

# **ST. SIMEON ANGLICAN CHURCH, OFF FUTA ROAD, AKURE**

## **BIBLE STUDY, 18/07/2007**

### **STUDY 1**

#### **VANITY OF EVERYTHING**

Ecclesiastes 1: 1 – 18;

In this study we have, I. The inscription, or title of the book (v. 1). II. The general doctrine of the vanity of the creature laid down (v. 2) and explained (v. 3). III. The proof of this doctrine, taken, 1. From the shortness of human life and the multitude of births and burials in this life (v. 4). 2. From the inconstant nature, and constant revolutions, of all the creatures, and the perpetual flux and reflux they are in, the sun, wind, and water (v. 5-7). 3. From the abundant toil man has about them and the little satisfaction he has in them (v. 8). 4. From the return of the same things again, which shows the end of all perfection, and that the stock is exhausted (v. 9, 10). 5. From the oblivion to which all things are condemned (v. 11). IV. The first instance of the vanity of man's knowledge, and all the parts of learning, especially natural philosophy and politics. Observe, 1. The trial Solomon made of these (v. 12, 13, 16, 17). 2. His judgment of them, that all is vanity (v. 14). For, (1.) There is labour in getting knowledge (v. 13). (2.) There is little good to be done with it (v. 15). (3.) There is no satisfaction in it (v. 18). And, if this is vanity and vexation, all other things in this world, being much inferior to it in dignity and worth, must needs be so too. A great scholar cannot be happy unless he be a true saint.

#### **Vanity of all human things**

Ecc. 1: 1 – 3; I John 2:16; Psalm 39: 5 – 6; 89:47; 4:2; 24:4; Job 33:14; I Kings 4:33; Psalm 17:14; Matthew 20:12; Prov. 14:23; 22:5; Luke 12:5

Much is to be learned by comparing one part of Scripture with another. We here behold Solomon returning from the broken and empty cisterns of the world, to the Fountain of living water; recording his own folly and shame, the bitterness of his disappointment, and the lessons he had learned. Those that have taken warning to turn and live, should warn others not to go on and die. He does not merely say all things are vain, but that they are vanity. VANITY OF VANITIES, ALL IS VANITY. This is the text of the preacher's sermon, of which in this book he never loses sight. If this world, in its present state, were all, it would not be worth living for; and the wealth and pleasure of this world, if we had ever so much, are not enough to make us happy. What profit has a man of all his labour? All he gets by it will not supply the wants of the soul, nor satisfy its desires; will not atone for the sins of the soul, nor hinder the loss of it: what profit will the wealth of the world be to the soul in death, in judgment, or in the everlasting state?

#### **Man's toil and want of satisfaction**

Ecc. 1: 4 – 11; Job 14:7, 12; 20:17; II Peter 3:4; Heb. 4:3; John 8: 8 – 9; 6:49; II Cor. 5:17; Luke 20:35; Psalm 49:11

All things change, and never rest. Man, after all his labour, is no nearer finding rest than the sun, the wind, or the current of the river. His soul will find no rest, if he has it not from God. The senses are soon tired, yet still craving what is untried. Men's hearts and their corruptions are the same now as in former times; their desires, and pursuits, and complaints, still the same. This should take us from expecting happiness in the creature, and quicken us to seek eternal blessings. How many things and persons in Solomon's day were thought very great, yet there is no remembrance of them now!

#### **The vexation in pursuit of knowledge**

Ecc. 1: 12 – 18; Deut. 4:6; Prov. 2: 10 – 11; 22:18; Hosea 12:1

Solomon tried all things, and found them vanity. He found his searches after knowledge weariness, not only to the flesh, but to the mind. The more he saw of the works done under the sun, the more he saw their vanity; and the sight often vexed his spirit. He could neither gain that satisfaction to himself, nor do that good to others, which he expected. Even the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom discovered man's wickedness and misery; so that the more he knew, the more he saw cause to lament and mourn. Let us learn to hate and fear sin, the cause of all this vanity and misery; to value Christ; to seek rest in the knowledge, love, and service of the Saviour.