



A Third Approach (continued)

1. We are not the centre
 - Ephemeral 1:4
 - Succession 2:18-21
 - Corruption 3:16, 4:13, 10:16
 - Sin 7:20 (and see Melachim I 8:46)
 - Satisfaction 2:4-10
 - Emotional states 9:6, 9:9

2. The contradictions, internal and external
 - Incomprehensible 7:23
 - Theodicy 7:15
 - Distance 5:1

"Hevel"

3. Tanach

- Set 1
 - Yeshayahu 30:7, 49:4, 57:13
 - Yonah 2:9
 - Zechariah 10:2
 - Tehillim 31:7, 39:6, 39:7, 39:12, 62:10, 62:11, 78:33, 94:11, 144:4
 - Iyov 7:16, 9:29, 21:34, 27:12, 35:16
 - Eichah 4:17
- Set 2
 - Devarim 32:21
 - Melachim I 16:13, 16:26, 17:15
 - Yirmiyahu 2:5, 8:19, 10:3, 10:8, 10:15, 14:22, 16:19, 23:16, 51:18
- Set 3
 - Mishlei 13:11, 21:6, 31:30

4. Rabbi David Altschuler, Metzudat Tzion to Kohelet 1:2

"הבל" ענינו דבר שאין בו ממש, והוא מושאל מלשון "הבל פה" המוזכר בדברי רבותינו ז"ל.

Hevel is something without substance; it is borrowed from the expression "*hevel* of the mouth" mentioned by our Sages.

5. Prof. Mordechai Zer-Kavod, Daat Mikra to Kohelet 1:2

עקר הוראתה "הבל פה" ובהוראה מושאלת חולף וכלה, כזב ושוא, לא יועיל וכו', דבר שאין בו ממש.

Its central meaning is "*hevel* of the mouth," and with a borrowed meaning of passing, evanescent, false and empty, without benefit, etc., something without substance.

6. Radak to Bereishit 4:2

ולא זכר למה קראה אתו הבל, כמו שלא נכתבו טעמי שמות שאר התולדות משת ועד נח. ואולי קראה אותו הבל לענין "אך הבל בני אדם כזב בני איש" (תהלים ס"ב) כי לא יעמדו על מתכונת אחת, ואם תהיה לו טובה תפסק מהרה כמו שראתה היא ובעלה בטובה בגן וגורשו משם לעמל ויגיעה, ולזכר אותו הענין קראה אותו הבל, היא ובעלה:

And it did not mention why she called him Hevel, as the reasons for the names of other progeny are not mentioned from Shet until Noach. And perhaps she called him Hevel as in Tehillim 62, "But people are *hevel*, sons of man are false", for they do not remain in one form, and if they have good then it ends quickly, as she and her husband saw the good of the garden and were expelled from there to struggle and exhaustion. To remember this, she called him Hevel, she and her husband.

7. Ramban to Bereishit 4:1

וקראה האחד בשם "קנין" והשני "הבל", כי קנין האדם להבל דמה, ולא רצתה לפרש זה, על כן לא נכתב טעם בשם השני.

And she called one for "acquisition" and the second "*hevel*", for a person's acquisitions are like *hevel*. And she didn't want to say this explicitly, and so the reason for the second name was not recorded.

8. Kohelet

- Overall 1:2, 12:8
- Unclear? 4:7, 5:9, 6:11, 7:6, 11:8
- Nothing, no substance, not enduring 2:1, 3:19, 5:6, 6:4, 6:12, 7:15, 9:9, 11:10
- Upsetting? 1:14, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26, 4:4, 4:16, 6:9, 8:10
- Bad 2:15, 2:19, 2:21, 2:23, 4:8, 6:2, 8:14

9. Ibn Ezra to Kohelet 1:2

וכפל "הבל הבלים" להורות על כל זמן... ושלא יאמר אדם בלבו שיש בדברי העולם הבל ויש בו שורש עומד, הנה חתם "הכל הבל".

And the double, *haveil havalim* is to teach this about all times... And lest someone say to himself that there are things in this world that are *hevel* and there are things that endure, he concluded, "all is *hevel*."

10. Rabbi David Altschuler, Metzudat Dovid to Kohelet 1:2

בזה הספר אמר קהלת לבני אדם והזהירם לההביל ולהמאיס את ההבלים.

In this book Kohelet told people and warned them to treat *havalim* as *hevel* and to reject them.

"Amal"

11. Two uses

- Bereishit 41:51, Devarim 26:7
- Bamidbar 23:21

12. Tanach

- Group 1
 - Shoftim 5:26, 10:16
 - Yeshayahu 53:11
 - Yirmiyahu 20:18
 - Yonah 4:10
 - Mishlei 16:26, 31:7
- Group 2
 - Chavakuk 1:3, 1:13
 - Yeshayahu 10:1, 59:4
 - Mishlei 24:2

13. Tehillim and Iyov