Scroll Of Koheles Questions

The SCROLL OF KOHELES is read on Shabbos during Succos.

1. Why do we read Koheles during Succos?
2. Who wrote Koheles?
3. What is the meaning of the words in the verse “Don’t be too righteous?”
4. In the Book of Koheles, King Solomon refers to himself as “Koheles.” Why?
5. In verse 1:2, how many “vanities” are referred to? Why this number?
6. The verse states “And the wise man’s eyes are in his head.” What does this mean?
7. “A time to cry and a time to laugh?” Which specific times is the verse referring to?
8. What example does Rashi give for the verse “Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it?”
9. Why was Man created?
10. Why is “the end of the thing is better than the beginning?”

Answers

1. Koheles teaches that the physical world is empty and fleeting, and that the purpose of life is mitzvah observance and awe of G-d. The succah also teaches this: It is a flimsy temporary structure which we enter for the purpose of doing Hashem’s Will.
2. Shlomo Hamelech. (1:1)
3. Don’t transgress Hashem’s command even if you think you’re doing a good deed by doing so, as did Shaul Hamelech (when he spared Agag the Amalekite king). (7:16)
4. Because he gathered (kihale) vast wisdom, and because he, as king, gathered the nation on Succos after the Sabbatical year. (1:1)
5. Seven, referring to the world which was created in seven days. (1:2)
6. At the the beginning of a matter, he foresees what will be at the end. (2:14)
7. A time to cry: Tisha B’Av. A time to laugh: The Future, about which David Hamelech wrote “then our mouths will be filled with laughter (Tehillim 126).” (3:4)
8. Yisro fed Moshe; later Moshe became his son-in-law and accepted him as a convert and Yisro’s offspring sat on the Sanhedrin. (11:1)
9. In order to have awe of Hashem and to observe Hashem’s commandments.(12:13)
10. Only at the end is it known that the thing is well-done: whereas in the beginning it is yet unknown how it will end. (7:8)