

ECCLESIASTES

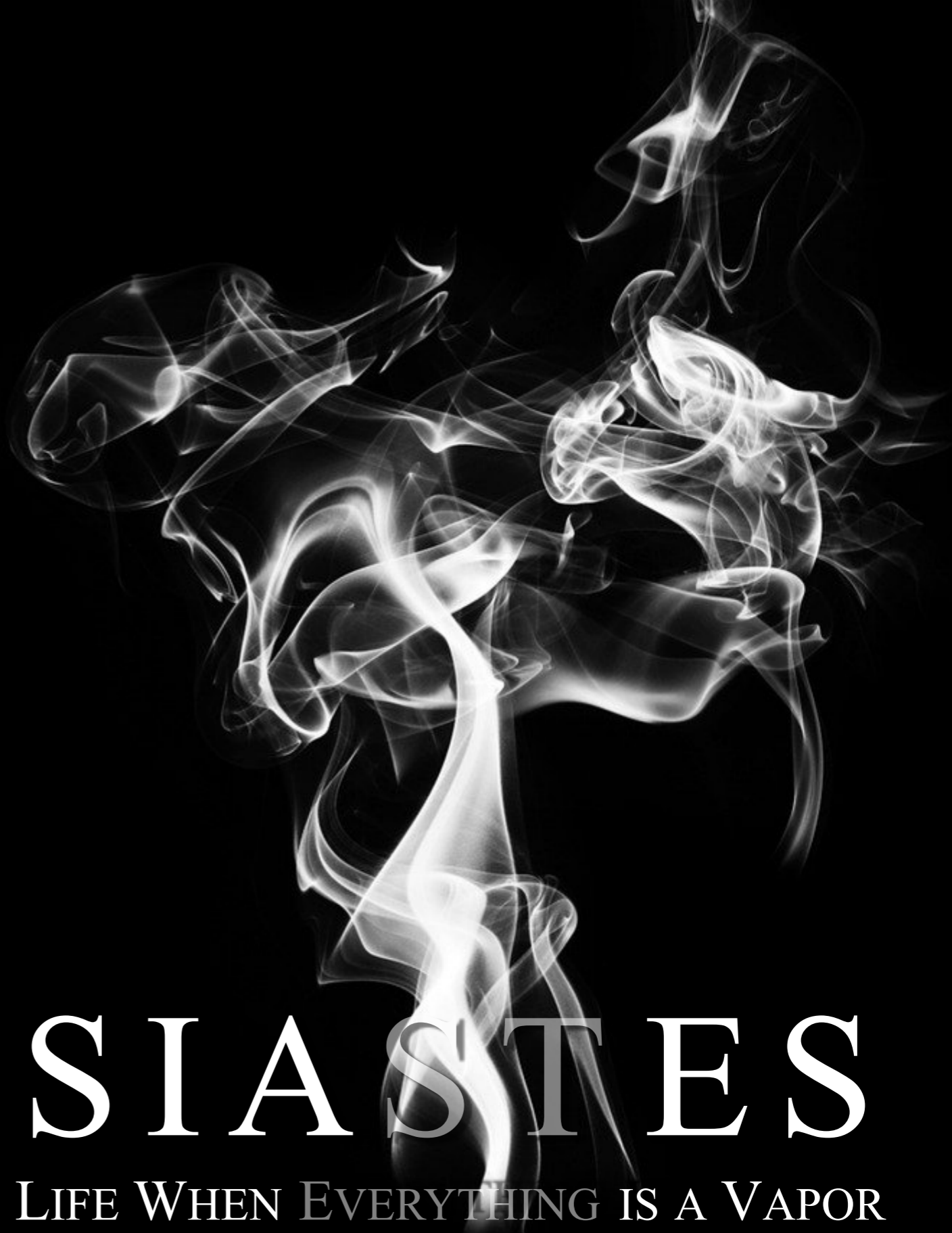
EXPLORING THE MEANING OF LIFE WHEN EVERYTHING IS A VAPOR

**You have made
us for Yourself,
and our hearts
are restless
until they find
rest in You.**

Augustine (354-430)

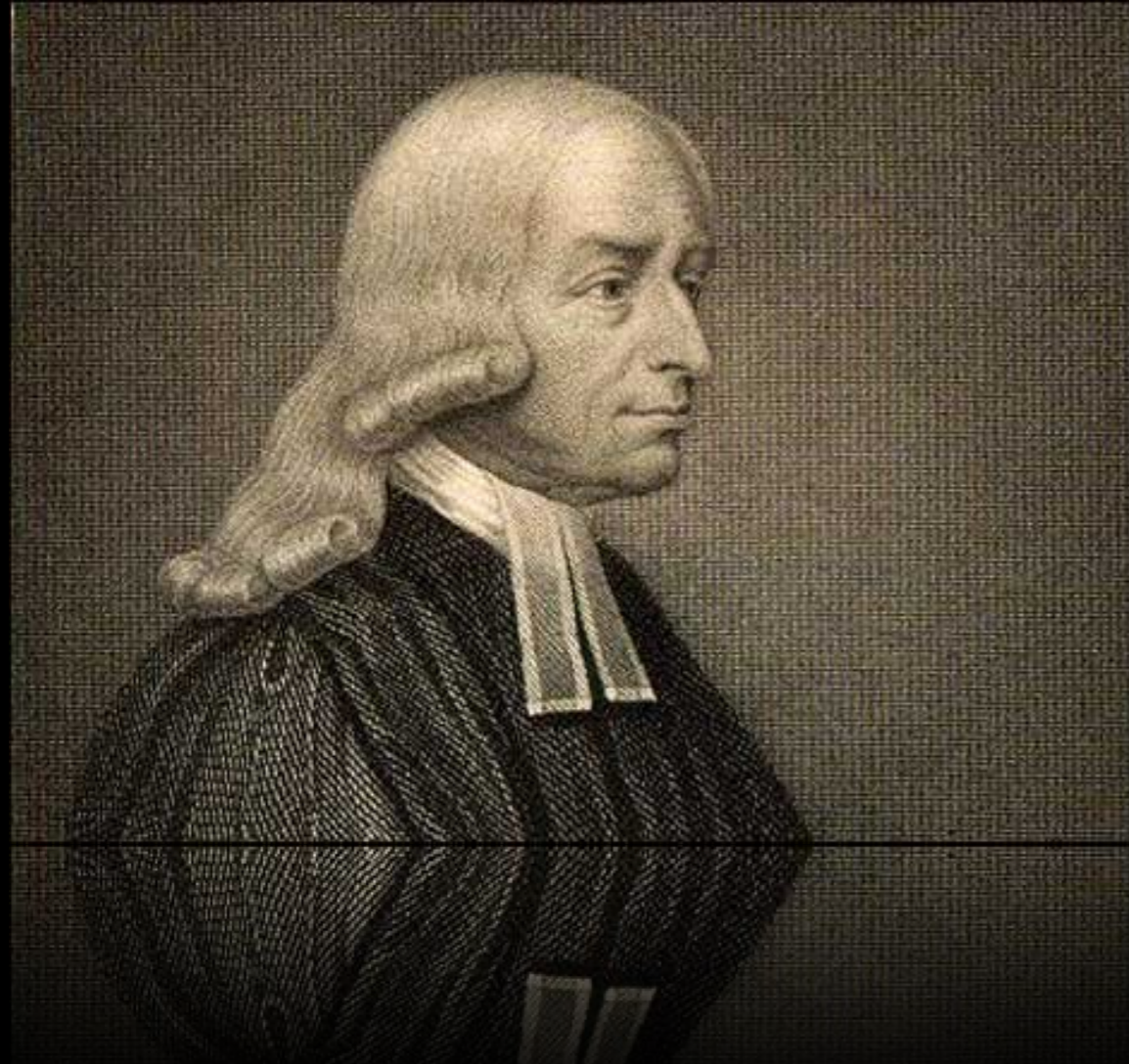
Confessions





ECCLESIASTES

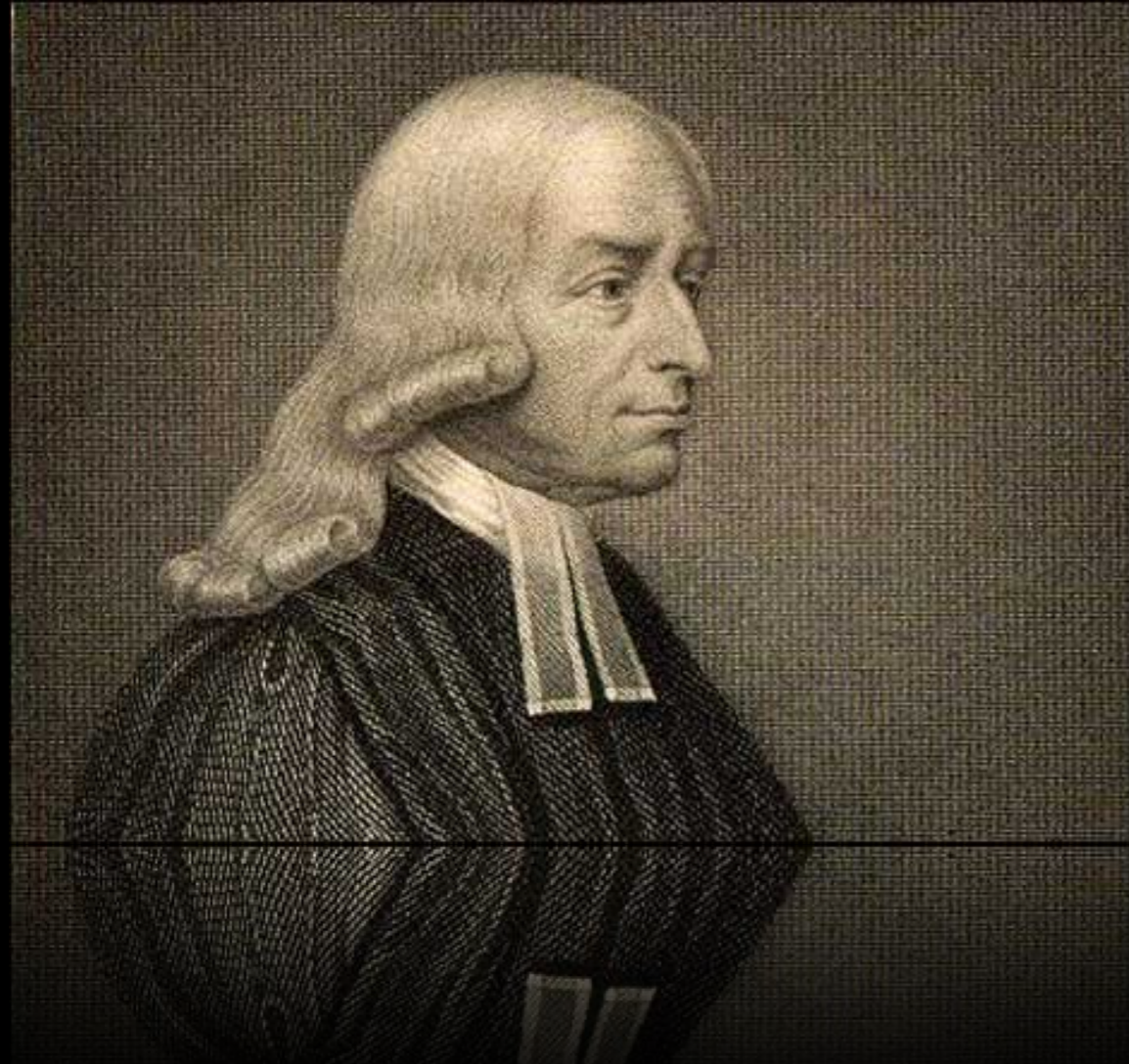
EXPLORING THE MEANING OF LIFE WHEN EVERYTHING IS A VAPOR



John Wesley

The Journal of John Wesley

**Began expounding
the Book of
Ecclesiastes.
Never before have
I had so clear a
sight either of its
meaning or its
beauties.**



John Wesley

The Journal of John Wesley

**Neither did I
imagine that the
several parts of it
were in so exquisite
a manner connected
together, all tending
to prove the grand
truth, that there is
no happiness apart
from God.**



East of Eden
Under the Sun

ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2

ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2

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

2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

What is Ecclesiastes?

Ecclesiastes is one of three major books of wisdom in the Scriptures

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Job

Proverbs

**No ill befalls the righteous,
but the wicked are full of trouble.**

— Proverbs 12:21 —

Job

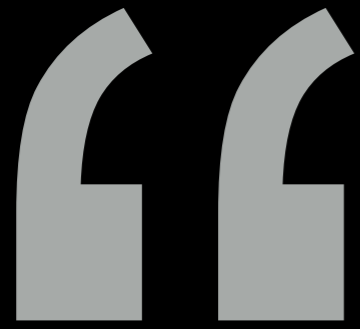
Job was a man blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

— Job 1:1 —

Ecclesiastes

In my fleeting life I have seen everything. There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his evildoing.

— Ecclesiastes 7:15 —



**...if Proverbs focuses on
the norms and rules,
'Ecclesiastes focuses
on the exceptions.'**

Zack Eswine
Rediscovering Eden

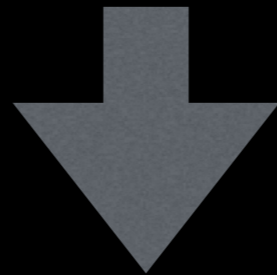


Ecclesiastes is
honest about
our lived
experience
under the sun



Who wrote Ecclesiastes?

Verse 1 tells us that these are
the words of “The Preacher”



Hebrew: Qoholeth

one who assembles people for instruction

“Ecclesiastes” is Greek for “Qoholeth”

**“...the Son of David,
King in Jerusalem”**

Ecclesiastes 1:1

**“So I became great and
surpassed all who were
before me in Jerusalem.”**

Ecclesiastes 2:9





Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. The preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth.

Ecclesiastes 12:9-10

So the author is Solomon

OR

**Someone is adopting
the persona of Solomon
in order to teach**



The Structure of Ecclesiastes

Intro

1:1

Main Teaching

1:2-12:8

“the words of the Preacher”

Outro

12:9-14

ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2

1:2 **Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.**

12:8 **Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, all is vanity.**

hebel

pronounced hevel

38x

(the same spelling as
Abel, the first man
to die - Gen. 4:8)



hebel

smoke, vapor,
mist, or even
breath

“Man is like a breath, his days
are like a passing shadow.”

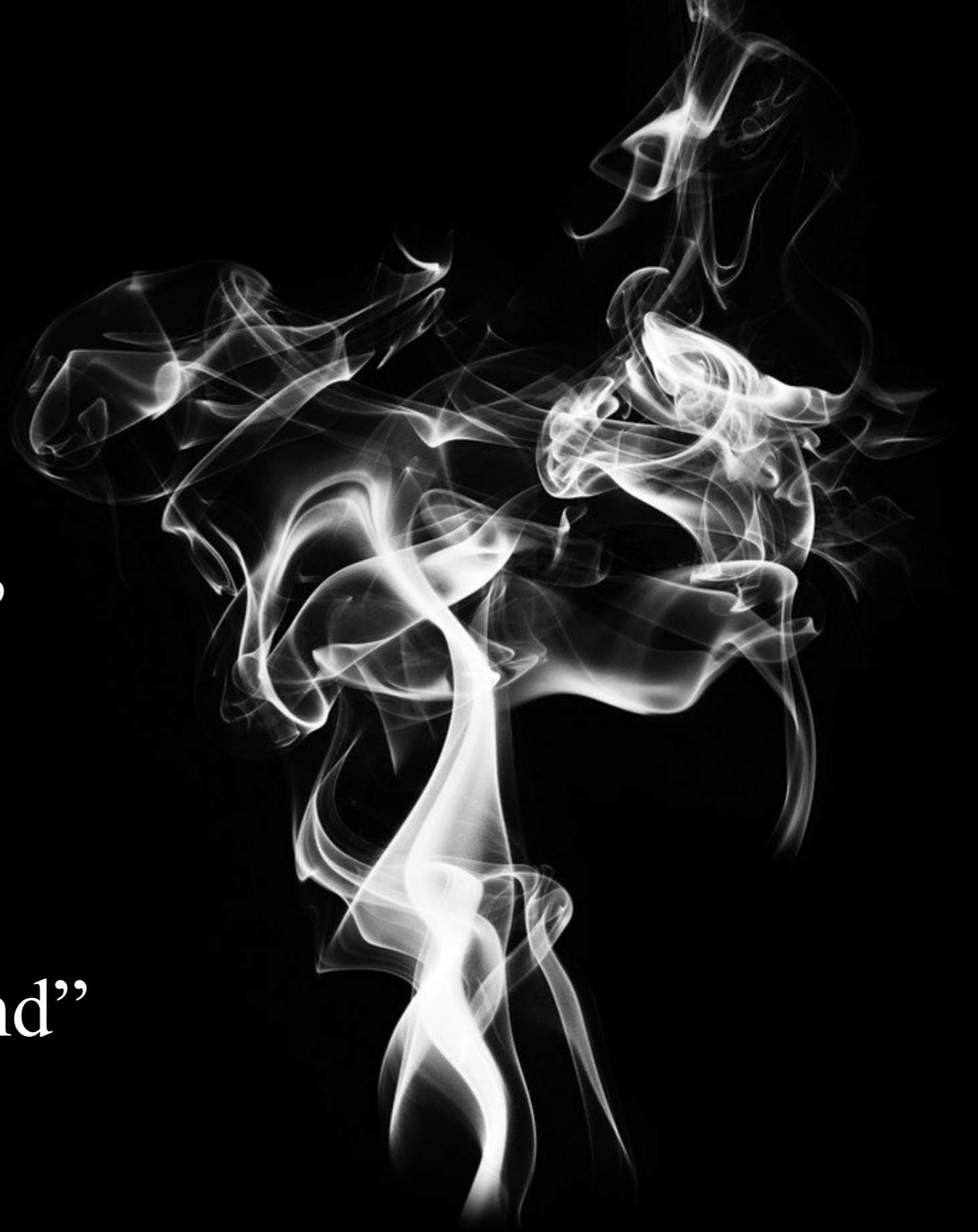
— Psalm 144:4 —



hebel

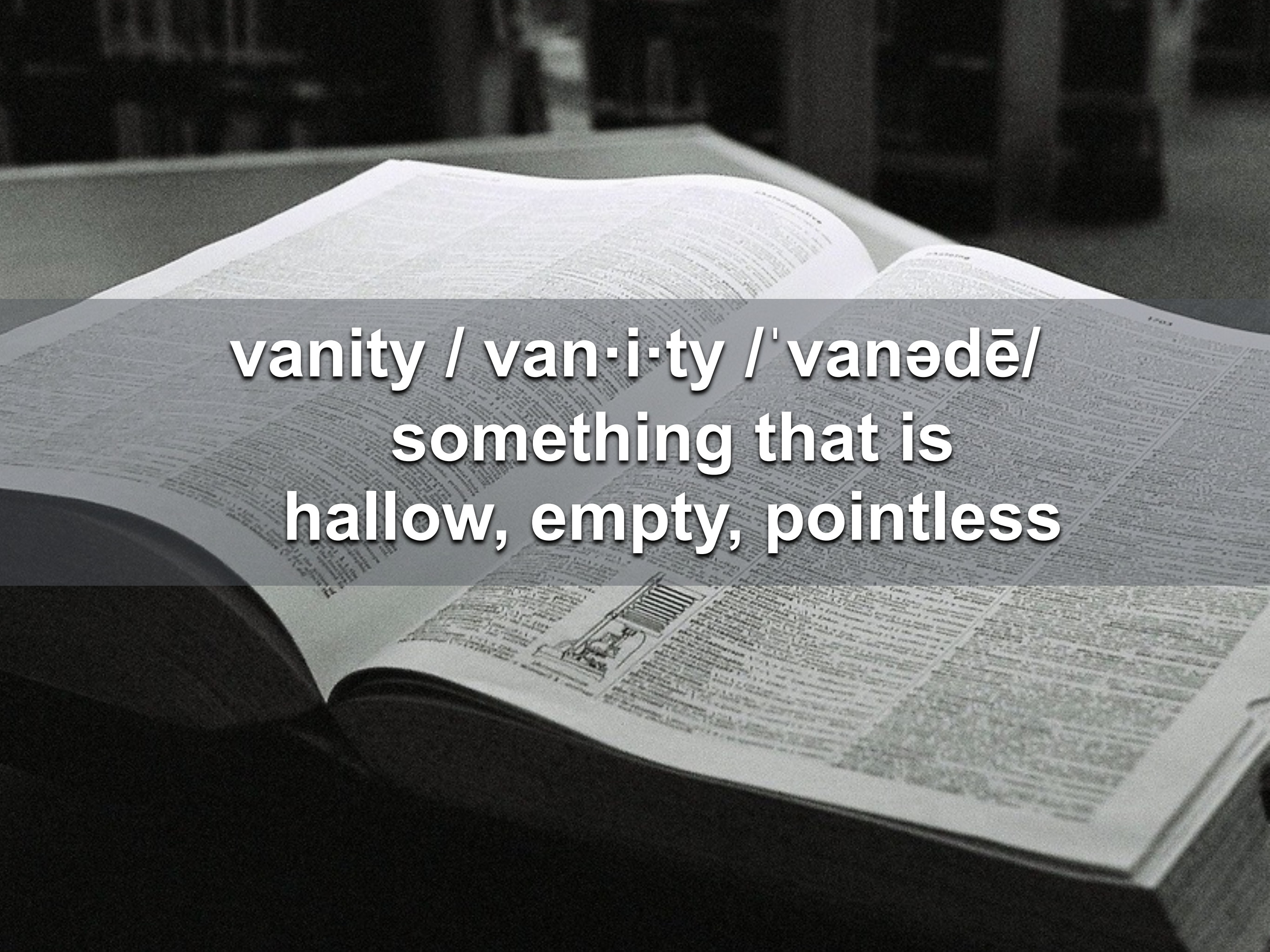
Metaphorically,
like an enigma
or a paradox

“chasing after the wind”



ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2

**2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.**

An open book is shown from a high angle, lying flat. The pages are filled with dense, small text, likely a dictionary or encyclopedia. A semi-transparent dark grey horizontal band is overlaid across the center of the book, containing white text. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting a library or study setting.

**vanity / van·i·ty /'vanədē/
something that is
hallow, empty, pointless**

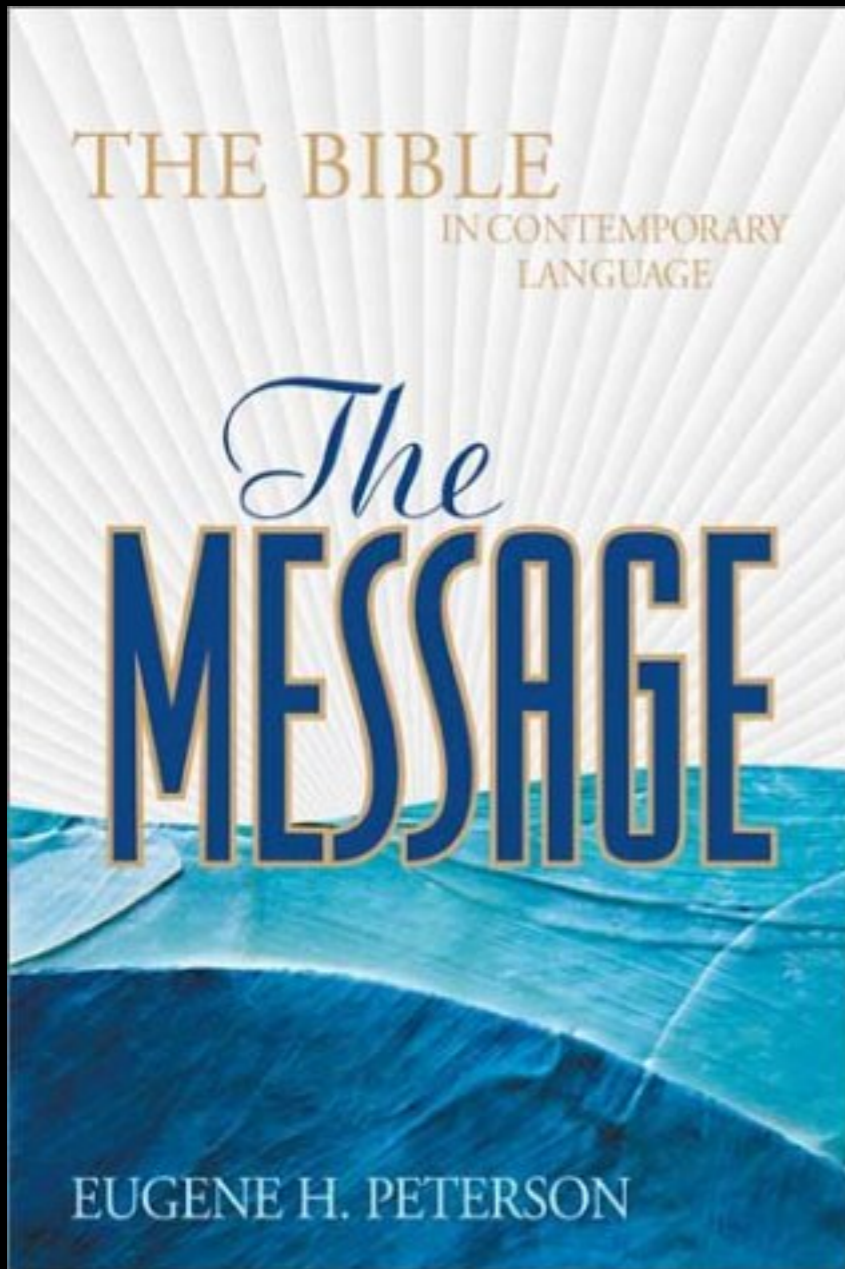


CHRISTIAN
STANDARD
BIBLE

**“Absolute futility,”
says the Teacher.**

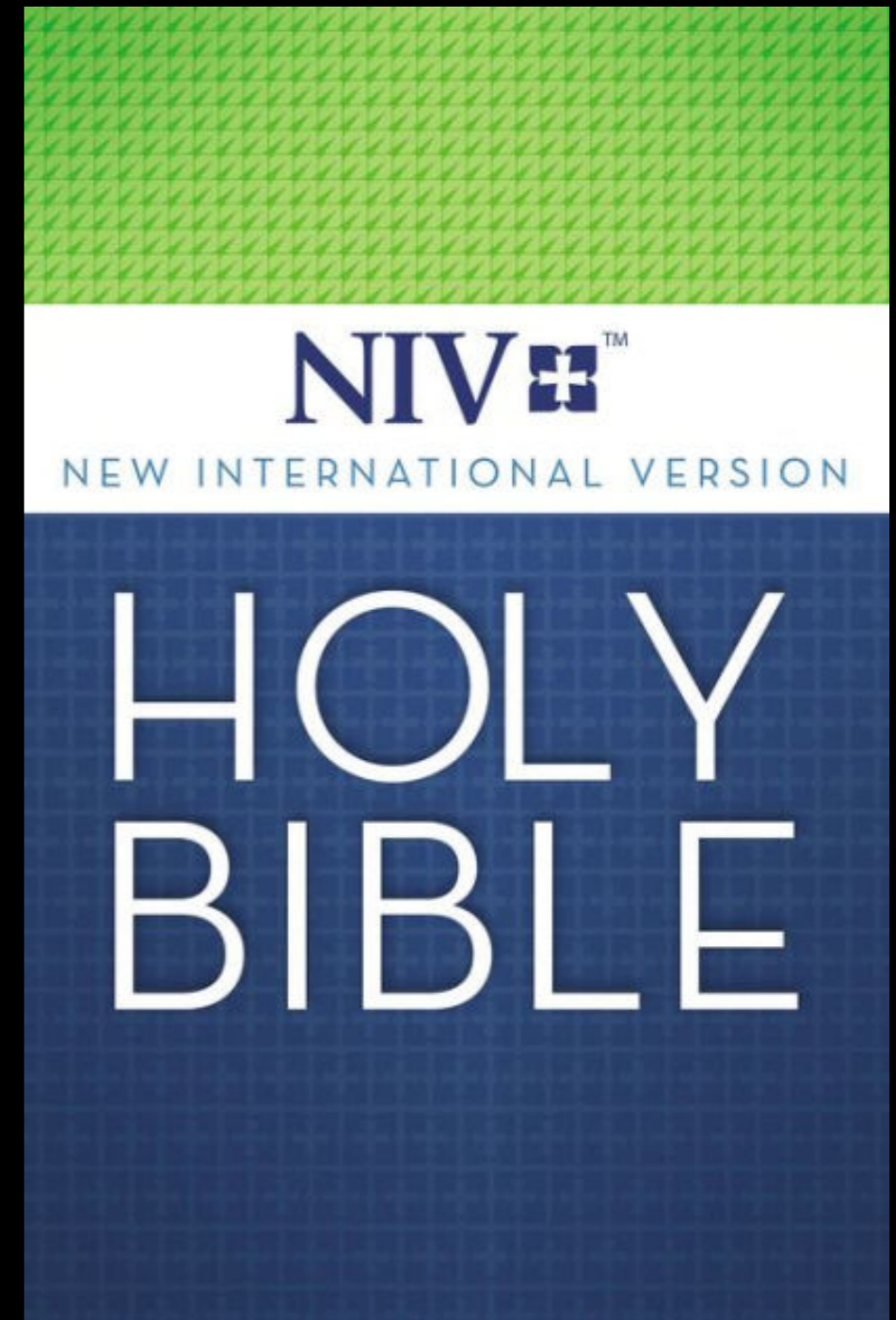
“Absolute futility.

**Everything is
futile.”**

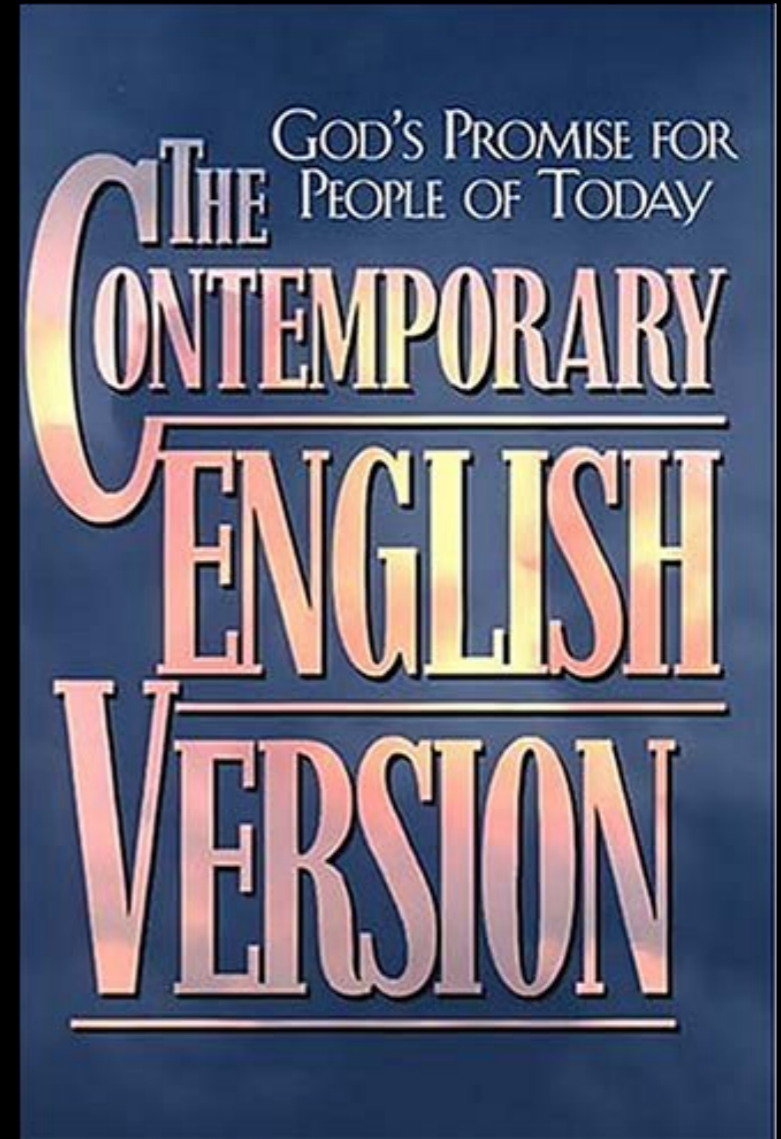


**Smoke, nothing but
smoke. [That's what the
Quester says.] There's
nothing to anything—
it's all smoke.**

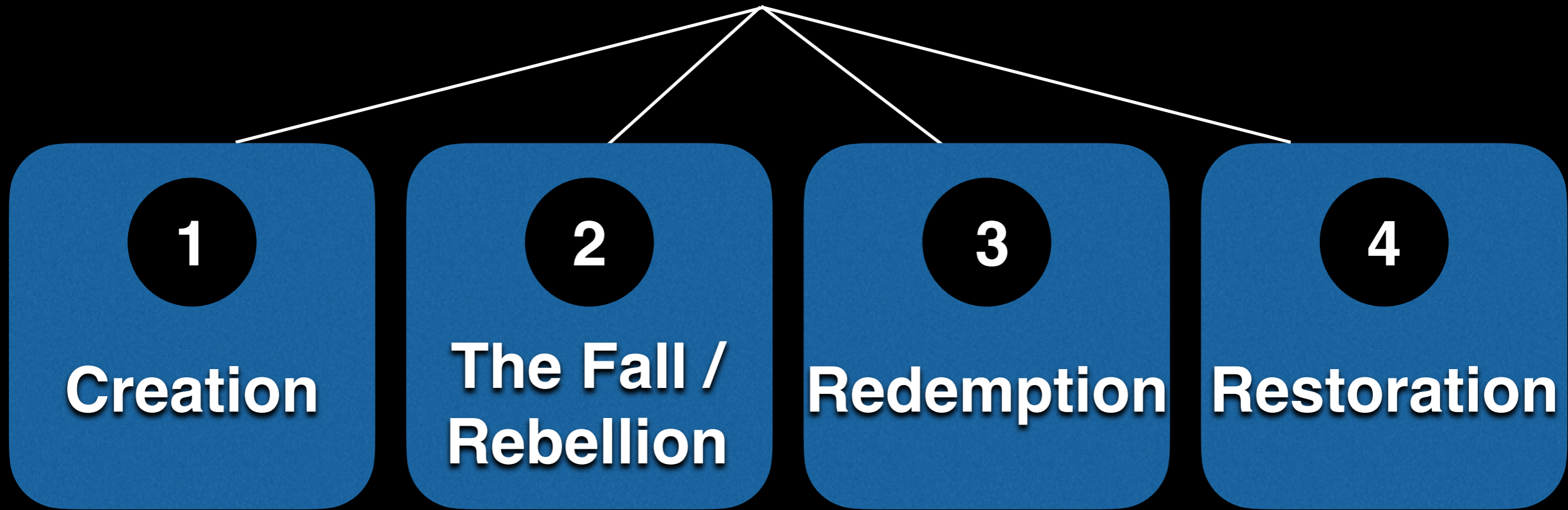
**"Meaningless!
Meaningless!"
says the Teacher.
"Utterly meaningless!
Everything is
meaningless."**



**Nothing makes sense!
Everything is nonsense.
I have seen it all—
nothing makes sense!**



The Four Part Story of the Gospel

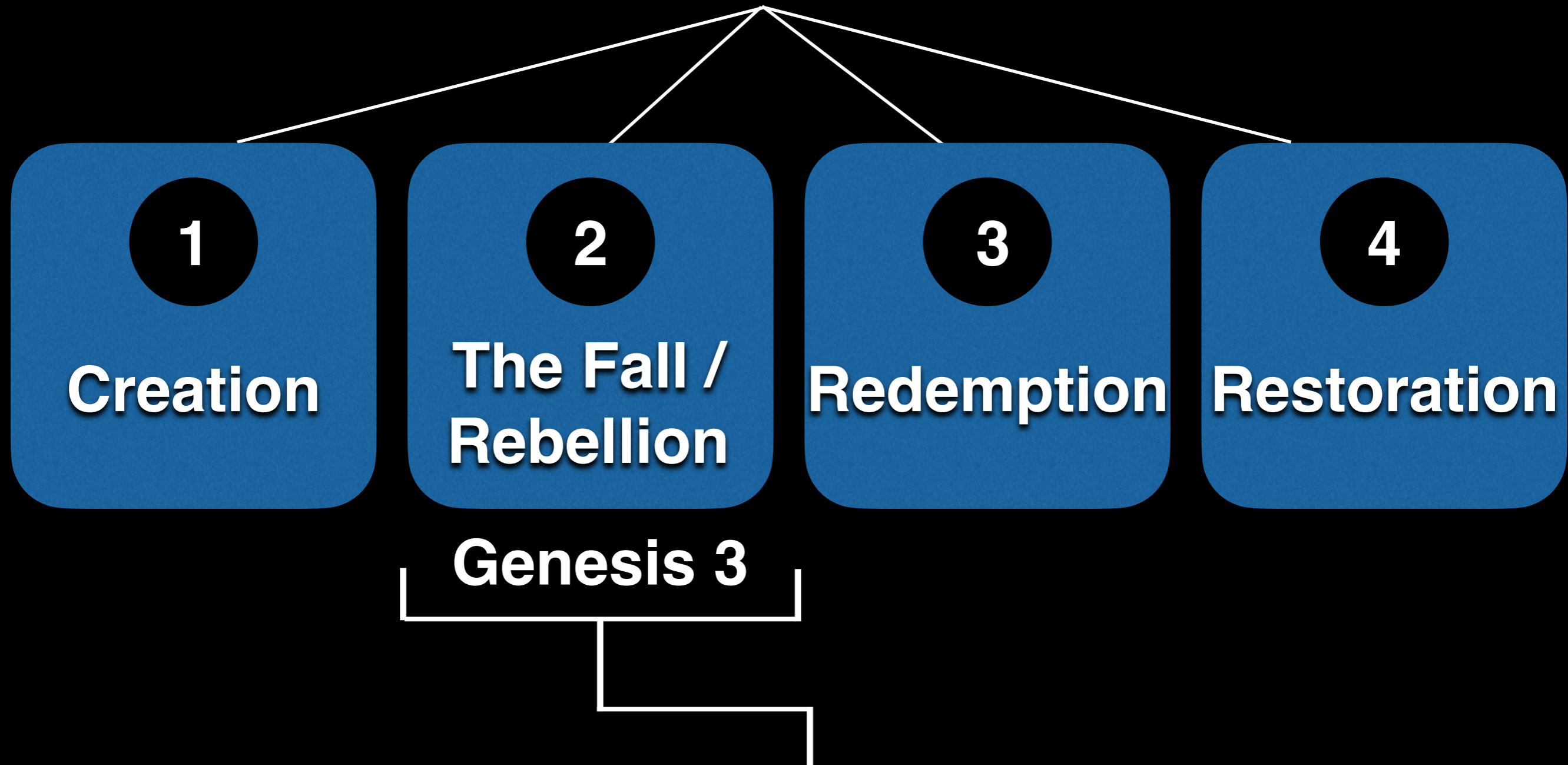


Genesis 1-2

Creation as God designed it
for human flourishing — Eden.

“shalom”

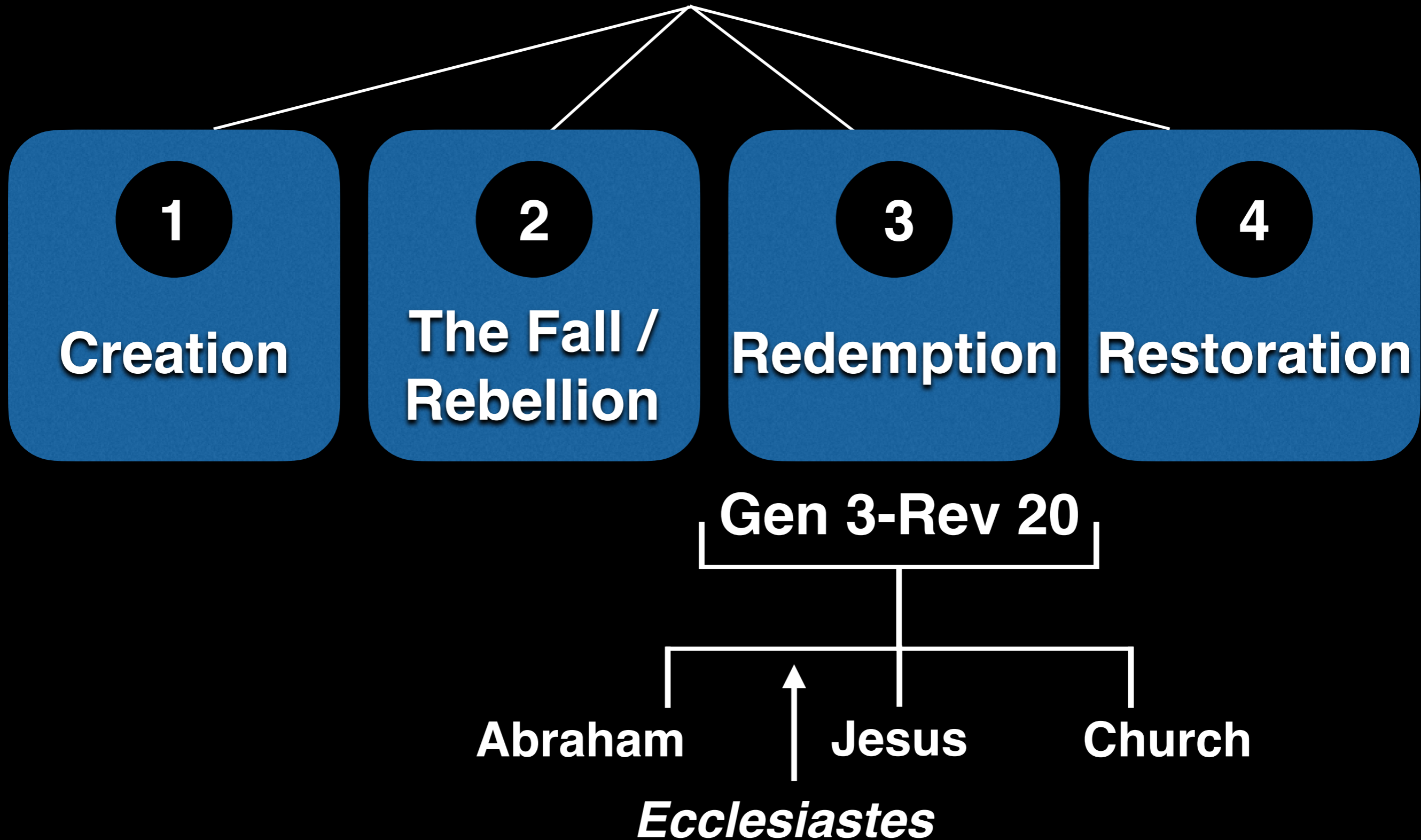
The Four Part Story of the Gospel



And then it all went wrong.

“hebel”

The Four Part Story of the Gospel



Ecclesiastes
is about what
life is like
east of Eden
under the sun



OT / COMMENTARY

AUTHOR Daniel L. Akin and Jonathan Akin

SERIES EDITORS David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida

CHRIST-CENTERED

Exposition

EXALTING JESUS IN

ECCLESIASTES



Ecclesiastes drives home the point that life in this fallen world east of Eden is futile and meaningless.... The creation of humanity and the fall into sin are the background to Solomon's observations of life in this broken world. God created the world good with a design for everything.

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God created the world as a perfect home for His children—humanity—and gave good gifts like food, drink, relationships and sex.... They were designed to cause our hearts to worship our Creator.... Instead, we rebelled against God's good design and began using His gifts in ways He did not intend.

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We turned them into ends rather than means. We sought to find satisfaction in created things rather than the Creator God, and that brought a curse on the world.... Thus Ecclesiastes describes the meaninglessness and frustration of life in a Genesis 3 world....

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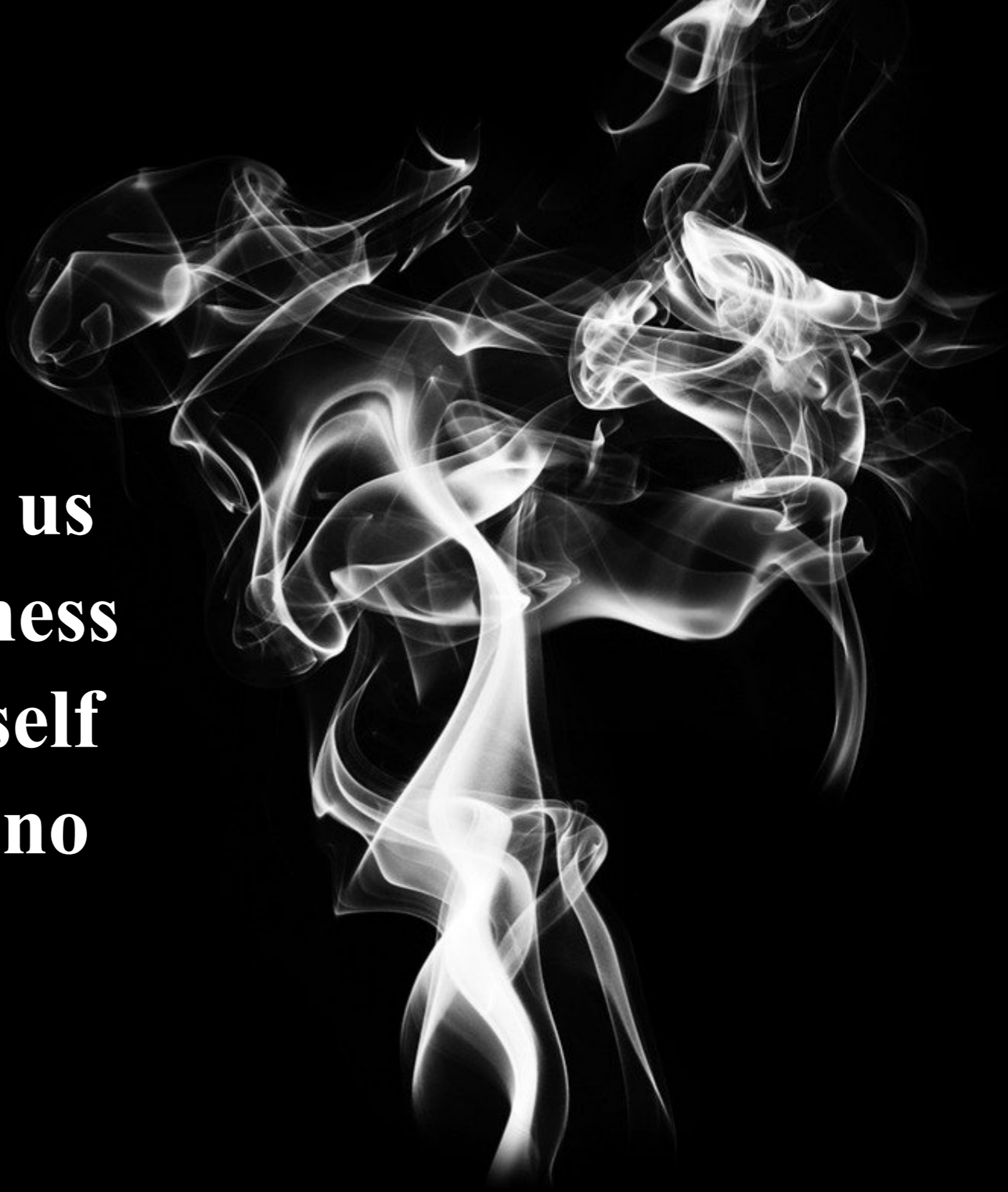
ECCLESIASTES



East of Eden and separated from God, we live in a cursed, meaningless existence seeking lasting joy in things that eventually let us down! That is the reality of life 'under the sun' that Solomon unfolds for us in this book.

**God cannot give us
peace and happiness
apart from Himself
because there is no
such thing.**

CS Lewis



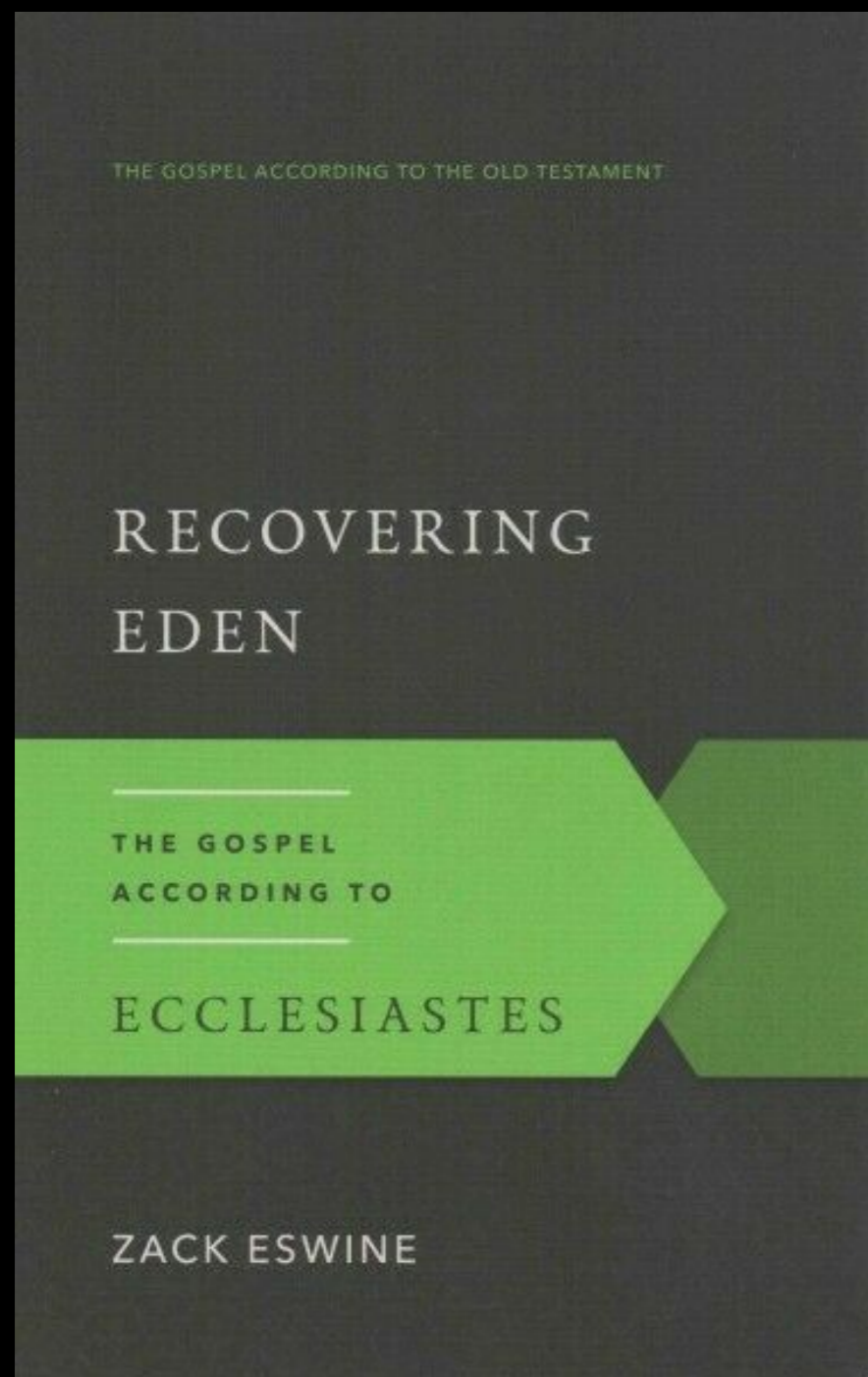
For the creation was
subjected to **futility**...
[in] bondage to
decay...the whole
creation has been
groaning.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 8



ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2

**2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.**



Ecclesiastes sounds like a crazed man downtown. He smells like he hasn't bathed —looks like it too—and as we pass by he won't stop glaring at us and beckoning to us that our lives are built on illusions, and that we're all going to die.



1

**Ecclesiastes is going
to ask us to be honest
with ourselves about
what life is really like**

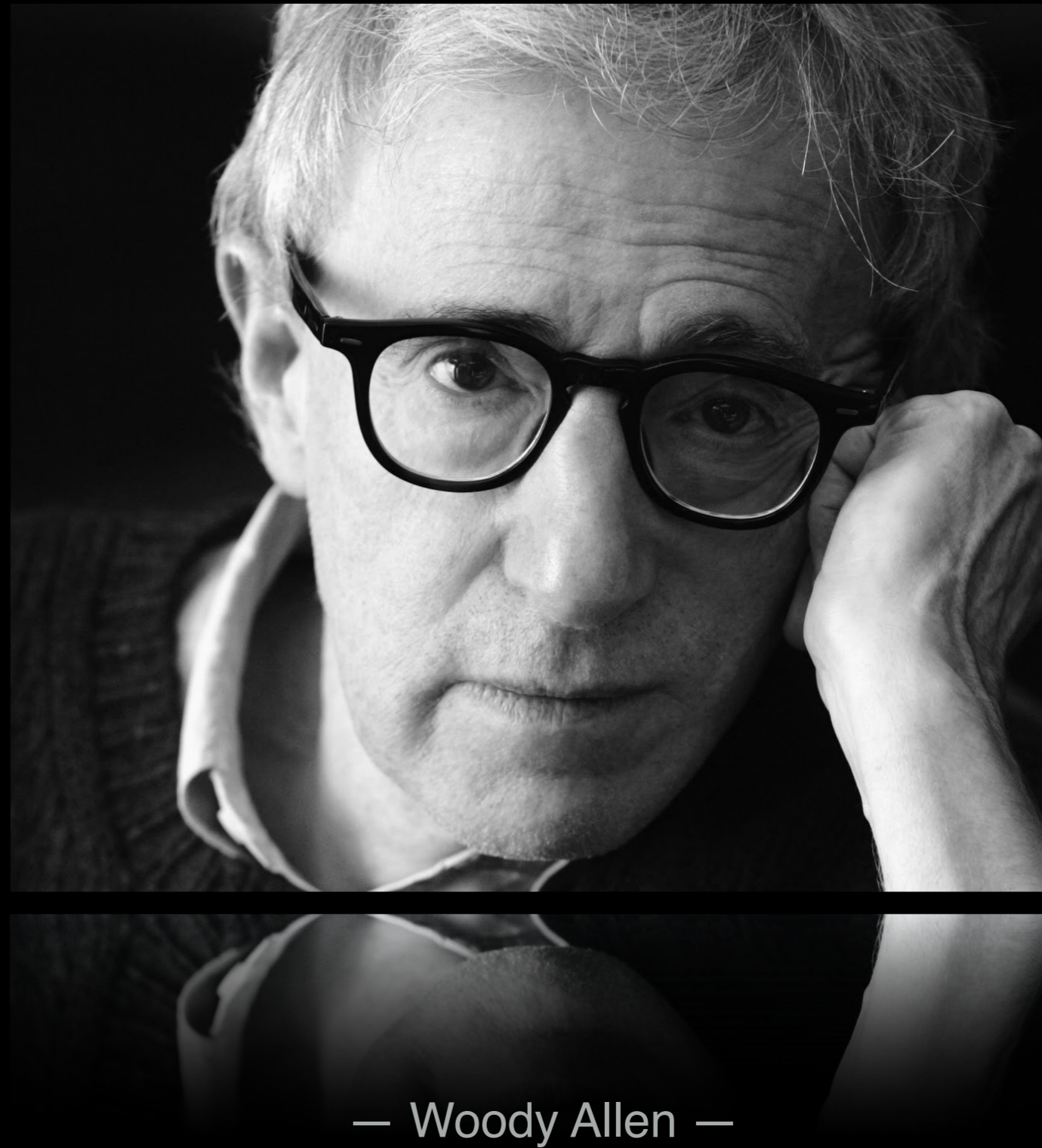


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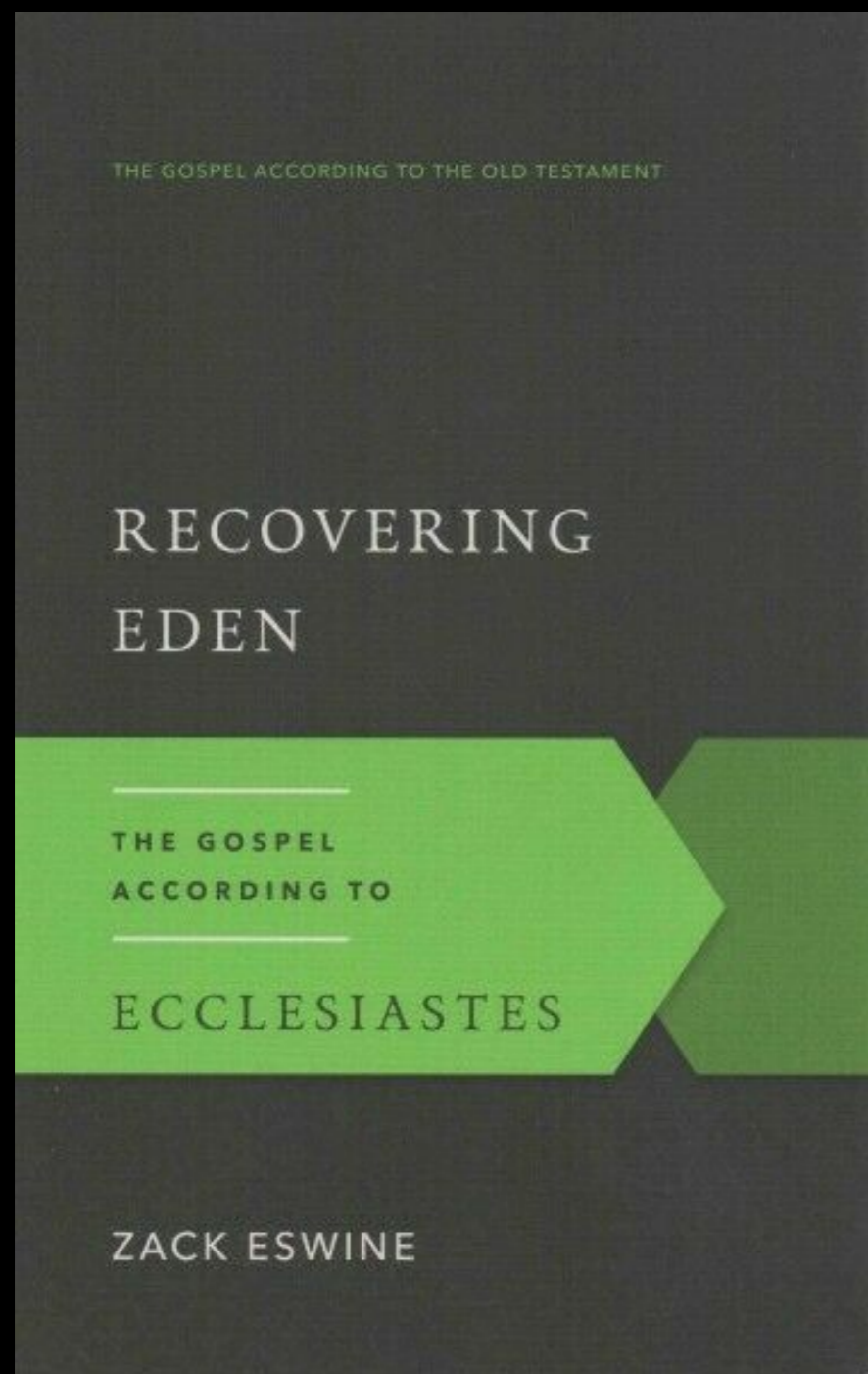
**Ecclesiastes is going
to goad us to be
intentional about
becoming wise**



The universe is indifferent.... It's meaningless. But it's important that we create some sense of meaning, because no perceptible meaning exists for anybody.



— Woody Allen —



The aim of this Preacher's message is that we who listen will come to believe in God and to recover our purpose with his gift and to see that our whole purpose as human beings is a God-centered relationship toward all things.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

RECOVERING
EDEN

THE GOSPEL
ACCORDING TO

ECCLESIASTES

ZACK ESWINE

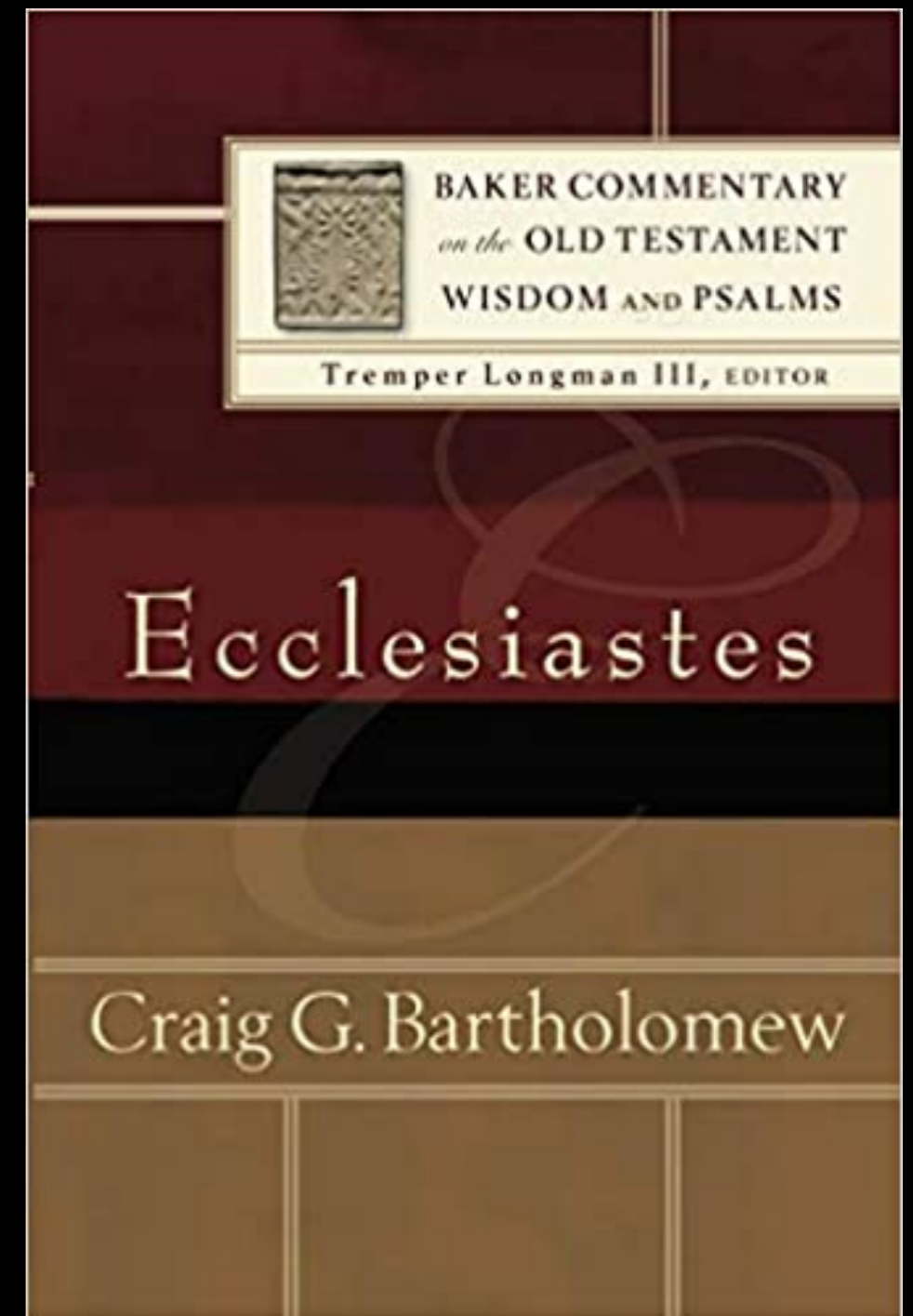
This Preacher hopes to persuade us to recognize that God is the one to whom we belong and in whom we must place our trust.

3

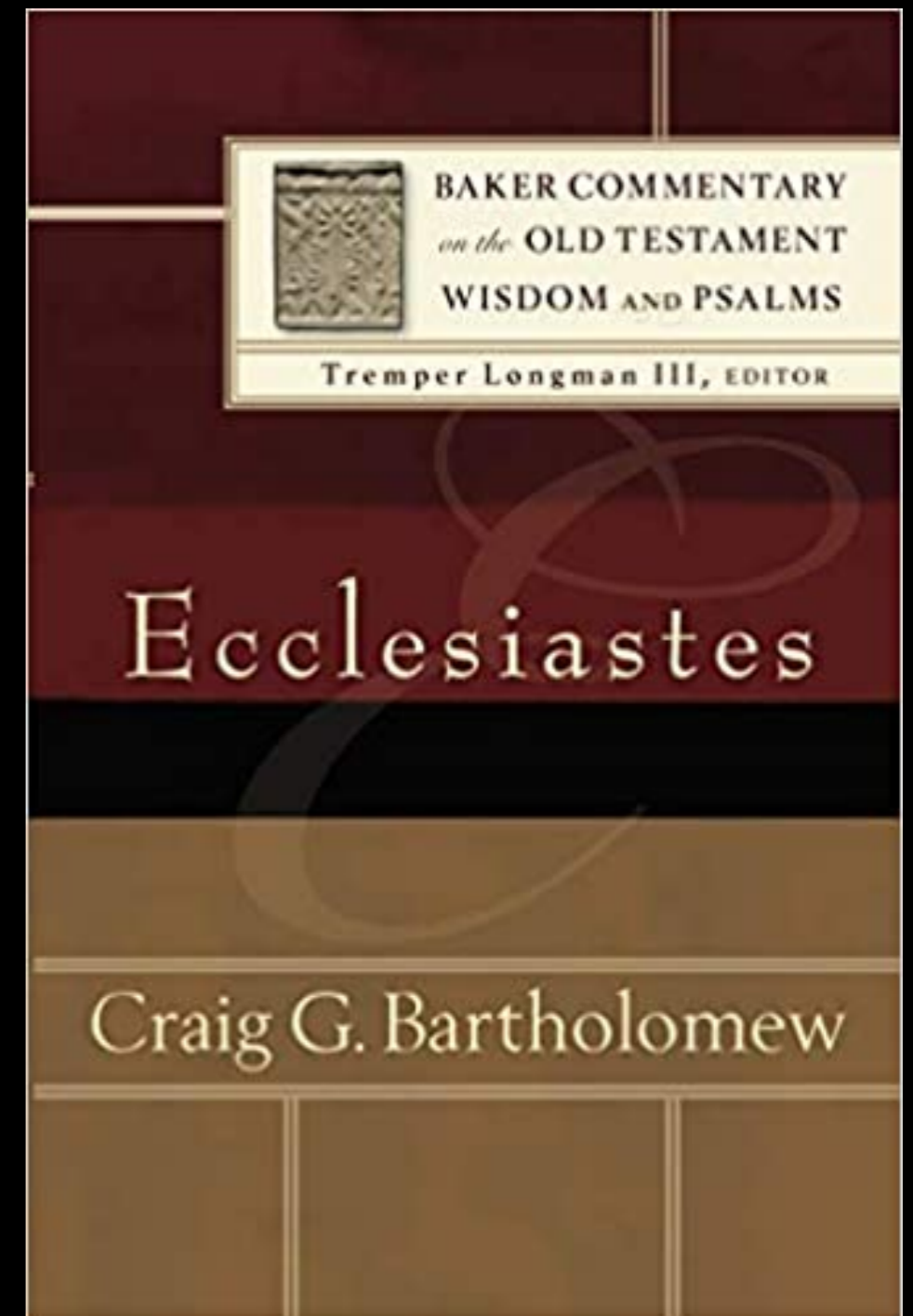
**Ecclesiastes is going
to lead us to Jesus**



Just as *hebel* casts its long shadow across all areas of life, so too does Christ claim all areas of life as rightly his and thus to be redeemed and brought to their fulfillment under his rule....



In his death he takes upon himself the full weight of the futility of separation from God and thereby opens the gate to entrance into the kingdom, in which full meaning is found in Christ.

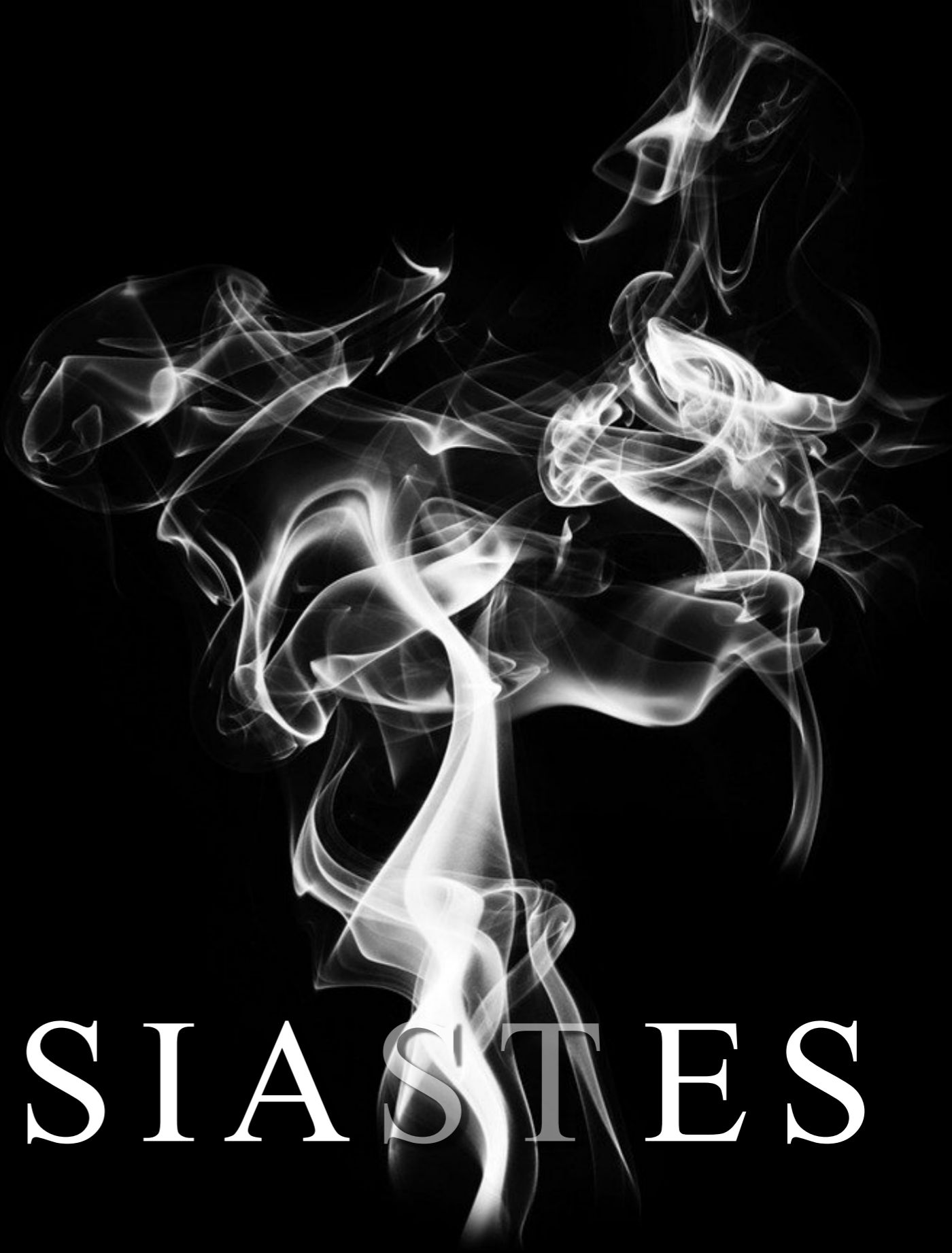


**There is not a
square inch in the
whole domain of our
human existence
over which Christ,
who is Sovereign
over all, does not
cry: “Mine!”**



Abraham Kuyper
1837-1920

Prime Minister of the Netherlands



ECCLESIASTES

**May you find in
Jesus the key to
unlock the meaning
of life east of Eden
under the sun**

