

### **Ecclesiastes 1: 1-11**

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

Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.

The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirlleth about continually and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, qe thither they return again.

All things are full of labor; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

“These hours of backward clearness come to all men and women, once at least, when they read the past in the light of the present, with the reasons of things, like unobserved fingerposts, protruding where they never saw them before. The journey behind them is mapped out, and figured with its false steps, its wrong observations, all its infatuated, deluded geography.”

Henry James, *The Bostonians*

### **Part of Eve's Discussion**

*Marie Howe*

It was like the moment when a bird decides not to eat from your hand,  
and flies, just before it flies, the moment the rivers seem to still  
and stop because a storm is coming, but there is no storm, as when  
a hundred starlings lift and bank together before they wheel and drop,  
very much like the moment, driving on bad ice, when it occurs to you  
your car could spin, just before it slowly begins to spin, like  
the moment just before you forgot what it was you were about to say,  
it was like that, and after that, it was still like that, only  
all the time.

## The Triumph of Achilles

Louise Glück

In the story of Patroclus  
no one survives, not even Achilles  
who was nearly a god.  
Patroclus resembled him; they wore  
the same armor.

Always in these friendships  
one serves the other, one is less than the other:  
the hierarchy  
is always apparent, though the legends  
cannot be trusted—  
their source is the survivor,  
the one who has been abandoned.

What were the Greek ships on fire  
compared to this loss?

In his tent, Achilles  
grieved with his whole being  
and the gods saw  
he was a man already dead, a victim  
of the part that loved,  
the part that was mortal.