

Beginnings Famous & Endings

Ecclesiastics 1:1-2

“The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: 2 “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.””

What a way to open a book! Is it doom? Is it ramblings of a mad man? It's like the opening to some suspenseful movie. They begin with the dead person telling their story. We already know who dies. Sometimes we even know who did it. The how, when, where needs to be flushed out. Bring on the suspense. Bring on the story. Who is the teacher? Why is he freaking out? What is meaningless? What happened? So many questions within 2 verses.

To be fair it's really one verse. Many books of the Bible open with a greeting. An explanation of who's writing or where they are writing from. The book of Ecclesiastics is great writing. Just by itself, it's a fabulous literary work. Far too often we search for hidden meaning in Bible writing. We miss the beauty of the words. This is a masterful piece of literary art. By tradition Solomon wrote it yet, we just don't really know. Thankfully it's preserved in the Bible.

Most scholars believe that Solomon did write it. Yet, why did the writer mask his name as teacher? It's a famous opening to a book because of the shock and truth it proposes. To just read these verses leaves us hanging with questions. These verses; however, set up the rest of the story. Life is full of many things. There is a ton to be learned. Yet, some things are not answerable. Birth to death is a short period of time in the big picture. We fight and scrap all along the way just to die in the end? It seems meaningless doesn't it.

Yet, throughout the Bible is a door. Verses that lead you through to more than you thought. Yes, life is hard. Trials and trouble are here to stay. We get caught up in the storms of life. We forget that it's not all meaningless. Chapter three says there is a time for many things. I feel the opening verse is real. Life is tough. The writer is just trying to think about his existence. If it's Solomon, he had it all. Yet, life was meaningless. Why?

It means that no matter if your rich or poor, there is life to be lived. We can avoid many things. Yet, we all share death. We all share in some form of trials and tragedy. In the face of peril, life could look meaningless. In the face of heartbreak, substance abuse, and an oppressive life could look meaningless. The writer ends with hope that God will prevail. That the good will find restitution in God. Evil will be judged.

It would be easy to pick out the word meaningless. Yet, I feel Solomon is reflecting on life. when you get to a place of reflection it means your listening. You are engaged with the time you have left. That is a good thing. You're not ignoring your actions and the world around you. It's almost the opposite. Solomon is trying to find meaning in life. it's contemplative. I feel it's a positive message that we should look for more in the lives we lead.

Ecclesiastics 12:14 **“For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”**