### Ecclesiastes

## Chapter 12

1‘Remember your Creator in the days of your youth;  
 For, bad days will come [all too soon],  
 And the years will arrive when you’ll say:  
  
 ‘I never really wanted [to see] them!’  
  
 2‘[It’s a time when] the ‘sun’ becomes dark,  
 And you’ll not see the light of the moon or the stars,  
 Or the clouds passing by after rain.  
  
 3‘It’s a day when the ‘watchman’ starts to tremble…  
 When the powerful man is bent double,  
 And the grinders cease, because they’re few.  
  
 Then, ‘women’ will stare from their ‘windows’ at darkness,  
 4And they’ll lock all their doors  
 In fear of the sounds of those grinding in the market.  
  
 ‘Then the sound of a sparrow will wake you,  
 And the daughters of song will be humbled.  
 5From above, you’ll look down and see  
 Frightening things on the road.  
  
 ‘Then, at the time when ‘almonds’ should blossom,  
 The ‘locusts’ will grow to be many,  
 And ‘capers’ will drop on the ground…  
 For, you’ll have gone to your home of the ages.  
  
 ‘Then, people will circle the market,  
 Beating their chests in mourning for you.  
 6For the silver cord has been severed;  
 The gold decoration is broken;  
 The bucket at the well has been shattered;  
 And the wheel has rolled into the pit.  
  
 7‘For, that which is dust went back to the ground  
 From which it once had been taken;  
 And the breath has also returned  
 To the God by whom it was given.’  
  
8Says the great congregator:  
  
 ‘Oh how silly and foolish!’  
  
9Yet to him, came even more wisdom,  
 And he taught all his knowledge to men…  
 He traced it all out and composed it as proverbs.  
  
10The Great Congregator searched for the words,  
 And he wrote them as right ways of truth:  
  
 11‘As words to the wise and as ox goads…  
 As nails that are hammered in tight.  
 They’re agreeable things from a shepherd;  
 12So, carefully guard them, my son!  
  
 ‘For, many scrolls have been written  
 (Yes, to them, there’s no end),  
 And spending much time thinking about them  
 Is just a weariness to the flesh.  
  
 13‘But listen, for this is what I’ve concluded:  
  
 ‘Fear God and keep His Commandments…  
 This is all that there is for a man!  
  
 14‘The rest just leads to judgment by God,  
 Who decides whether we’ve been bad or good.’

# Song of Solomon

Song of Solomon is a poem (or song) about the love between a shepherd boy and a young maiden, who could not be together because the girl had become one of the king’s concubines.  
  
It was written by King Solomon around 1000 BCE.  
  
  
Tricky narration  
  
The Song of Solomon can be one of the most difficult Bible passages, as it’s a two-way conversation between a man and a woman told in song – so it’s not always clear exactly who is speaking. So to help the reader, we’ve looked at both the context and the grammar tenses for clues, and put what appears to be the woman’s words in bold, and those of her beloved shepherd boy in italics. We might not always have it right.  
  
Also, it’s not always obvious when some terms are figurative or literal, so some translations are best-guesses.