

## **Ecclesiastes** or, the Preacher

(This is an interview with Solomon, with my questions in red and his answers in black using only words from the Ecclesiastes. Of course, one of the class attendees fills in for Solomon. I asked the person who did this to be very dramatic.)

Please tell us who you are.

### Chapter 1

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

And what is your message for us today?

2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

4 One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

Tell us a little about yourself.

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: .

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

By “vanity,” you mean “meaningless” or “futile,” right?

15 That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

17 And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18 For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

I was under the impression you had a great life.

### Chapter 2

4 I made great works; I built houses; I planted vineyards:

5 I made gardens and orchards, ...

6 I made pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 ... also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

It sounds like you were very rich.

8 I gathered silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9 So I was great, ...

So, life was good?

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: ...

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, ...and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

So, you had everything, but you still weren't happy?

17 ... I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

You've been credited with writing a song made famous by the Byrds in the 1960s. Can you remember the lyrics?

### Chapter 3

1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; ..

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

8 A time to love, and a time to hate; ...

You're known as wise. Can you give us a few of your pearls of wisdom?

### Chapter 4

13 ¶ Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

### Chapter 5

5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

10 He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.

Did you have many friends?

11 When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: ...

So your entourage was something of a burden.

12 The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

You seem to be a little depressed.

#### Chapter 7

1 A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Do you have any advice for men about marriage, especially since you had so much experience in this area?

#### Chapter 9

9 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity

Are you hopeful about anything?

11 ... the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, ... nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

#### Chapter 11

8 But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity.

Even with all your wisdom you stopped worshiping God, abandoning him for the idols of your foreign wives. Any last words of advice to help us endure to the end?

#### Chapter 12

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.