

*THE WEARINESS OF
WISDOM*

Ecclesiastes 1:12-18

The Limits of Life
ENGAGING ECCLESIASTES





ECCLESIASTES IS A
VOLATILE TEXT

IT IS A WRITING OF
EXPERIENTIAL PHILOSOPHY



MEANINGLESS

הֶבֶל *hebel* [heh'bel]

faint vapour, breath, mist

A close-up photograph of an orange traffic cone with reflective white bands, positioned on a dark asphalt surface. The cone is on the left side of the frame, and the text is overlaid on the right side.

HOLDING THE
TENSION:

LAMENT AND HOPE



THE WEARINESS OF
WISDOM

ECCLESIASTES 1:12-13A

I, the Teacher,^[a] was king over Israel in Jerusalem. I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens.



ECCLESIASTES 1:13B-14


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



ECCLESIASTES 1:15

What is crooked cannot be straightened;
what is lacking cannot be counted.





“NOT EVERYTHING THAT
COUNTS CAN BE
COUNTED, AND NOT
EVERYTHING THAT CAN
BE COUNTED COUNTS.”

- WILLIAM BRUCE CAMERON
(NOT ALBERT EINSTEIN)

ECCLESIASTES 1:16-17

I said to myself, “Look, I have increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge.” Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind.



ECCLESIASTES 1:18

For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.





Understandable Temptations

CYNICISM

OVERWHELM



Unprepared Responses

DISTRACTION

DESPAIR



EMBRACING THE EMOTIONS
OF LAMENT:

SORROW
FRUSTRATION
INSIGNIFICANCE
FEAR
DOUBT
ANGER
LONGING

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HOLDING THE TENSION:

THE GOD OF
TRUTH
IS ALSO THE GOD OF
MYSTERY



DEUTERONOMY 29:29

The LORD our God has secrets known to no one. We are not accountable for them.

But we and our children are accountable forever for all that he has revealed to us, so that we may obey all the terms of these instructions.

TWO STONES

RABBI SIMCHA BUNEM



Seeking wisdom.

AND



Embracing mystery.

