

A circular frame containing a landscape of rugged mountains and a lake, with the text "PREPARING FOR ETERNITY" overlaid in white. The scene is a high-altitude mountain range with rocky peaks and patches of snow. A calm lake in the foreground reflects the surrounding landscape. The text is centered and reads "PREPARING FOR ETERNITY" in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**PREPARING
FOR
ETERNITY**

THE FLEETING NATURE OF LIFE

- The word הבל (*hebel*) occurs 73x in the OT, 38x in Ecclesiastes, and means "vanity," "futility," or "brevity" (Eccl 1:2; Job 7:16; Deut 32:21; Gen 4:2; Exod 26:33).
- Ecclesiastes seems to blend the notions of fleetingness and meaninglessness in its description of life under the sun (Eccl 1:3-11; 4:1-3; 6:12).
- Solomon urges his readers to appreciate the brevity of life, the inevitability of death, and the reality of judgment and eternity (Eccl 7:1-4; 12:1-8; 2:12-23).

GLIMPSES OF THE AFTERLIFE

- An OT portrayal of the afterlife is limited, though not absent, and Ecclesiastes matches it (Eccl 3:11; 7:14; 9:2-6, 10; 12:7; Ps 16:10; 49:13-15; Heb 11:13-16).
- Solomon discusses the (final) judgment of God, which demands human existence after death (Eccl 3:16-21; 8:10-13; 11:9-10; 12:14).
- God-fearers hope for a present reward or חלק (chēleq, "allotment," e.g., Eccl 9:5-9) but also for an eternal one (3:17 = "there"; cf. v. 22; 5:13-15 // vv. 18-20).

GET READY NOW!

- What must we do here to receive a reward there?
 - Fear God (Eccl 3:14-15; 5:1-7; 12:1, 13; cf. 8:2-6).
 - Pursue wisdom (4:13; 7:11-14, 19; 10:1-2, 10; 12:11-12; cf. 7:23-29; 8:16-17; 9:1, 13-18).
 - Enjoy life (2:24-26; 3:12-13, 22; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-9; 11:8, 9; cf. 5:10-17; 6:1-6).
 - Anticipate judgment (11:9; 12:13-14).
 - Follow the One who offers something greater than Solomon (Luke 11:29-36 = resurrection, revelation, renewal).
- Have you prepared for eternity?