppositions (14, 16-17), and the Hebrew "confessional voice" (12-13, 15) in which the fear of God is not only the final destination of Qoheleth's journey (12:13) but also the point of departure (3:14; 5:6/7; 7:18; 8:12; cf. Prov 1:7 and see the presuppositional apologetics and philosophies of thinkers such as Herman Dooyeweerd, Cornelius Van Til and Francis Schaeffer).

In the Fifth century, under the Persian Empire (539-333 B.C.), commerce was democratized and privatized and thus ceased to be a royal enterprise. Instead of the earlier farming society's land and cattle, under the Persians money became the principal tender of commercial transactions⁴. For Qoheleth "economy came to be the metaphor for human life"⁵:

yitron – profit, advantage (1:3; 2:11; 3:9; 5:16; 6:8)

inyan – business, concern

heleq – portion, lot

nakhala – inheritance (7:11)

toser – wealth

kesep – money (7:12)

Under the oppressive domination of the Persians and the Greeks, with the new effective bureaucracy and its disastrous (ruinous) taxes, Qoheleth and his contemporaries felt trapped and – according to some – almost incapable of improving their situation⁶. Nevertheless, although Qoheleth's theology expresses itself in a vocabulary that reflects the new economic situation, he seeks to subvert both imperial economic domination and the ideology (traditional "wisdom") that supported it⁷.

1. Qoheleth and the poor: lacking in solidarity?

According to David Pleins, *Ecclesiastes* lacks the kind of “radical solidarity with the poor” that we see in *Job* and various prophets⁸. And yet, as Pleins points out, even though Qoheleth avoids various common words for the poor (*'ebyon, dal, makhsor*), he frequently employs other terms (*'ani, rash, miskin*)⁹. However, as Pleins recognizes¹⁰, Qoheleth causes us to contemplate the oppressive brutalities of the epoch, in which the people had to confront the new world of money and finance:

Again I saw all the oppressions (*'ashuqim*) that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed (*'ashuqim*) – with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors (*'oshqehem*) there was power – with no one to comfort them (4:1).¹¹

We see that Qoheleth does not merely denounce certain local acts of oppression against the poor (as did many prophets), but directs our attention to all types of oppressive acts (not only against the poor) globally (literally “under the sun”). He analyses the problem of the distribution of power that permits some to abuse their privileged situation and cause others who are weaker to suffer. And he sensitizes us to the suffering of the oppressed, for in fact in the entire Bible only Qoheleth depicts how so many oppressed are homeless and crying.

As for the poor, Qoheleth makes it clear that the fundamental cause of its poverty is not some purported vices (laziness), but the abuse of power manifest in acts of oppression. Moreover, the common mechanism of oppression that Qoheleth emphasizes is the abuse of political power on the part of the state and its easily bribed bureaucrats:

⁸If you see in a province the oppression (*'osheq*) of the poor (*rash*) and the violation (*gezel*) of judgment and justice, do not be amazed at the matter; for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them. ⁹But all things considered, this is an advantage for the land: a king for a plowed field. (5:8-9)

Oppression makes the wise foolish, and a bribe corrupts the heart (7:7).

As Pleins points out, Qoheleth subverts the ideology of Proverbs, which, like Pharaoh (Exodus 5:8), blames the poor for their poverty, insisting that they are poor because they are lazy. Qoheleth employs the word that Proverbs uses for the indolent poor (*rash*), but uses it to refer to the poor of good character.

¹³Better is a poor (*miskin*) but wise youth than an old but foolish king, who will no longer take advice. ¹⁴One can indeed come out of [debtors'] prison to reign, even though born poor in the kingdom. ¹⁵I saw all the living who, moving about under the sun, follow that youth who replaced the king (4:13-15)

Frequently these poor [*rash/miskin*] are wise and of good character:

¹³ I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. ¹⁴ There was a small town with few inhabitants. A great king came against it and besieged it, building great siege works. ¹⁵ Then there was found in it a poor

[*misken*] wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man [*misken*].¹⁶ So I said, “Wisdom is better than might; yet the poor [*misken*] man’s wisdom is despised, and his words not heeded” (9:13-16).

For what advantage have the wise over fools? And what do the poor [*’oni*] have that know how to conduct themselves before the living? (6:8 BJ)

Pleins concludes, the poor, like all human beings under the sun, “are all victims of an immense system of futility...that subverts even the best of human plans and deeds”.¹² Is Pleins then correct when he says that Qoheleth lacks solidarity with the poor? Certainly he does well to point out the Bible’s diversity of perspectives concerning poverty, which is reflected in the varied vocabulary and different historical contexts. And since few in antiquity could write, the biblical books reflect the perspective of the privileged classes. Nevertheless:

- The kind of comprehensive “academic” analysis Qoheleth carries out facilitates a better understanding of the problem – and is itself a type of solidarity.
- Qohelet clearly points to oppression as the fundamental cause of poverty and which is manifest, above all, in a corrupt and indifferent state bureaucracy.
- In describing eloquently the suffering (“tears”) of the poor, Qoheleth does not sin by silence, but directs our attention to the problem, which is another type of solidarity (consider the journalists of today). He could have investigated countless other subjects and problems and never said a word about oppression, poverty, and the violence against the poor.
- Qoheleth subverts majority propaganda (reflected in Proverbs and by Pharaoh in Exodus: “the poor are poor because they are lazy”), by insisting that the poor are poor because of the oppression of the powerful – and he points us to examples of poor persons who were wise and of good character.

2. Qoheleth and women (7:23-29)

²³ All this I have tested by wisdom: I said, “I will be wise,” but it was far from me. ²⁴ That which is, is far off, and deep, very deep: who can find it out? ²⁵ I turned my mind to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the sum of things, and to know that wickedness is folly and that foolishness is madness. ²⁶ I found more bitter than death the woman who is a trap, whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are fetters: one who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her. ²⁷ See, this is what I found, says the Teacher, adding one thing to another to find the sum, ²⁸ which my mind has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among these I have not found. ²⁹ See, this alone I found, that God made human beings straightforward, but they have devised many schemes.

2.1 Was Qoheleth misogynist? (cf. the slaves, singers and many concubines of “Solomon” (Ecl 2:7/8)) Commonly 7:23-29 is taken as convincing evidence that Qoheleth was misogynist¹³. Others, however, suggest that 7:26 does not talk about all women or women in general, but only of a certain type of seductive woman (adulteress or whore), or even woman as a metaphor of stupidity.¹⁴ Others propose that 7:28 is an annotation, an editorial addition written by someone who misinterpreted 7:26 as a condemnation of women in general¹⁵.

2.2 Marriage as inevitable?

Enjoy life with the woman/wife whom *you* love, all the days of *your* vain life that are given under the sun, because that is *your* portion in life and in *your* toil at which *you* toil under the sun (9:9; “you/r” always singular).

Many conclude from 9:9 that Qoheleth loves marriage, since he clearly recommended it to his disciples – although the Hebrew text only speaks of a “woman”, not necessarily a wife. What’s more, we must note the emphasis on the second person singular “you” and the possible note of irony or sarcasm (the days of your *vain* life), since in this way Qoheleth seems to distinguish between that which he recommends to his students and the bachelor life which he preferred (similarly, Paul, 1 Cor 7:1-7).

A time to throw away stones and a time to gather;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. (3:5)

“Stone” has been interpreted by a few as a metaphor for sexual relations¹⁶, but this interpretation is rejected by the majority¹⁷.

3. Ecclesiastes and sexual minorities: Was Qoheleth heterosexual?

“One man among a thousand I have found” (7:28. see Song of Songs 5:10)

Like the gay *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Qoheleth’s literary genre is a pseudo-autobiography of a great king. The author utilizes the figure of King Solomon (970-931 B.C.), son of David (1010-970 B.C.) as literary fiction, to demonstrate his conclusion that “under the sun” all is “vanity” (1:2; 12:8). Following the German commentator O. Loretz (1964), biblicists commonly point out the special literary affinity of Qoheleth with the Epic of Gilgamesh and his intimate companion Enkidu.¹⁸ In recent gender studies Gilgamesh and Enkidu are commonly recognized as an ancient example of a “gay” couple.¹⁹ Connecting the dots, we can conclude that Qoheleth’s imitation of the literary genre of Gilgamesh provides what is perhaps the strongest among the many clues that the author of Ecclesiastes was not heterosexual, but of homosexual orientation (“gay”).

The *Epic of Gilgamesh* is the earliest known text in world literature that celebrates intimate male friendship. Gilgamesh ruled the ancient Mesopotamian city of Uruk (in what is today Iraq) around 2700 B.C. Around 1700-1600 B.C. a Sumerian priest wove the legends about this king into a magnificent poem that was rediscovered only in the mid-19th century. Like David and Jonathan (→ 1-2 Samuel), the friendship between Gilgamesh and his intimate companion Enkidu is intense and passionate. They are inseparable in life and at Enkidu’s death Gilgamesh is devastated. Inconsolable, Gilgamesh sings a moving lament, then sets out on a journey to discover the secret of eternal life.

- Both Gilgamesh and Qohelet share the common somber theme of human mortality;
- Both refer to human life as “under the sun”;
- Both evaluate even the most exalted royal accomplishments as “vanity”;
- For vanity, Qohelet uses the Hebrew term *hebel*, breath, wind; Gilgamesh, the Akkadian term “wind”;
- Gilgamesh the warrior king in the epic becomes Gilgamesh the sage; who has seen and done everything (like King Solomon in Qohelet 1-2). Had T-shirts been the style for ancient rulers, that of Gilgamesh and the Solomon of Qoh 1-2 would both read the same: on the front, “Been There, Done That”; and on the back, “All is Vanity”;
- Qohelet (4:12) echoes Gilgamesh’s ancient proverb:
“a three-fold ply cord is not easily broken”;
- Qohelet 9:7-9 echoes Gilgamesh’s *Carpe Diem* with identical sequence of topics:
(1) feasting; (2) fresh clothing; (3) hair care; (4) spouse/woman:

Gilgamesh, wither rovest thou?	(1) Go, eat your food in pleasure
The life thou pursuest thou shalt not find.	and drink your wine with merry heart,
When the gods created humankind,	for God has already favored
They set aside Death for humankind,	what you have done
Retaining life in their own hands.	(2) Let your garments be ever white
(1) Thou, Gilgamesh, let thy belly be full,	(3) and oil not be lacking upon your head.
Make thou merry by day and by night.	(4) Enjoy life with your beloved spouse
Of each day make thou a feast of rejoicing.	all the days of your vain life
Day and night dance thou and play!	which has been given to you
(2) Let thy garments be sparkling fresh,	under the sun,
(3) Thy head be washed; bathe thou in water.	for that is your portion in life
Pay heed to the little one that holds thy hand.	and in your toil,
(4) Let thy spouse delight in thy bosom!	which you are toiling
For this is the task of humankind!	under the sun

In societies that place great pressure on its people to accumulate honor and to avoid shame by marrying and procreating, in the case of adults that never marry, the burden of proof obviously falls on whoever would insist on the heterosexuality of the person in question. In Qoheleth’s case, his book gives no indication whatsoever of heterosexuality, but rather includes various indications to the contrary. In addition to the literary genre in purposeful imitation of the famous gay saga of Gilgamesh:

3.1. Qoheleth is unmarried (7:26-28; 2:18-23, 28; 4:7-12; 5:14; 6:1-2). With a certain irony or sarcasm (“Each one of your absurd days!”), Qoheleth recommends marriage to others, especially his students (“you/r”, 9:9; see above 2.2. Women), although it clear that he himself never married, nor was he interested in finding a wife. Then why is it supposed that he was heterosexual?

3.2. Although not attracted to women, he is not necessarily misogynist (see 2.1. Women; 7:26-29). Modern studies have focused so much on the question of his possible misogyny that they have passed over his strong expression concerning the very special male that he encountered. Even in Proverbs, which ends with a tribute to the ideal wife (hard-working and virtuous, but not too beautiful), it begins by affirming that – for the wise – such a woman is nearly impossible to find, and the book often complains of unbearable wives (cf. the exhortation to be faithful to the wife of one’s youth, 5:18-20).

3.3. Qoheleth prefers a male companion (4:7-12) and even to be in bed with a male (4:11). God Himself had declared that “It is not good for a man to be alone” (Gen. 2:18), but Qoheleth makes it clear that matrimony is not for everyone, and that for a minority it is better to sleep with someone of the same sex.

3.4. The wise testimony of an *ex* “Ex-Gay”: The favorite proverb that Qoheleth has seized upon occurs at the beginning of the two principal sections of the book:

“What crooked cannot be made straight,
and what is lacking cannot be counted” (Eccl. 1:15).

“Look at God’s work:
who can make straight what He has made crooked? (Eccl. 7:13)

“Crooked” has been a common euphemism and a favorite metaphor for persons who are not sexually attracted to the opposite sex, but to the same sex. For example, from the Maale of Ethiopia comes this testimony:

“The Deity created me *wobo*, crooked. If I had been a man, I would have been able to take a wife and create sons. If I had been a woman, I would have been able to marry and have children. But I am a wobo, I cannot have either of those things.”²⁰

This male “wobo” had come to believe that God created him in that way. Qoheleth also appears to have accepted or “assumed” his sexual orientation; since at first he only insists that such a preference cannot be changed (1:15), but later accepts that God created him in that way (7:13). The pain that he suffered all his life for being “different” surely made him especially sensitive to the suffering of other – not only the poor, but the oppressed and outcasts of all kinds. Otherwise, it is difficult to understand why someone so privileged concerned himself so much with all the oppressed, their suffering and tears.

3.5. Qoheleth, the name that the author of Ecclesiastes chose for himself, is the feminine participle of the Hebrew verb *qahal*, “to collect” or “to gather together”²¹. The author seems to be thinking of Solomon, who collected proverbs, riches²² – and 1000 women (see ver.2 Women, 7:23-29). This feminine noun “Qoheleth” (“who gathers together”) is used with masculine verbs in 1:2 and 12:9, and is described as a wise male (*khakam*, 12:9)²³. But, at the precise point where his frustration with women is revealed, “Qoheleth” employs the feminine form of the verb (7:27; changed to the masculine in LXX). Translators and commentators generally succeed in imposing a “correct” grammar on all the texts that appear to them to be “queer / strange”. However, such playful manipulation of the laws of grammar is a commonly intentional diversion among various sexual minority groups. As teacher/professor in the court, in addition to proverbs and slaves (2:7, 8), Qoheleth “gathered together” students-disciples (see the bachelors Jesus and Paul) who could listen to and learn the proverbs and the wisdom that “She who gathers up” – “the Qoheleth (feminine)” – had collected.

3.6. Qoheleth’s life-style was not typically that of a male, but “different”, giving much consideration to the style and color of his clothes (always white) and an interest in perfumed oils (9:8). If he had no desire for women, whom did he wish to attract with such lovely clothing and expensive perfumes?

3.7. Qoleleth found the common processes of Creation boring and tiresome, (1:1-11, “Nature?”), since he prefers those things “against nature” (cp. Rom. 1:26-27; even as God does, Rom. 11:23-24).²⁴

3.8. Qoleleth is a lover of the pleasures and has a positive theology, integrating the body and spirituality (3:11). In six texts Qoheleth exhorts his disciples to enjoy the simple pleasures of eating, drinking and working. People can even find God in the enjoyment of their work (2:24-26; 3:12-13, 22; 5:17-18 [18-19]; 8:15; 9:7-10; cp. 11:9-10).²⁵ Although references to sexual pleasure are notably absent, probably reflecting the reality of the unmarried author, now aged (cf. Prov. 5:18-20 and Song of Songs), but it would be difficult to find better counsel for gay youth than the following:

Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. *Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes*, and know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment. (11:9; cf. Numbers 15:39!).²⁶

3.9. He is sensitive to the oppression of all the weak and outcast (4:1-3; 5:8-9).

3.10. He is aged, never married, nor even tempted to marry (11:7–12:8).

3.11. Qoheleth will die without bearing sons (2:18-21; 4:7-8).

3.12. As Richard Clifford points out: “Qoheleth uses ‘I’ to the very end of the book. In no other wisdom book does an author explicitly base all his teaching on his *personal* experience and observation.”²⁷ More explicitly, Qoheleth’s theology emerges from the conflictive experience of an oppressed sexual minority that caused him to be an extremely dialectic thinker, a lover of paradoxes and of the contradictions of life.²⁸ Not to share the common sexual interests in the opposite sex caused Qoheleth to suffer greatly, and gave him a special sensitivity to those which “don’t seem to fit” into the scheme, the dominant ideologies and the propaganda that supports them. Michael Fox²⁹ points out three principal contradictions in Qoheleth’s dialectic:

- (1) work is useless and absurd; it does, however, give pleasure and create wealth;
- (2) the possibility and the value of wisdom is both affirmed and negated;
- (3) life is unjust, but God is just (2:26; 3:17; 5:4-6).

Conclusions

The principal theses of Qoheleth are:³⁰

- (1) Death, our common destiny, cancels all temporary and illusory gains; (2:14b-23; 6:6, 12; 8:8; 9:1-6, 10; 11:7–12:8).
- (2) Meanwhile, we must avail ourselves of all the pleasures that God offers us (food, work; 2:24-25; 3:12-13, 22; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:7-10, cp. erotic love in → Songs).

- (3) Wisdom is better than foolishness, but its outcome can never be assured (1:16-18; 2:12-14a; 7:11-13, 19).
- (4) The world is characterized by injustice, oppression and violence against the weak.
- (5) God is an inscrutable and transcendent judge, but also a source of pleasure.

Roland Murphy criticizes H. W. Hertzberg's conclusion that "the book of Qoheleth, standing at the end of the Old Testament, is the most staggering messianic prophesy to appear in the Old Testament." Murphy explains: "This is meant to be understood in the sense that the 'Old Testament was here on the point of running itself to death. Behind this total nothing from a human point of view, the only possible help was the 'new creature' of the New Testament".³¹ We should distance ourselves from any of anti-Judaic tendency in Hertzberg's commentary, since the Hebrew Bible itself provides innumerable counterpoints to the teachings of Qoheleth (see the resurrection in Daniel 12:2-3). However, with all due respect to Murphy's concern, the Apostle Paul (a Jew) intentionally succeeds in transcending Qoheleth's pessimistic conclusions, insisting:

- that by the redemptive death of Jesus, God has liberated the entire Cosmos from Vanity (Rom. 8:20-21);
- that in the light of Jesus resurrection, our labor "is not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58), and
- that instead of a monotonous universe ("nothing new under the sun", 1:9), "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away, everything has become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17; also cp. Eccl. 1:8 with 1 Cor. 2:9).

Note: Pastoral for the gay and "gray" (older lesbians and gays). Qohelet offers us a positive paradigm of an older gay male that may have even more importance for the young than for the old, since for many in the gay culture, the idolatry of youth makes the successive transitions from one stage of maturity to another (30...40...50...60...) a traumatic process. For lack of happy older gay role models, many youths fall into patterns of destructive conduct: alcoholism, drugs, risky sexual practices, suicide, etc. Abundant self-help groups and bibliographies are available in English, but up to now there are few in Spanish. Sobre la muerte y la vida, ver 4:1-3; 6:3; 7:1-4; 9:4-6, 10; 11:5 y el aborto → Éxodo 21:22-25.

Berger, Raymond M. (1982/96). *Gay and Gray: The Older Homosexual Man*. New York: Haworth.

Farell, Lorena Fletcher, ed. (1993). *Lambda Gray: A Practical Emotional and Spiritual Guide for Gays and Lesbians Who Are Growing Older*. North Hollywood, CA: Newcastle.

Hughes, Tonda L. and Gretchen E. LaGodna (2000). "Aging: Lesbians". *Reader's Guide to Lesbian and Gay Studies*, ed. Timothy F. Murphy, 21-23. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn.

Structure

- 1:1 Title: Words of Qoheleth, son of David, king of Jerusalem → 12:9-14
1:2 Prologue: All is vanity → 12:8 (*hebel*, wind, puff, futility, absurdity)
1:3-11 Cosmology: the universe, cyclic and monotonous (“nothing new under the sun”)

First Part, 1:12—6:12

- 1:12—2:26 A pseudo-autobiography (Solomon): the royal experiment
- 1:12-18 The vanity of wisdom (1:15 → 7:13)
 - 2:1-11 The vanity of work and pleasures
 - 2:12-26 Facing the common destiny (12-23): *Carpe diem* (24-26)
- 3:1-15 Time, eternity, death → 11:7–12:7
3:16-4:6 An unjust world: the violence and the oppression of the weak → 5:7-8
4:7-16 Solace for an unmarried professor: a poor but wise youth
5:1-7 [4:17-5:6] Authentic piety: the integration of sexuality (vows) and spirituality
5:8-9 Violent oppression of the poor → 4:1-6
5:10—6:12 Money and pleasure

Second Part, 7:1—12:7

- 7:1-14 “It is better”: Traditional values reassessed (7:13 → 1:15)
7:15-22 Moderation and realism – not fanaticism
7:23-29 Slaves and women
8:1-9 The wise counselor to the king
8:10-17 The inscrutable paths of God
9:1-10 Our common destiny: the shadow of death
9:11-12 Time and chance
9:13-18 Ingenuity is better than force
10:1-20 Foolishness and wisdom: examples abound
11:1-6 Dangers demand courage with humility
11:7—12:7 Youth, old age and death
- 12:8 Conclusion: “All is vanity” → 1:2
12:9-14 Epilogue: Qoheleth imparts his knowledge to the people → 1:1

Bibliografy: Gilgamesh

- Drake, Robert (1998). *The Gay Canon*. New York: Anchor, 28-37 (*Gilgamesh*, Selections from Herbert Mason's translation).
- Fone, Byrne R. S (1998). *The Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature: Readings from Western Antiquity to the Present Day*. New York: Columbia University, 3-9 (*Epic of Gilgamesh*, selections from N. K Sandars's translation).
- Frontain, Raymond-Jean (2000). "Gilgamesh, Epic of". *Gay Histories and Cultures*, George E. Haggerty, ed. New York: Garland, 402-403.
- (2002). "Gilgamesh". *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage*. Claude J. Summers, ed. New York: Routledg, 306-07.
- Halperin, David M. (1990). "Heroes and their Pals". *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*. New York: Routledge, 75-87.
- Johansson, Warren (1990). "Gilgamesh". *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*. Wayne R. Dynes, ed. New York: Garland, I:479-80.
- Loretz, O. (1963). *Qohelet und der alte Orient*. Freiberg: Herder, 1964, 116-22.
- Pritchard, James B., ed. (1955). *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton: Princeton University, 60-119 (Akkadian Myths and Epics, E. A Speiser, translator and section editor).

Bibliography: Ecclesiastes

- Bartholomew, Craig G. (2010). *Ecclesiastés*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Bonora, A. (1994). *El libro de Qohélet*. Barcelona: Herder.
- Brown, William P. (2000). *Proverbs*. Interpretation. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Bruggemann, Walter (1997). *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Clifford, Richard J. (1998). *The Wisdom Literature*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Clifford, Richard J., et al. (1997). « Introduction to Wisdom Literature ». *New Interpreter's Bible 5*. Louisville: Abingdon.
- Crenshaw, James L. (1987). Ecclesiastes. OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- Crüsemann, Frank (1979/84). "The Unchangeable World: The 'Crisis of Wisdom' in Koheleth". In *God of the Lowly: Socio-Historical Interpretations of the Bible*, 57-77. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Eaton, Michael A. (1983). Ecclesiastes. TOTC. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity.
- Ellul, Jacques (1987/89). *La razón de ser. Meditación sobre el Ecclesiastés*. Barcelona: Herder.
- Fontaine, Carol R. "Ecclesiastes" (1992/98). In *The Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon Ringe, 161-163. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Fox, Michael V. (1989). *Qoheleth and his Contradictions*. BLS 18. Sheffield: Almond.
- (1999). *A Time to Tear Down and A Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Gattinoni, Carlos T. (1990). *El Sentido de la Vida: Reflexiones sobre el Ecclesiastés*. Buenos Aires: El Aurora.
- González Núñez, A. (1996). *Qohélet. El sabio desengañado*. Bilbao: Ega.
- Gordis, Robert (1951/1968). *Koheleth: The Man and His World*. New York: Schocken.
- Hubbard, David Allan (1976). *Beyond Futility: Messages of Hope from the Book of Ecclesiastés*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Kaiser, Walter C. (1979/93). *Ecclesiastes: la vida total*. Grand Rapids: Portavoz. Defends the tradition of Solomon as autor.

- Kato, Kumiko (1998/99). "Das Buch Kohelet: Der Mensch allein, ohne Frau". In *Kompendium Feministische Bibelauslegung*, ed. Luise Schottroff y Marie-Teres Wacker, 221-232. Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser.
- Kruger, Thomas (2004). *Qoheleth*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Lohfink, Norbert (1979). "War Kohelet ein Frauenfeind? Ein Versuch, die Logik un den Gegenstand von Koh., 7, 23-8, la herauszufinden". En *La Sagasse de l'Ancien Testament*, ed. M. Gilbert, 259-287. Gembloux: Leuven University.
- (2002). *Qoheleth*. Continental. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Longman, Tremper III (1998). *The Book of Ecclesiastes*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Murphy, Roland E. (1992). *Ecclesiastes*. WBC 23A Dallas: Word.
- Orvieto, Paolo (2002). *Misoginia. L'inferioria dela donna nel pensiero moderno*. Italia: Salero.
- Rudman, Dominic (2001). *Determinism in the Book of Ecclesiastés*. Sheffield: Sheffield.
- Salyer, Gary D. (2001). *Vain Rhetoric: Private Insight and Public Debate in Ecclesiastes*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic.
- Schoors, Antón (1999). "Ecclesiastés". In *Comentario Bíblico Internacional*, ed. William R. Farmer, 809-817. Estella: Verbo Divino.
- Seow, Choon-Leong (1997). *Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday.
- Tamez, Elsa (1998). *Cuando Los Horizontes Se Cierran: Relectura del libro de Ecclesiastés o Qohélet*. San José, Costa Rica: DEI.
- Towner, W. Sibley (1997). "Ecclesiastes". In *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck, 5:265-360. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Vílchez Lindes, José (1994). *Ecclesiastés o Qohélet* (Nueva Biblia Española, Sapienciales III). Estella: Verbo Divino.

Notes

- ¹ Richard Clifford (98-99, 174, note 1); Seow 1997:306; O. Loretz (1964:116-22);
 - ² C.-L. Seow 1997:20-21; Richard Clifford 1998:100
 - ³ James Crenshaw 1998:139; Anthony Ceresko 1999:92; Craig Bartholomew 2009.
 - ⁴ C. L. Seow 1997:95; Clifford 1998:99-101
 - ⁵ Clifford 101
 - ⁶ Anthony Ceresko 1999:92-93; Elsa Tamez 1998
 - ⁷ Ceresko 1999:95
 - ⁸ David Pleins 2000:510
 - ⁹ Pleins 509-510, 513
 - ¹⁰ Pleins 508-509
 - ¹¹ 4:1; on the root *'shq*, three times in 4:1, see Hanks 1983; Tamez 1982
 - ¹² Pleins 2000:510
 - ¹³ Carole Fontaine 1998:162
 - ¹⁴ Choon-Leong Seow 1997:262-263
 - ¹⁵ Seow 1997:264-265; cp. Kumiko Kato 1998:227, where he concludes that Qohelet is, indeed, refuting the common prejudices against women.
 - ¹⁶ Carole Fontaine 1998:162
 - ¹⁷ Seow 1997:161
 - ¹⁸ Richard Clifford (98-99, 174, note 1).
 - ¹⁹ David Halperin (1990:75-87); Byrne Fone 1998:3-9; Robert Drake (1998:28-37; Raymond-Jean Frontain (2000:402-03); (2002:306-07).
 - ²⁰ Stephen O. Murray, *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies of African Homosexualities*. New York: St. Martins, 1998:23-24
 - ²¹ Dianne Bergant 1997:110
 - ²² Seow 1997:97
 - ²³ Seow 96
 - ²⁴ Carole Fontaine (“the monotony of Nature” 1998:161).
 - ²⁵ Dianne Bergant 1997:114; Richard Clifford 1998:106
 - ²⁶ William Brown 2000:104-07.
 - ²⁷ Clifford 1998:99
 - ²⁸ Jacques Ellul 1987/89; Anthony Ceresko 1999:93; cp. feminist, black, Latin American, Pentecostal/charismatic and gay theologies, all criticized for starting from experience instead of the Bible.
 - ²⁹ Michael Fox 1989:10-12, cited in Clifford 1998:113.
 - ³⁰ James Crenshaw 1998:117-128.
 - ³¹ Roland Murphy 1992:lxix, citing H. Hertzbert, *Der Prediger*. KAT 17. Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1963:238.
-

