### Ecclesiastes

## Chapter 1

1These are the sayings of the great congregator, son of David, the king of IsraEl in JeruSalem.  
  
2The Great Congregator said:  
  
 ‘All is foolishness and waste,  
 Foolishness and waste… All that’s done is in vain.’  
 3‘What value does man gain from the things he’s done,  
 And the things he’s worked hard for under the sun?  
  
 4‘For, one generation passes away,  
 And then another arrives…  
 Yet, the earth remains throughout the ages.  
  
 5‘The sun keeps on rising and setting  
 As it draws to it’s place,  
 6And the winds blow in from the south,  
 As they move north in a circle…  
 Then they go back and come ‘round again.  
  
 7‘Even though all the rivers flow into the sea,  
 The sea doesn’t become filled.  
 For, to the places from which they all came,  
 They return and flow back again.  
  
 8‘So, no man can speak all the words he might say,  
 And his eyes can’t be filled with all he can see,  
 Nor can his ears handle all that they hear.  
  
 9‘What’s this thing that [just] happened?  
 The same thing will happen again!  
 What’s this thing being done?  
 The same will be done in the future…  
 For there’s nothing that’s new under the sun!  
  
 10‘Who can say, Look, here’s something new?  
 For the same thing has happened for ages  
 To those who have lived before us.  
 11But the things that they did were forgotten,  
 And those who are born in the future  
 Won’t remember the things that we’re doing now.'  
  
  
12The great congregator is the king over all of IsraEl from JeruSalem.  
  
  
 13‘So I set my heart to survey and inquire  
 About all that has happened under the sky.  
 God gave me this to distract me from bad,  
 And to lead sons of men back to Him.  
  
 14‘I’ve seen all that’s done under the sun,  
 And I find it to be a waste of [good] breath.  
 15For, things that go wrong are never made right,  
 And there’s too much that’s wrong to be counted.  
  
 16‘Once I spoke in my heart and I said:  
  
 ‘Look how great I’ve become!  
 For, I’ve been given more wisdom  
 Than all who have lived before me!’  
  
 ‘So, I set my heart to learn wisdom and knowledge;  
 17And wisdom and knowledge, my heart then beheld,  
 As well as higher learning and proverbs.  
  
 ‘So, it became the resolve of my spirit  
 18To gain an abundance of wisdom,  
 Along with vast volumes of knowledge.  
 But, those who gain knowledge also gain pain.’