

Contents

General Preface	
Author's Preface	
Chief Abbreviations	
Part One: What is this book doing in the Bible? —a reconnaissance	13
Part Two: What is the book saying? —a running commentary	21
The author, the motto and a survey of the scene 1:1-11	21
The search for satisfaction 1:12-2:26	28
The tyranny of time 3:1-15	37
The harshness of life 3:16-4:3	41
The rat-race 4:4-8	45
<i>A first summary:</i> A backward glance over Ecclesiastes 1:1-4:8	48
<i>Interlude:</i> Some reflections, maxims and home truths 4:9-5:12	50
The bitterness of disappointment 5:13-6:12	57
<i>A second summary:</i> A backward glance over Ecclesiastes 4:9-6:12	63
<i>Interlude:</i> More reflections, maxims and home truths 7:1-22	64
The search goes on 7:23-29	71
Frustration 8:1-17	74
Jeopardy 9:1-18	80

CONTENTS

<i>A third summary:</i>	
A backward glance over Ecclesiastes 7:1—9:18	86
<i>Interlude:</i>	
Be sensible! 10:1—20	88
Towards home 11:1—12:8	96
Conclusion 12:9—14	105
Part Three: What are we to say to this?	
—an epilogue	109