

12 So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly; for what can the man do who comes after the king? Only what he has already done. ¹³Then I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness. ¹⁴The wise man has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness; and yet I perceived that one fate comes to all of them. ¹⁵Then I said to myself, "What befalls the fool will befall me also; why then have I been so very wise?" And I said to myself that this also is vanity. ¹⁶For of the wise man as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise man dies just like the fool! ¹⁷So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a striving after wind.

18 I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me; ¹⁹and who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes a man who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by a man who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. ²²What has a man from all the toil and strain with which he toils beneath the sun? ²³For all his days are full of pain, and his work is a vexation; even in the night his mind does not rest. This also is vanity.

24 There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God; ²⁵for apart from him^d who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶For to the man who pleases him God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he gives the work of gathering and heaping, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

3 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

²a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

³a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

⁵a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

⁷a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

⁸a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

⁹What gain has the worker from his toil?

10 I have seen the business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with. ¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time; also he has put eternity into man's mind, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. ¹²I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; ¹³also that it is God's gift to man that every one should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil. ¹⁴I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has made it so, in order that man should fear before him. ¹⁵That which is, already has been; and that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.

16 Moreover I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness. ¹⁷I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work. ¹⁸I said in my heart with regard to the sons of men that God is testing them to show them that they are but beasts. ¹⁹For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same: as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is vanity. ²⁰All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. ²¹Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down to the earth?

²²So I saw that there is nothing better

²²Gk Syr: Heb apart from me

than that a man should enjoy his work, for that is his lot; who can bring him to see what will be after him?

4 Again I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun.

And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them!

On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them. ²And I thought the dead

who are already dead more fortunate than the living who are still alive;

but better than both is he who has not yet been, and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

4 Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

5 The fool folds his hands, and eats his own flesh.

6 Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind.

7 Again, I saw vanity under the sun: a person who has no one, either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.

9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up. ¹¹Again, if two lie together, they are warm; but how can one be warm alone? ¹²And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king, who will no longer take advice, ¹⁴even though he had gone from prison to the throne or in his own kingdom had been born poor. ¹⁵I saw all the living who move about under the sun, as well as that youth, who was to stand in his place; ¹⁶there was no end of all the people; he was over all of them. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

5 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know that they are doing evil. ²⁴Be not rash with

your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few.

3 For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words.

4 When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it; for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow.

²It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

⁶Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger¹ that it was a mistake; why should God be angry at your voice, and destroy the work of your hands?

⁷For when dreams increase, empty words grow many;² but do you fear God.

8 If you see in a province the poor oppressed and justice and right violently taken away, do not be amazed at the matter; for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them. ⁹But in all, a king is an advantage to a land with cultivated fields.⁴

10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money; nor he who loves wealth, with gain: this also is vanity.

11 When goods increase, they increase who eat them; and what gain has their owner but to see them with his eyes?

12 Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much; but the surfeit of the rich will not let him sleep.

13 There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, ¹⁴and those riches were lost in a bad venture; and he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. ¹⁵As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil, which he may carry away in his hand. ¹⁶This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go; and what gain has he that he toiled for the wind, ¹⁷and spent all his days in darkness and grief,¹ in much vexation and sickness and resentment?

18 Behold, what I have seen to be

¹Heb the second

²Ch 4.17 in Heb ³Ch 5.1 in Heb ⁴Or angel

⁵Or For in a multitude of dreams there is futility, and ruin in a flood of words

⁶Or The profit of the land is among all of them; a cultivated field has a king

⁷Gk: Heb all his days also he eats in darkness