

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 194 – The Son Of David Through Grief That Comes With Wisdom (Ecclesiastes 1:1-18)

1. Based on verse one and verse twelve, who is the penman of Ecclesiastes?

The verses say this: *“The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem... I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem”* (Ecclesiastes 1:1; 12).

- Solomon was the son of David (**I Kings 2:12**). Solomon reigned in Jerusalem (**II Chronicles 9:30**).

2. How much of life does the Preacher call vanity?

All: *“Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity... I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit”* (Ecclesiastes 1:2; 14).

- This is a repetitive theme throughout this book: **Ecclesiastes 1:14, Ecclesiastes 2:1, Ecclesiastes 2:11, Ecclesiastes 2:15, Ecclesiastes 2:17, Ecclesiastes 2:19, Ecclesiastes 2:21, Ecclesiastes 2:23, Ecclesiastes 2:26, Ecclesiastes 3:19, Ecclesiastes 4:4, Ecclesiastes 4:7-8, Ecclesiastes 4:16, Ecclesiastes 5:7, Ecclesiastes 5:10, Ecclesiastes 6:2, Ecclesiastes 6:4, Ecclesiastes 6:9, Ecclesiastes 6:11, Ecclesiastes 7:6, Ecclesiastes 7:15, Ecclesiastes 8:10, Ecclesiastes 8:14, Ecclesiastes 9:9, Ecclesiastes 11:8, Ecclesiastes 11:10, and Ecclesiastes 12:8.**

3. “What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:3)?

- Physical work for and in this world doesn’t profit you in that what you work for is temporary (**Proverbs 23:4-5, Isaiah 55:1-3, and John 6:27**).
- When you really think about it, we do have to work to provide for our physical needs (**Proverbs 13:11** and **II Thessalonians 3:10-12**). Yet, you cannot take that which you work for in this life into the life to come (**Ecclesiastes 5:14-16** and **Luke 12:13-21**).
- The beauty of our spiritual labor is that the reward is eternal (**John 5:28-29** and **Hebrews 6:9-12**).

4. How do we know that “the earth abideth for ever”, is an exaggerated statement?

This verse, in the context of the vanity of physical life, is talking about how generations come and go: *“One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever”* (Ecclesiastes 1:4).

- “Forever” doesn’t always mean unending: **Deuteronomy 15:12-17, Psalms 89:1, Psalms 111:9 [Jeremiah 31:31-34]**, etc. We use this phrase similarly too: i.e. “I stood in line at the grocery store forever”.
- We know that the earth will not abide literally forever (**Matthew 24:35** and **I John 2:17**).
- We have to be mindful that under the Old Law, the children of Israel were focused on the physical land wherein they dwelled and that life as a promise from God (**Exodus 32:13, II Chronicles 20:7, and Jeremiah 7:5-7**).

5. How much activity is going on around us at all times?

Much, but still satisfaction is not accomplished: *“(5) The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. (6) The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. (7) All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. (8) All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing” (Ecclesiastes 1:5-8).*

- There is so much going on in the world, yet it’s going to burn (**II Peter 3:10-14**).

6. As the world naturally goes through cycles, are there new things happening?

Old things may be forgotten, but there are no new things under the sun: *“(9) The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. (10) Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. (11) There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after” (Ecclesiastes 1:9-11).*

- History is repetitive (**Ecclesiastes 3:15**; cf. **II Peter 2:1**).

7. What did the Preacher give his heart to?

To seek and search out wisdom of things done under heaven: *“(12) I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. (13) And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith... (17) And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 1:12-13; 17).*

- **Proverbs 4:7, Ecclesiastes 7:25, Ecclesiastes 8:9, and Ecclesiastes 8:16-17.**

8. Can we undo what has occurred in the past?

No: *“That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered” (Ecclesiastes 1:15).*

- This verse isn’t saying people cannot change (**Jeremiah 26:13** and **I Corinthians 6:9-11**).

9. Was the Preacher wiser than others?

Yes: *“I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge” (Ecclesiastes 1:16).*

- **I Kings 3:12-13** and **I Kings 4:30-31**.

10. Does wisdom and knowledge always bring joy to our lives?

No: *“For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow” (Ecclesiastes 1:18).*

- **Ezekiel 2:8-3:3, Romans 9:1-3, and Revelation 10:9-10.**