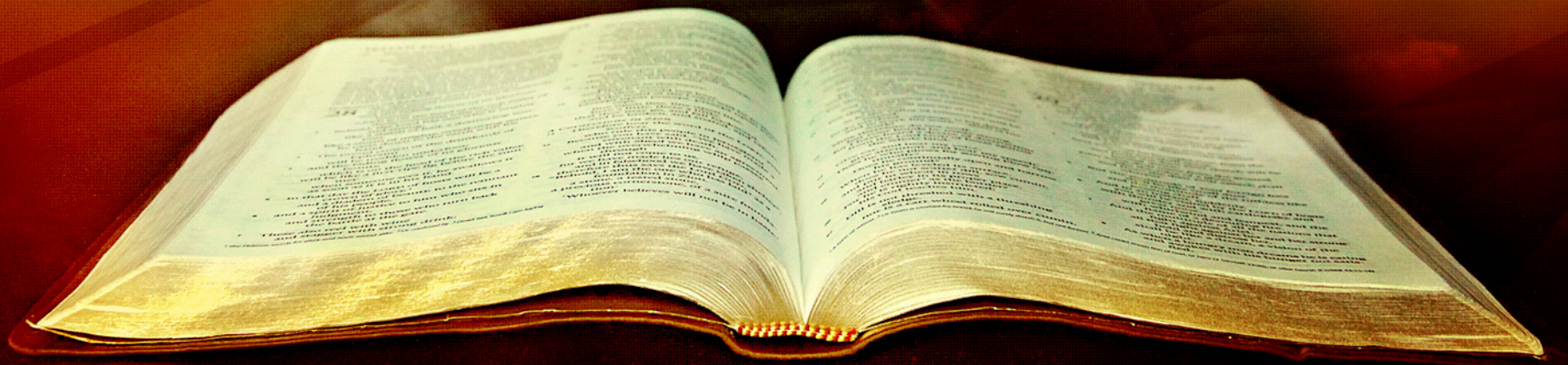


ECCLESIASTES

Eccl. 4:13-16



Eccl. 4:13 Better *is* a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

15 I considered all the living which walk **under the sun**, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 *There is* no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. **Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.**

This evening, we continue on a wonderful, spiritual journey through the Book of Ecclesiastes, known also as “The Preacher.”

I. THE PREACHER’S SUBJECT, 1:1-11

- A. The Preacher, 1:1
- B. The Problem, 1:2-3
- C. The Process, 1:4-11

II. THE PREACHER’S SERMON, 1:12-10:20

- A. Things He Had Sought, 1:12—2:26
- B. Things He Had Seen, 3:1—6:12
 - 1. The Problem of Time Without Eternity, 3:1-11
 - 2. The Problem of a New Leaf Without a New Life, 3:12-17
 - 3. The Problem of Mortality Without Immortality, 3:18-22
 - a. A Low View of Man’s Dignity, 3:18-19
 - b. A Low View of Man’s Destiny, 3:20-21
 - c. A Low View of Man’s Duty, 3:22

4. The Problem of Might Without Right, 4:1-3

a. Gloomy Consideration, 4:1

(1) The Anguished of the Oppressed, 4:1a

(2) The Arrogance of the Oppressors, 4:1b

b. Gloomy Conclusion, 4:2-3

(1) Praising Those the Tomb Has Received,

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(2) The Lazy Fool, 4:5

b. The Realistic Man, 4:6

c. The Ridiculous Man, 4:7-12

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(b) No Satisfaction, 4:8b

(c) No Sense, 4:8c

(2) The Suggestion, 4:9-12

(a) Production, 4:9

(b) Precaution, 4:10

(c) Preservation, 4:11

(d) Protection, 4:12

6. The Problem of Sovereignty Without Sagacity, 4:13-16

a. Unsound in His Thoughts, 4:13

Eccl. 4:13 Better *is* a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

- Before Solomon was born, his father, David, was “a poor and wise child” and Saul was “an old and foolish king.”
- Saul, as he aged, would “...no more be admonished.”
- “There’s no fool like an old fool.”

b. Unsited to His Throne, 4:14

Eccl. 4:14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

- Joseph, in an Egyptian jail, came to reign over the kingdom of Egypt. An heir to Pharaoh was passed over.

c. Unsung by the Throng, 4:15-16

(1) The Nameless Monarch, 4:15

Eccl. 4:15 I considered all the living which walk **under the sun**, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

- Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was over-shadowed by Jeroboam who ruled 10 tribes in the Northern Kingdom.
- What is in view is a succession of kings, none of whom fully satisfies the populace (cf. Jeroboam, Solomon, and Rehoboam).

- The point is that even though a man may rise from the bottom of society—this youth had been in prison—to the top, **not everyone will accept or appreciate him.**

(2) The Nebulous Multitude, 4:16a *“There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him...”*

- Therefore, since it is impossible to achieve full acceptance, it is foolish to spend one's life seeking it.
- Our priority should be to please God.

Gal. 1:10 For **do I now persuade men, or God?** or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

1 Thess. 4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how **ye ought to walk and to please God**, so ye would abound more and more.

- You can please some of the people some of the time, all of the people some of the time, some of the people all of the time, but you can never please all of the people all of the time.

Abraham Lincoln

<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/415900>

- Saul, head and shoulders taller than other Israelites, looked like the best choice to be king.

1 Sam. 9:1 Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name *was* Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, **a mighty man of power.**

2 And he had a son, whose name *was* **Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly:** and ***there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.***

- The human tendency is to look on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.

1 Sam. 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; **for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.**

(3) The Nagging Misery, 4:16b “...Surely this also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.”

- The *emptiness of chasing the wind*, is comparable to an unqualified person chasing a position for which they are unqualified.
- Solomon understood that those who would follow him were unqualified failures waiting to happen.
- Solomon foresaw the surety of “...vanity and vexation of spirit”
- Solomon asked for wisdom, not goodness, and came to realize that he had “Sovereignty Without Sagacity.”

1 Kings 11:1 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites;

2 Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

4 For it came to pass, **when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.**

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 And **Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his father. ...**

9 And **the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel**, which had appeared unto him twice,

10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, **I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. ...**

26 And **Jeroboam** the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, **Solomon's servant**, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up *his* hand against the king. ...

40 Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

Conclusion

Job 32:9 **Great men are not *always* wise:** neither do the aged understand judgment.

Deut. 32:29 **O that they were wise,** *that* they understood this, *that* they would **consider their latter end!**

Eccl. 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole duty of man.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

