

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

1. What questions were provoked within you?
2. Did anything confuse you?
3. Did anything move you emotionally?
4. Did God instruct you to do something?
5. Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Ecclesiastes 1 New American Standard Bible

The Futility of All Endeavors

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

2 "Futility of futilities," says the Preacher,

"Futility of futilities! All is futility."

3 What advantage does a person have in all his work

Which he does under the sun?

4 A generation goes and a generation comes,

But the earth remains forever.

5 Also, the sun rises and the sun sets;

And hurrying to its place it rises there *again*.

6 ¹Blowing toward the south,

Then turning toward the north,

The wind continues swirling along;

And on its circular courses the wind returns.

7 All the rivers flow into the sea,

Yet the sea is not full.

To the place where the rivers ¹flow,

There they flow again.

8 All things are wearisome;

No one can tell *it*.

The eye is not satisfied with seeing,

Nor is the ear filled with hearing.

9 What has been, it is what will be,

And what has been done, it is what will be done.

So there is nothing new under the sun.

10 Is there anything of which one might say,

"See this, it is new"?

It has already existed for ages

Which were before us.

¹¹ There is no remembrance of the earlier things,
And of the later things as well, which will occur,
There will be no remembrance of them
Among those who will come later *still*.

The Futility of Wisdom

¹² I, the Preacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³ And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom about everything that has been done under heaven. *It* is a sorry task with which God has given the sons of mankind to be troubled. ¹⁴ I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is futility and striving after wind. ¹⁵ What is crooked cannot be straightened, and what is lacking cannot be counted.

¹⁶ I said to myself, “Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.” ¹⁷ And I applied my mind to know wisdom and to know insanity and foolishness; I realized that this also is striving after wind. ¹⁸ Because in much wisdom there is much grief; and increasing knowledge *results in* increasing pain.

Paul’s observations and insights

1. What does Ecclesiastes mean?
2. Vanity means what to you?
3. The writer introduces himself as the son of the King. Did Saul write this as a young man?
4. Did he say he was the King's son in order to obtain credibility?
5. He calls himself ‘the preacher’. Why not the King of Israel?
6. What is vanity of vanities?
7. Does man have an advantage over the rest of creation that God has made?
8. ‘Same old, same old’ what is happening here in this statement?
9. Did the wise man get it wrong when he said the earth will remain forever?
10. There isn’t much in life you can depend on, but the sun rising every day is one of them.
11. Where does the wind come from and where does it go?
12. Do all the rivers flow into the sea?
13. Are all things wearisome?
14. Do you think Solomon is sliding into depression?
15. Is it true our eyes are never satisfied and our ears filled with hearing?
16. Is Solomon conveying desperation along his journey?
17. The concept of what goes around comes around –what does this mean?

18. Is it true that there is nothing new under the sun or have we moved on from where Solomon was?
19. Why do we need to remember what has gone before?
20. How does one set your mind to work and discover wisdom?
21. Can you imagine seeing everything done.
22. What does 'under the sun' mean?
23. How do you strive after the wind?
24. In these days it is possible to straighten what is crooked.
25. You can't count what you don't have! What does it mean?
26. Solomon makes some incredible bold statement, was he right?
27. What is wisdom? Or, who is wisdom? And why does it help?
28. Notice Solomon says it was his mind that observes what he saw.
29. Why did Solomon speak to himself?
30. Some people can see and some people take no notice.
31. Those who can see become aware.
32. How do you go about setting your mind to know wisdom, madness and folly?
33. Having done this Solomon discovers it was pointless in striving after the wind.
34. He declares the more you know the more grief you will feel.
35. Knowledge does empower you but the price you will pay is pain, because the more you know the more it hurts!