



The Way of Solomon: Finding Joy and Contentment in the Wisdom of Ecclesiastes

Rami Shapiro

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"Thus I understand the simple truth of life:
There is nothing better than for you to rejoice
in every deed done in harmony with the moment.
For doing is your purpose;
in doing is your meaning.
Leave the result to those who come after you,
and attend solely to doing well that which must be done at all."

In this thoughtful, fresh interpretation, Rami Shapiro presents King Solomon's philosophy as that of a Taoist sage and the book of Ecclesiastes not as a lamentation of life's vanities and meaninglessness but as a guide to reality and how to embrace it with joy and tranquility. Shapiro's Ecclesiastes shows modern spiritual seekers the way to truth, gratitude, contentment, and joy.

Traditional translations of Ecclesiastes dampen the hopeful spirit of Solomon's message, while Shapiro's rendition illuminates an ancient wisdom as timely and relevant today as ever. Shapiro boldly asserts that Solomon didn't in fact cry "vanity of vanities," as his words are so often translated, but rather, "Emptiness, emptiness, all is emptiness." Read this way, the message becomes a meditation on the promise of finding joy in even the most ordinary of daily acts and true peace of mind in our contemporary world of ego and artificial distractions.

Positioning Solomon as a realist with the instincts of a Zen master who seeks a path away from illusion and toward true enlightenment, Shapiro presents an innovative, engaging translation of the full text, and then lingers over the most moving and important passages, offering real-world examples of how this classic book of wisdom can be incorporated into our own lives. Solomon beseeches us to accept impermanence in order to embrace the present with freshness of body and mind. He calls on us to engage each moment, lest we miss today by agonizing about yesterday or daydreaming about tomorrow. And he urges us to recognize and celebrate the interdependence of all things, so that we may act justly and compassionately.

Shapiro's passion for the timeless message of Ecclesiastes is evident throughout *The Way of Solomon*. He encourages us to read with open minds and hearts, to savor the wisdom of this ever-popular book of the Bible, to consider its implications carefully for our own lives, and to commit ourselves to testing its truth against our own experiences.

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