

## **Ecclesiastes 1:1-18 ESV**

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 does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

4 A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. 5 The sun rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises.

6 The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. 7 All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again.

8 All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. 9 What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

10 Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us. 11 There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.

12 I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.

14 I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. 15 What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.

16 I said in my heart, "I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge." 17 And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after wind. 18 For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:1-26 ESV**

1 I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." But behold, this also was vanity.

2 I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" 3 I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine--my heart still guiding me with wisdom--and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life.

4 I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. 5 I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. 6 I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees.

7 I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. 8 I

also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the children of man.

9 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil.

11 Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

12 So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly. For what can the man do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done.

13 Then I saw that there is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is more gain in light than in darkness. 14 The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I perceived that the same event happens to all of them.

15 Then I said in my heart, "What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise?" And I said in my heart that this also is vanity.

16 For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been

long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool! 17 So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.

18 I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, 19 and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity.

20 So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, 21 because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.

22 What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? 23 For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

24 There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, 25 for apart from Him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?

26 For to the one who pleases Him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

## **Ecclesiastes 3:1-22 ESV**

1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: 2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; 3 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5 a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6 a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; 7 a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

9 What gain has the worker from his toil? 10 I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, He has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

12 I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; 13 also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil--this is God's gift to man.

14 I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before Him.

15 That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.

16 Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness. 17 I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work.

18 I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts. 19 For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. 20 All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.

21 Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth? 22 So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?

### **Ecclesiastes 4:1-16 ESV**

1 Again I saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them.

2 And I thought the dead who are already dead more fortunate than the living who are still alive. 3 But better than both is he who has not yet been and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

4 Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind. 5 The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh.

6 Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind. 7 Again, I saw vanity under the sun: 8 one person who has no other, either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.

9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! 11 Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone?

12 And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him--a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice. 14 For he went from prison to the throne, though in his own kingdom he had been born poor.

15 I saw all the living who move about under the sun, along with that youth who was to stand in the king's place. 16 There was no end of all the people, all of whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

### **Ecclesiastes 5:1-20 ESV**

1 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil.

2 Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few. 3 For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words.

4 When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

6 Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? 7 For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.

8 If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter, for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are



yet higher ones over them. 9 But this is gain for a land in every way: a king committed to cultivated fields.

10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. 11 When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes?

12 Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

13 There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, 14 and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. 15 As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. 16 This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? 17 Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

18 Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. 19 Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil--this is the gift of God.

20 For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

## **Ecclesiastes 6:1-12 ESV**

1 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind: 2 a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous evil.

3 If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. 4 For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name is covered. 5 Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it finds rest rather than he. 6 Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good--do not all go to the one place? 7 All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied. 8 For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living?

9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the appetite: this also is vanity and a striving after wind. 10 Whatever has come to be has already been named, and it is known what man is, and that he is not able to dispute with one stronger than he. 11 The more words, the more vanity, and what is the advantage to man? 12 For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow? For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun?