

The World English Bible (WEB): Ecclesiastes

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Title: The World English Bible (WEB): Ecclesiastes

Release Date: June, 2005 [EBook #8248]
[This file was first posted on July 4, 2003]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Character set encoding: US-ASCII

***** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK, THE WORLD ENGLISH BIBLE (WEB):
ECCLESIASTES *****

From www.ebible.org with slight reformatting by Martin Ward.

Book 21 Ecclesiastes

001:001 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem:

001:002 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities,
all is vanity."

001:003 What does man gain from all his labor in which he labors
under the sun?

001:004 One generation goes, and another generation comes;
but the earth remains forever.

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001:005 The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it rises.

001:006 The wind goes toward the south, and turns around to the north. It turns around continually as it goes, and the wind returns again to its courses.

001:007 All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, there they flow again.

001:008 All things are full of weariness beyond uttering. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

001:009 That which has been is that which shall be; and that which has been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

001:010 Is there a thing of which it may be said, "Behold, this is new?" It has been long ago, in the ages which were before us.

001:011 There is no memory of the former; neither shall there be any memory of the latter that are to come, among those that shall come after.

001:012 I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

001:013 I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under the sky. It is a heavy burden that God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with.

001:014 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

001:015 That which is crooked can't be made straight; and that which is lacking can't be counted.

001:016 I said to myself, "Behold, I have obtained for myself great wisdom above all who were before me in Jerusalem. Yes, my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge."

001:017 I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also was a chasing after wind.

001:018 For in much wisdom is much grief; and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

002:001 I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with mirth: therefore enjoy pleasure;" and behold, this also was vanity.

002:002 I said of laughter, "It is foolishness;" and of mirth, "What does it accomplish?"

002:003 I searched in my heart how to cheer my flesh with wine, my heart yet guiding me with wisdom, and how to lay hold of folly, until I might see what it was good for the sons of men that they should do under heaven all the days of their lives.

002:004 I made myself great works. I built myself houses. I planted myself vineyards.

002:005 I made myself gardens and parks, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit.

002:006 I made myself pools of water, to water from it the forest where trees were reared.

002:007 I bought male servants and female servants, and had servants born in my house. I also had great possessions of herds and flocks, above all who were before me in Jerusalem;

002:008 I also gathered silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and of the provinces. I got myself male and female singers, and the delights of the sons of men--musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

002:009 So I was great, and increased more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also remained with me.

002:010 Whatever my eyes desired, I didn't keep from them. I didn't withhold my heart from any joy, for my heart rejoiced because of all my labor, and this was my portion from all my labor.

002:011 Then I looked at all the works that my hands had worked,
and at the labor that I had labored to do; and behold,
all was vanity and a chasing after wind, and there was no
profit under the sun.

002:012 I turned myself to consider wisdom, madness, and folly:
for what can the king's successor do? Just that which has
been done long ago.

002:013 Then I saw that wisdom excels folly, as far as light excels darkness.

002:014 The wise man's eyes are in his head, and the fool walks in darkness--
and yet I perceived that one event happens to them all.

002:015 Then said I in my heart, "As it happens to the fool,
so will it happen even to me; and why was I then more wise?"
Then said I in my heart that this also is vanity.

002:016 For of the wise man, even as of the fool, there is no memory
for ever, seeing that in the days to come all will have
been long forgotten. Indeed, the wise man must die just
like the fool!

002:017 So I hated life, because the work that is worked under the sun
was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

002:018 I hated all my labor in which I labored under the sun,
seeing that I must leave it to the man who comes after me.

002:019 Who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool?
Yet he will have rule over all of my labor in which I have labored,
and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun.
This also is vanity.

002:020 Therefore I began to cause my heart to despair concerning
all the labor in which I had labored under the sun.

002:021 For there is a man whose labor is with wisdom, with knowledge,
and with skillfulness; yet he shall leave it for his portion
to a man who has not labored for it. This also is vanity
and a great evil.

002:022 For what has a man of all his labor, and of the striving
of his heart, in which he labors under the sun?

002:023 For all his days are sorrows, and his travail is grief;
yes, even in the night his heart takes no rest.
This also is vanity.

002:024 There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat
and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labor.
This also I saw, that it is from the hand of God.

002:025 For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment, more than I?

002:026 For to the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge,
and joy; but to the sinner he gives travail, to gather
and to heap up, that he may give to him who pleases God.
This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.

003:001 For everything there is a season, and a time for every
purpose under heaven:

003:002 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant,
and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

003:003 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down,
and a time to build up;

003:004 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn,
and a time to dance;

003:005 a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

003:006 a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time
to cast away;

003:007 a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence,
and a time to speak;

003:008 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war,

and a time for peace.

003:009 What profit has he who works in that in which he labors?

003:010 I have seen the burden which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with.

003:011 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in their hearts, yet so that man can't find out the work that God has done from the beginning even to the end.

003:012 I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice, and to do good as long as they live.

003:013 Also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy good in all his labor, is the gift of God.

003:014 I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; and God has done it, that men should fear before him.

003:015 That which is has been long ago, and that which is to be has been long ago: and God seeks again that which is passed away.

003:016 Moreover I saw under the sun, in the place of justice, that wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness, that wickedness was there.

003:017 I said in my heart, "God will judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

003:018 I said in my heart, "As for the sons of men, God tests them, so that they may see that they themselves are like animals.

003:019 For that which happens to the sons of men happens to animals. Even one thing happens to them. As the one dies, so the other dies. Yes, they have all one breath; and man has no advantage over the animals: for all is vanity.

003:020 All go to one place. All are from the dust, and all turn to dust again.

003:021 Who knows the spirit of man, whether it goes upward, and the spirit of the animal, whether it goes downward to the earth?"

003:022 Therefore I saw that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his works; for that is his portion: for who can bring him to see what will be after him?

004:001 Then I returned and saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold, the tears of those who were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.

004:002 Therefore I praised the dead who have been long dead more than the living who are yet alive.

004:003 Yes, better than them both is him who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

004:004 Then I saw all the labor and achievement that is the envy of a man's neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

004:005 The fool folds his hands together and ruins himself.

004:006 Better is a handful, with quietness, than two handfuls with labor and chasing after wind.

004:007 Then I returned and saw vanity under the sun.

004:008 There is one who is alone, and he has neither son nor brother. There is no end to all of his labor, neither are his eyes satisfied with wealth. For whom then, do I labor, and deprive my soul of enjoyment? This also is vanity, yes, it is a miserable business.

004:009 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.

004:010 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls, and doesn't have another to lift him up.

004:011 Again, if two lie together, then they have warmth; but how can one keep warm alone?

004:012 If a man prevails against one who is alone, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

004:013 Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who doesn't know how to receive admonition any more.

004:014 For out of prison he came forth to be king; yes, even in his kingdom he was born poor.

004:015 I saw all the living who walk under the sun, that they were with the youth, the other, who succeeded him.

004:016 There was no end of all the people, even of all them over whom he was--yet those who come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a chasing after wind.

005:001 Guard your steps when you go to God's house; for to draw near to listen is better than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they don't know that they do evil.

005:002 Don't be rash with your mouth, and don't let your heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and you on earth. Therefore let your words be few.

005:003 For as a dream comes with a multitude of cares, so a fool's speech with a multitude of words.

005:004 When you vow a vow to God, don't defer to pay it; for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay that which you vow.

005:005 It is better that you should not vow, than that you should vow and not pay.

005:006 Don't allow your mouth to lead you into sin. Don't protest before the messenger that this was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice, and destroy the work of your hands?

005:007 For in the multitude of dreams there are vanities, as well as in many words: but you must fear God.

005:008 If you see the oppression of the poor, and the violent taking away of justice and righteousness in a district, don't marvel at the matter: for one official is eyed by a higher one; and there are officials over them.

005:009 Moreover the profit of the earth is for all. The king profits from the field.

005:010 He who loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase: this also is vanity.

005:011 When goods increase, those who eat them are increased; and what advantage is there to its owner, except to feast on them with his eyes?

005:012 The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep.

005:013 There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: wealth kept by its owner to his harm.

005:014 Those riches perish by misfortune, and if he has fathered a son, there is nothing in his hand.

005:015 As he came forth from his mother's womb, naked shall he go again as he came, and shall take nothing for his labor, which he may carry away in his hand.

005:016 This also is a grievous evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go. And what profit does he have who labors for the wind?

005:017 All his days he also eats in darkness, he is frustrated, and has sickness and wrath.

005:018 Behold, that which I have seen to be good and proper is for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy good in all his labor, in which he labors under the sun, all the days of his life

which God has given him; for this is his portion.
005:019 Every man also to whom God has given riches and wealth,
and has given him power to eat of it, and to take his portion,
and to rejoice in his labor--this is the gift of God.
005:020 For he shall not often reflect on the days of his life;
because God occupies him with the joy of his heart.
006:001 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it
is heavy on men:
006:002 a man to whom God gives riches, wealth, and honor,
so that he lacks nothing for his soul of all that he desires,
yet God gives him no power to eat of it, but an alien eats it.
This is vanity, and it is an evil disease.
006:003 If a man fathers a hundred children, and lives many years,
so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not
filled with good, and moreover he has no burial; I say,
that an untimely birth is better than he:
006:004 for it comes in vanity, and departs in darkness, and its name
is covered with darkness.
006:005 Moreover it has not seen the sun nor known it. This has rest
rather than the other.
006:006 Yes, though he live a thousand years twice told, and yet fails
to enjoy good, don't all go to one place?
006:007 All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite
is not filled.
006:008 For what advantage has the wise more than the fool?
What has the poor man, that knows how to walk before the living?
006:009 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire.
This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.
006:010 Whatever has been, its name was given long ago; and it is
known what man is; neither can he contend with him who is
mightier than he.
006:011 For there are many words that create vanity. What does
that profit man?
006:012 For who knows what is good for man in life, all the days
of his vain life which he spends like a shadow?
For who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun?
007:001 A good name is better than fine perfume; and the day of death
better than the day of one's birth.
007:002 It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go
to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men,
and the living should take this to heart.
007:003 Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the face
the heart is made good.
007:004 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart
of fools is in the house of mirth.
007:005 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man
to hear the song of fools.
007:006 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter
of the fool. This also is vanity.
007:007 Surely extortion makes the wise man foolish; and a bribe
destroys the understanding.
007:008 Better is the end of a thing than its beginning.
The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
007:009 Don't be hasty in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests
in the bosom of fools.
007:010 Don't say, "Why were the former days better than these?"
For you do not ask wisely about this.
007:011 Wisdom is as good as an inheritance. Yes, it is more excellent
for those who see the sun.

007:012 For wisdom is a defense, even as money is a defense;
but the excellency of knowledge is that wisdom preserves
the life of him who has it.

007:013 Consider the work of God, for who can make that straight,
which he has made crooked?

007:014 In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of
adversity consider; yes, God has made the one side by side
with the other, to the end that man should not find out
anything after him.

007:015 All this have I seen in my days of vanity: there is a righteous
man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked
man who lives long in his evil-doing.

007:016 Don't be overly righteous, neither make yourself overly wise.
Why should you destroy yourself?

007:017 Don't be too wicked, neither be foolish. Why should you die
before your time?

007:018 It is good that you should take hold of this. Yes, also from
that don't withdraw your hand; for he who fears God will come
forth from them all.

007:019 Wisdom is a strength to the wise man more than ten rulers
who are in a city.

007:020 Surely there is not a righteous man on earth, who does good
and doesn't sin.

007:021 Also don't take heed to all words that are spoken, lest you
hear your servant curse you;

007:022 for often your own heart knows that you yourself have
likewise cursed others.

007:023 All this have I proved in wisdom. I said, "I will be wise;"
but it was far from me.

007:024 That which is, is far off and exceedingly deep.
Who can find it out?

007:025 I turned around, and my heart sought to know and to search out,
and to seek wisdom and the scheme of things, and to know
that wickedness is stupidity, and that foolishness is madness.

007:026 I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares
and traps, whose hands are chains. Whoever pleases God shall
escape from her; but the sinner will be ensnared by her.

007:027 Behold, this have I found, says the Preacher, one to another,
to find out the scheme;

007:028 which my soul still seeks; but I have not found:
one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among
all those have I not found.

007:029 Behold, this only have I found: that God made man upright;
but they search for many schemes.

008:001 Who is like the wise man? And who knows the interpretation of
a thing? A man's wisdom makes his face shine, and the hardness
of his face is changed.

008:002 I say, "Keep the king's command!" because of the oath to God.

008:003 Don't be hasty to go out of his presence. Don't persist
in an evil thing, for he does whatever pleases him,

008:004 for the king's word is supreme. Who can say to him,
"What are you doing?"

008:005 Whoever keeps the commandment shall not come to harm,
and his wise heart will know the time and procedure.

008:006 For there is a time and procedure for every purpose,
although the misery of man is heavy on him.

008:007 For he doesn't know that which will be; for who can tell him
how it will be?

008:008 There is no man who has power over the spirit to contain

the spirit; neither does he have power over the day of death.
There is no discharge in war; neither shall wickedness deliver
those who practice it.

008:009 All this have I seen, and applied my mind to every work that is
done under the sun. There is a time in which one man has
power over another to his hurt.

008:010 So I saw the wicked buried. Indeed they came also from holiness.
They went and were forgotten in the city where they did this.
This also is vanity.

008:011 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily,
therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them
to do evil.

008:012 Though a sinner commits crimes a hundred times, and lives long,
yet surely I know that it will be better with those who fear God,
who are reverent before him.

008:013 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall
he lengthen days like a shadow; because he doesn't fear God.

008:014 There is a vanity which is done on the earth, that there
are righteous men to whom it happens according to the work
of the wicked. Again, there are wicked men to whom
it happens according to the work of the righteous.
I said that this also is vanity.

008:015 Then I commended mirth, because a man has no better thing
under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be joyful:
for that will accompany him in his labor all the days of his
life which God has given him under the sun.

008:016 When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business
that is done on the earth (for also there is that neither
day nor night sees sleep with his eyes),

008:017 then I saw all the work of God, that man can't find out
the work that is done under the sun, because however
much a man labors to seek it out, yet he won't find it.
Yes even though a wise man thinks he can comprehend it,
he won't be able to find it.

009:001 For all this I laid to my heart, even to explore all this:
that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand
of God; whether it is love or hatred, man doesn't know it;
all is before them.

009:002 All things come alike to all. There is one event to the righteous
and to the wicked; to the good, to the clean, to the unclean,
to him who sacrifices, and to him who doesn't sacrifice.
As is the good, so is the sinner; he who takes an oath,
as he who fears an oath.

009:003 This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there
is one event to all: yes also, the heart of the sons of men
is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live,
and after that they go to the dead.

009:004 For to him who is joined with all the living there is hope;
for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

009:005 For the living know that they will die, but the dead don't
know anything, neither do they have any more a reward;
for the memory of them is forgotten.

009:006 Also their love, their hatred, and their envy has perished long ago;
neither have they any more a portion forever in anything
that is done under the sun.

009:007 Go your way--eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine
with a merry heart; for God has already accepted your works.

009:008 Let your garments be always white, and don't let your
head lack oil.

009:009 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your life of vanity, which he has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity: for that is your portion in life, and in your labor in which you labor under the sun.

009:010 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, where you are going.

009:011 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all.

009:012 For man also doesn't know his time. As the fish that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, even so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falls suddenly on them.

009:013 I have also seen wisdom under the sun in this way, and it seemed great to me.

009:014 There was a little city, and few men within it; and a great king came against it, besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it.

009:015 Now a poor wise man was found in it, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.

009:016 Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.

009:017 The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the cry of him who rules among fools.

009:018 Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroys much good.

010:001 Dead flies cause the oil of the perfumer to send forth an evil odor; so does a little folly outweigh wisdom and honor.

010:002 A wise man's heart is at his right hand, but a fool's heart at his left.

010:003 Yes also, when the fool walks by the way, his understanding fails him, and he says to everyone that he is a fool.

010:004 If the spirit of the ruler rises up against you, don't leave your place; for gentleness lays great offenses to rest.

010:005 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, the sort of error which proceeds from the ruler.

010:006 Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in a low place.

010:007 I have seen servants on horses, and princes walking like servants on the earth.

010:008 He who digs a pit may fall into it; and whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake.

010:009 Whoever carves out stones may be injured by them. Whoever splits wood may be endangered thereby.

010:010 If the axe is blunt, and one doesn't sharpen the edge, then he must use more strength; but skill brings success.

010:011 If the snake bites before it is charmed, then is there no profit for the charmer's tongue.

010:012 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but a fool is swallowed by his own lips.

010:013 The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.

010:014 A fool also multiplies words. Man doesn't know what will be; and that which will be after him, who can tell him?

010:015 The labor of fools wearies every one of them; for he doesn't know how to go to the city.

010:016 Woe to you, land, when your king is a child, and your princes eat in the morning!

010:017 Happy are you, land, when your king is the son of nobles,

and your princes eat in due season, for strength,
and not for drunkenness!

010:018 By slothfulness the roof sinks in; and through idleness
of the hands the house leaks.

010:019 A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes the life glad;
and money is the answer for all things.

010:020 Don't curse the king, no, not in your thoughts; and don't curse
the rich in your bedchamber: for a bird of the sky may carry
your voice, and that which has wings may tell the matter.

011:001 Cast your bread on the waters; for you shall find it
after many days.

011:002 Give a portion to seven, yes, even to eight; for you don't
know what evil will be on the earth.

011:003 If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth;
and if a tree falls toward the south, or toward the north,
in the place where the tree falls, there shall it be.

011:004 He who observes the wind won't sow; and he who regards
the clouds won't reap.

011:005 As you don't know what is the way of the wind, nor how the bones
grow in the womb of her who is with child; even so you don't
know the work of God who does all.

011:006 In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening don't withhold
your hand; for you don't know which will prosper, whether this
or that, or whether they both will be equally good.

011:007 Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes
to see the sun.

011:008 Yes, if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all;
but let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many.
All that comes is vanity.

011:009 Rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you
in the days of your youth, and walk in the ways of your heart,
and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these
things God will bring you into judgment.

011:010 Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, and put away evil
from your flesh; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

012:001 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth,
before the evil days come, and the years draw near, when you
will say, "I have no pleasure in them;"

012:002 Before the sun, the light, the moon, and the stars are darkened,
and the clouds return after the rain;

012:003 in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble,
and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders
cease because they are few, and those who look out of the
windows are darkened,

012:004 and the doors shall be shut in the street; when the sound
of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice
of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

012:005 yes, they shall be afraid of heights, and terrors will be in the way;
and the almond tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper shall
be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goes to his
everlasting home, and the mourners go about the streets:

012:006 before the silver cord is severed, or the golden bowl is broken,
or the pitcher is broken at the spring, or the wheel broken
at the cistern,

012:007 and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit
returns to God who gave it.

012:008 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher. All is vanity!

012:009 Further, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught
the people knowledge. Yes, he pondered, sought out, and set

in order many proverbs.

012:010 The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written blamelessly, words of truth.

012:011 The words of the wise are like goads; and like nails well fastened are words from the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

012:012 Furthermore, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

012:013 This is the end of the matter. All has been heard. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.

012:014 For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it is good, or whether it is evil.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK, THE WORLD ENGLISH BIBLE (WEB): ECCLESIASTES ***

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