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# "Vanity, Vanity, All Is Vanity"

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The quote for today is: "A man who lives right, and is right,  
has more power in his silence than another has by his words." --- Phillips Brooks

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*"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." (Ecclesiastes 1:2 NASB)*

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## ~Vanity, Vanity, all is Vanity~

The message today is titled, "Vanity, Vanity, all is Vanity," it could also be titled, "Emptiness, Emptiness, all is Emptiness." Life is empty without (God) Elohim.

Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones had a popular hit song back in 1965 entitled "I Can't Get No Satisfaction." Some of the lyrics are,

"I can't get no satisfaction, I can't get no satisfaction."  
Cause I try and I try and I try and I try.  
When I'm drivin' in my car, and a man comes on the radio  
He's telling me more and more  
About some useless information

This song is still being played and sung by "The Rolling Stones." It has the same message today, "I can't get no satisfaction." But, let me clear it up; the corrected title should be, "I can't get no satisfaction, without (God) Elohim." You see, there's a hole in our heart and the only thing that can fill that hole is (Jesus Christ) Yeshua.

This same theme was uttered thousands of years ago by the suggested author of Ecclesiastes, Solomon. The author wrote; *"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." (Ecclesiastes 1:2 NASB)* This was written several thousand years before the popular Rolling Stones song "I can't get no satisfaction." Solomon knew there is no satisfaction without (God) Elohim. How did Solomon know? God gave him the wisdom. Look at I Kings 4:29-30 and 4:32; *Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore. (1 Kings 4:29 NASB) Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. (1 Kings 4:30 NASB) He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. (1 Kings 4:32 NASB)*

## ~David to Solomon~

In David's old age, he appointed Solomon to reign as his successor. The Lord appeared to Solomon in Gibeon and asked him, "What do you wish Me to give you?"

We find this in I Kings 3:5: *In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, "Ask what you wish me to give you."* (1 Kings 3:5 NASB)

Solomon answered and asked for wisdom to discern between good and evil. Just look at I Kings 3:9 for the request; *"So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"* (1 Kings 3:9 NASB) And (God) Elohim honors Solomon's request in I Kings 3:13; *"I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.*

(1 Kings 3:13 NASB)

## ~Vanity~

What does vanity mean? We only have to go so far as a dictionary to find out. The dictionary says that Vanity is emptiness, uncertainty, fruitless desire or endeavor, labor that produces no good, untruth. **"Vanity is the food of fools."**

Let us look at some verses in the first chapter of Ecclesiastes. What does the preacher have to say about life? I have a feeling that Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes at a much older, wiser age. He had at that point in his life experienced many of these things he wrote about. He had acquired everything that he had asked for and had experienced the excess of many pleasures; wine, women and song, as the saying goes.

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 NASB

- (1) *The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.*
- (2) *"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."*
- (3) *What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun?*
- (4) *A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever.*
- (5) *Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; And hastening to its place it rises there again.*

- (6) *Blowing toward the south, Then turning toward the north, The wind continues swirling along; And on its circular courses the wind returns.*
- (7) *All the rivers flow into the sea, Yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, There they flow again.*
- (8) *All things are wearisome; Man is not able to tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing.*
- (9) *That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun.*
- (10) *Is there anything of which one might say, "See this, it is new"? Already it has existed for ages Which were before us.*
- (11) *There is no remembrance of earlier things; And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no remembrance Among those who will come later still.*

### **~Ecclesiastes~**

The basic thrust of Ecclesiastes is that all of life is meaningless, useless, hollow, futile and vain; if it is not rightly related to (God) Elohim. Only when based on (God) Elohim and His Word is life worthwhile. We are to have priorities in life and these priorities are to have (Jesus) Yeshua on the top of our list. What is the first thing to do? (Jesus) Yeshua tells us in Matthew 6:33; *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matthew 6:33 NASB)* (Jesus) Yeshua said; that all is vanity, if you do not seek Him first, and then and only then will life become meaningful and fulfilled.

### **~Which Master~**

You see (Jesus) Yeshua said that we cannot serve two masters, look at Matthew 6:24: *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 NASB)* And then the Apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 10:21: *You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. (1 Corinthians 10:21*

**NASB**) Folks, I think it's pretty clear! You cannot serve (God) Elohim and at the same time "drink the cup of demons." You can't have it both ways; if you love (God) Elohim with all your heart, soul, and mind, you will not have any room for the devil.

**~Worship~**

Our goal here on earth is to worship (God) Elohim in spirit and truth. Look at John 4:24, (Jesus) Yeshua said; *"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* (**John 4:24 NASB**) If you are only worshipping (God) Elohim when you are at church and only for those few hours on Sabbath, then you are missing the point. (God) Elohim is to be worshipped in spirit and truth daily. Your priority when you get out of bed each day is to worship and glorify (God) Elohim. The focus of our worship is to be on imitating Him, and honoring His precepts and commandments.

(God) Elohim wants us to concentrate on what He is. As one writer wrote, "Worship is not confined to any one place; worship cannot be confined to just an hour or two on a particular day, because in a biblical sense the worship of God is our response to Him in all of life." Being a follower of (Jesus) Yeshua is a way of life that impacts every area of our being.

What is the truth? One writer put it this way; "(God) Elohim is the Truth. The Bible is the Truth about the Truth. Theology is the Truth about the Truth about the Truth. A good sermon is the Truth, about the Truth, about the Truth, about the Truth. But the Truth is (God) Elohim." It always gets back to (God) Elohim, the only way.

**~Say What They Need to Hear, Even If It Kills You~**

John the Baptist's message from the wilderness was not, "Smile, God loves you." It was "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come." Jeremiah was not put into a miry pit for preaching, "I'm OK, you're OK." It was for crying against the adultery, idolatry and other wickedness of his nation. Noah's message from the steps of the ark was not, "Something *good* is going to happen to you." He condemned the world and was a preacher of righteousness. Jesus Christ was not crucified for saying, "Consider the lilies, how they grow," but for

saying, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...children of hell ...fools and blind guides ... whited sepulchers...you generation of vipers."

### **~The Greatest of All Commandments~**

(Jesus) Yeshua answers the question, as He does most questions. What is the greatest of all commandments? He answers the lawyer and the Pharisees when they asked Him this question. He had already silenced the Sadducees with His answer to one of their questions. Here the lawyer said; *"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"* (Matthew 22:36 NASB) And He said to him, *"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND."* (Matthew 22:37 NASB) (Jesus) Yeshua was quoting from the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 6:5. Remember, they only had the Old Testament as their sacred Writings. So there are many New Testament verses where they are quoting the Old Testament. Then (Jesus) Yeshua reaffirms the great commandment and tells us to put it first and upfront to all the others. *"This is the great and foremost commandment.* (Matthew 22:38 NASB)

Our heart, soul and mind can only hold so much. When we fill it up, it will not hold anymore. If you fill it up with secular things of this world, then there is no room for (God) Elohim. If you fill it up with (God) Elohim, there is no room for the secular world. The challenge is to fill it up with (God) Elohim first and follow the great and foremost commandment; to love the (Lord) YHWH with all your heart, soul and mind. Paul in Corinthians puts it in a little different way, *Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* (1 Corinthians 10:31 NASB)

### **~The Secular World~**

The economy and the world are set up to fill that empty space with many secular things. Think about it, we don't need all these things we have. (Jesus) Yeshua said in Matthew 16:26; *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Matthew 16:26 NASB) and then in Matthew 6:19-21; *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.* (Matthew

6:19 NASB) *"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; (Matthew 6:20 NASB) for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21 NASB)*

The wealthier we are and the more money we have, and the more pleasures we have, the more knowledge we have, the less we tend to depend on (God) Elohim. We seem to think that we are self-made persons and self-sufficient, not knowing or thinking that we need (God) Elohim to fulfill our life. We have it made without Him. With the attitude; "Look at me." A verse in Proverbs addresses this situation, "Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, (Proverbs 30:8 NASB) As we acquire more and more secular knowledge we seem to have less and less spiritual or Biblical knowledge. Paul addresses this in II Timothy; *always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:7 NASB)* Just remember this; "Only what is done for (Jesus) Yeshua will last, all other things will fade away or be destroyed."

### **~Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus~**

Words and Music: Helen H. Lemmel, 1922, we usually only sing the chorus in our worship service, but it has many other meaningful words. It's based on two verses in Hebrews; *Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (Hebrews 12:1 NASB) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2 NASB)* The song goes, listen to the words carefully.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.

Another verse says:  
O soul, are you weary and troubled?  
No light in the darkness you see?

There's a light for a look at the Savior,  
And life more abundant and free!

### The Chorus

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.

In summary, after all is said and done the chief end of man is and Solomon sums it up in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; *The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.*

*(Ecclesiastes 12:13 NASB) For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:14 NASB)*

### ~What's the Point~

As one writer wrote; "The whole point of Ecclesiastes is that life doesn't have to be empty. The preacher is trying to tell us that the meaning of life will not be found in knowledge, money, pleasure, work, or popularity. True satisfaction comes from knowing that what we are doing is part of (God's) Elohim's purpose for our lives."

Our purpose for living is not found in earthly treasures, it's found in a life filled with a desire to serve the (Lord Jesus Christ) YHWH Yeshua. How can we take vanity out of our life? By drinking the water that springs up to eternal life. Look at John 4:13-14; *Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; (John 4:13 NASB) but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." (John 4:14 NASB)*

**Choose the living waters to eternal life and fulfill your mission here on earth!**



*I have gotten information for this article from a number of different sources; From God, internet, Bibles, dictionaries, and study materials from several different authors, etc. I do not take full credit for these writings since there are many. I did not in some cases keep up with this information in order to give proper credit. My comments, writings and rewriting of the sources are in this article. I therefore cannot take full credit for this writing. The full credit would have to go to Jesus Christ, the creator of all things.*

October 2007

*Dewey E. (Obed) Fox, Bond Servant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

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## “What will it Matter”

Ready or not,  
someday it will all come to an end.

There will be no more sunrises,  
no minutes, hours or days.

All the things you collected,  
whether treasured or forgotten,  
will pass to someone else.

Your wealth,  
fame and temporal power  
will shrivel to irrelevance.

It will not matter what you owned  
or what you were owed.

Your grudges, resentments, frustrations,  
and jealousies will finally disappear.

So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans,  
and to-do lists will expire.

The wins and losses  
that once seemed so important  
will fade away.

It won't matter where you came from,  
or on what side of the tracks you lived,  
at the end

It won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant.  
Even your gender and skin color will be irrelevant.

So what will matter?  
How will the value of your days be measured?  
What will matter is not what you bought,  
but what you built;  
not what you got,  
but what you gave?



What will matter is not your success,  
but your significance.

What will matter is not what you learned,  
but what you taught.

What will matter is every act of integrity,  
compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched,  
empowered or encouraged others  
to emulate your example.

What will matter is not your competence,  
but your character.

What will matter is not how many people you knew,  
but how many will feel a lasting loss when you're gone.

What will matter is not your memories,  
but the memories that live in those who loved you.

What will matter is how long you will be remembered,  
by whom and for what.

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident.  
It's not a matter of circumstance,  
but of choice.

Choose to live a life that matters.

*Author Michael Josephson*

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