

Chapter 1

v1 These are the Teacher's words. The Teacher was David's son. The Teacher was a king. He lived in a city that was called Jerusalem. There he ruled his country.

v2 'Nothing has a purpose', he said.

'None of the things that happen has a purpose.'

v4 People are born and they live on the earth. At the end of their lives, they die.

But the earth continues as it has always continued.

v5 The sun still rises in the morning and it goes down in the evening.

And it does the same thing each day.

v6 The wind blows to the south and it turns to the north.

It blows round and round, but it always returns.

v7 All rivers go to the sea, but they never fill the sea.

In the end, the water returns. It returns to where it came from.

Chapter 1

v9 Future events will be the same as past events were.

What people have done, they will do again.

There is nothing that is new anywhere on the earth.

v11 We do not remember what they did many years ago.

It will be the same in future years.

People will remember things that they have seen during their lives.

But many events happened before they were born. They will not remember those events.

v12 I said these things when I was the king of my country, Israel. I lived in the city called Jerusalem. There I ruled my country.

v13 I also studied a lot and I was very wise. I thought about the things that happen here on the earth. And I tried to understand them. But God has made this very difficult for us to do.

v16 ‘I have become a really great man’, I told myself. ‘There have been other kings who have ruled in Jerusalem. But I am more wise than any of them’, I thought.

v17 I wanted to learn all that I could learn about wisdom. I also wanted to know how a fool thinks. But this, too, was like somebody who tries to catch the wind.

Chapter 2

v1 'I will enjoy my life', I thought. 'I will make myself happy. That will be good.' But it was not good. I enjoyed myself, but my life was not worth anything.

v2 It was silly to laugh all the time. I could look for things to make me happy. But they would not make my life worth anything.

v3 So I decided to drink wine to make myself happy. I wanted to understand how a fool thinks. But I did not want to be a fool myself. We only live for a short time on the earth. And I wanted to know the best way to use that time.

v4 I made some great things. I built houses for myself and I planted many vines.

v5 I made gardens and parks. I planted many fruit trees in the gardens and parks.

v6 I made large pools to give water for the trees.

v7 I bought male slaves and female slaves. Their sons and their daughters became my slaves too. Many people lived in Jerusalem before I did. And many of them had animals. But I had more cows and sheep than anyone else had.

Chapter 2

v8 I ruled many countries. And I got silver and gold for myself from their kings. Men and women sang for me. I got many wives to make me happy. These are all things that people enjoy.

v9 I was the most famous person who had ever lived in Jerusalem. And I was very wise.

v10 If I wanted to have something, I took it. If I wanted to do something, I did it. And I enjoyed my work.

I liked what I got from it. So I was not happy with my life. And my work on the earth does not make me happy now. All of my work was worth nothing. It was like somebody who tries to catch the wind.

v18 I will die in the end. Then some other person will enjoy the things that I have made.

v19 That person may be a wise man or he may be a fool. But he will have all the things that I have worked for on the earth. This, too, is not good. The fact that I was wise means nothing.

v20 So I became sad about all my work on the earth.

v21 A man may know how to do his job well. He may do his work well and after that, he dies. Then all that he had will become another man's things. And that man will not have worked for it. This too means nothing and it is very sad.

v22 People have to do a lot of work on this earth. But they get nothing that they can keep.

v23 Every day, their work disappoints them and it makes them sad. Even at night, their minds do not rest. All their work means nothing.

Chapter 12

v9 I was a wise teacher and I saw many things. I wrote down all the proverbs that I had studied.

v10 I saw all the things that happen on the earth. I tried to explain them. My words are all true.

v11 A farmer uses a stick when he wants his animals to move. Proverbs are like the stick that the farmer uses. Proverbs come from God. He is like a guide because he shows us the way to live. He uses *proverbs to do that.

v12 You are my son. So listen to what I say. Do not listen when people teach you other things. There are many books. If you study them all, you will be very tired.

v13 With a few words, I can describe everything that you must know. You should worship God. He says to you what you should do. And you should do what he says. That is our duty.

v14 We may do good things. Sometimes we do wrong things. We think that nobody sees us. But God sees the things that we do. And he will ask us to explain the answer to this question: ‘What have we done with our lives here on the earth?’