

# THE PAIN OF LIMITATION

Ecclesiastes 1:1-14



## *The Limits of Life*

ENGAGING ECCLESIASTES

# ECCLESIASTES 1:1

<sup>1</sup> The words of the **Teacher**<sup>[a]</sup>, son of David,  
king in Jerusalem:

<sup>[a]</sup>or “Convener”, “Collector”; **Qoheleth** (HEB)



## ECCLESIASTES 1:12-14

<sup>12</sup> I, the **Teacher**<sup>[a]</sup>, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens.

What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind! <sup>14</sup> I have seen all the things that are done **under the sun**; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

<sup>[a]</sup>or “Convener”, “Collector”; **Qohelet** (HEB)



A traffic cone with a white top and orange bottom, positioned on the left side of the frame. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly asphalt or concrete, with a white, torn-paper-like edge at the bottom. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

ECCLSIASTES IS A  
**VOLATILE TEXT**

IT IS A WRITING OF  
**EXPERIENTIAL PHILOSOPHY**

## **ECCLESIASTES 1:1-3**

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king in Jerusalem:



## ECCLESIASTES 1:1-3

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king in Jerusalem:

<sup>2</sup> “**Meaningless! Meaningless!**”  
says the Teacher.

“Utterly **meaningless!**  
Everything is **meaningless.**”

<sup>3</sup> What do people gain from all their labors  
at which they toil under the sun?





# MEANINGLESS

הֶבֶל *hebel* [heh'bel]

faint vapour, breath, mist

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## MEANINGLESS

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faint vapour, breath, mist

## GAIN

יָתֵר *yatar* [yaw'thar]

the remnant, residue



A traffic cone is positioned on the left side of the frame. The cone has a white top section with a grid-like texture and two orange bands. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly asphalt or concrete, with a white, torn paper-like border at the bottom. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

AM I EXPECTING  
SOMETHING THAT GOD  
HASN'T PROMISED ME?

## ECCLESIASTES 1:4-6

- <sup>4</sup> Generations come and generations go,  
but the earth remains forever.
- <sup>5</sup> The sun rises and the sun sets,  
and hurries back to where it rises.
- <sup>6</sup> The wind blows to the south  
and turns to the north;  
round and round it goes,  
ever returning on its course.



## ECCLESIASTES 1:7-8

<sup>7</sup> All streams flow into the sea,  
yet the sea is never full.

To the place the streams come from,  
there they return again.

<sup>8</sup> All things are wearisome,  
more than one can say.

The eye never has enough of seeing,  
nor the ear its fill of hearing.



## ECCLESIASTES 1:9-10

<sup>9</sup> What has been will be again,  
what has been done will be done again;  
there is nothing new under the sun.

<sup>10</sup> Is there anything of which one can say,  
“Look! This is something new”?

It was here already, long ago;  
it was here before our time.



## ECCLESIASTES 1:11

<sup>11</sup> No one remembers the former generations,  
and even those yet to come  
will not be remembered  
by those who follow them.



A traffic cone with orange and white reflective bands is positioned on the left side of the frame. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly asphalt or concrete, with a white, torn-paper-like edge at the bottom. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

THE PAIN OF  
LIMITATION



*An Unprepared Response*

**IGNORANCE**

“I Don’t Know.”



*An Unprepared Response*

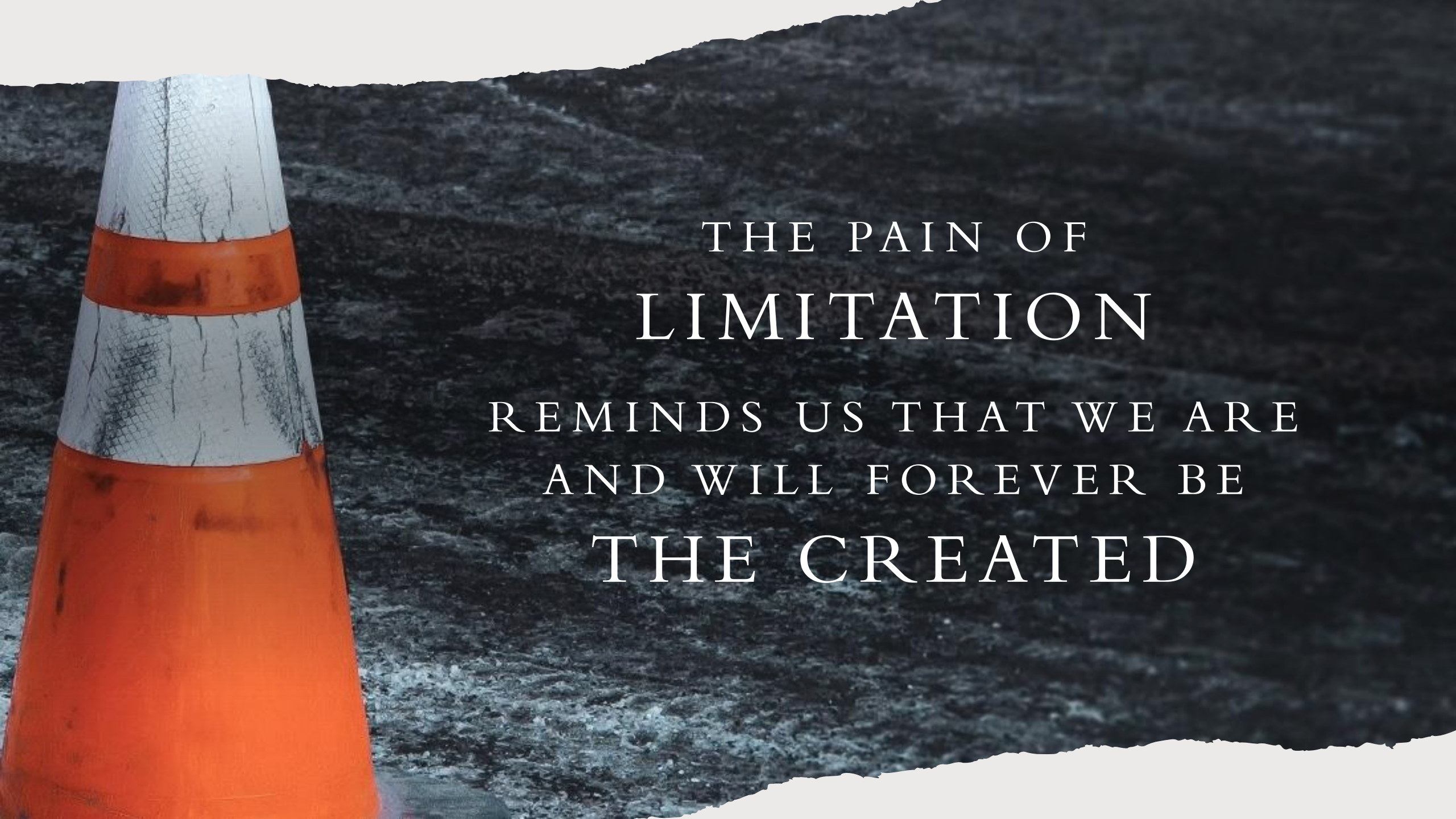
**IGNORANCE**

“I Don’t Know.”

AND

**APATHY**

“I Don’t Care.”



THE PAIN OF  
LIMITATION

REMINDS US THAT WE ARE  
AND WILL FOREVER BE  
THE CREATED



## MARK 14:3-9

<sup>3</sup> While Jesus was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

<sup>4</sup> Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? <sup>5</sup> It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly.



## MARK 14:3-9

<sup>6</sup> “Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? **She has done a beautiful thing to me.** <sup>7</sup> The poor you will always have with you,<sup>[a]</sup> and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.

<sup>8</sup> **She did what she could.** She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. <sup>9</sup> Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

[a] Deut 15:1-11



THE CREATOR  
IS THE CONSTANT

**SHE DID WHAT SHE COULD**

AND

**SHE HAS DONE A BEAUTIFUL THING TO  
ME**



# TWO STONES

RABBI SIMCHA BUNEM



I am dust and ashes.

AND



For my sake was the  
world created.