



ECCLESIASTES

Chapter 1*All is Vanity*

1 ¶ The words of the Teacher, the son of David, ^aking in Jerusalem.

2 ^bVanity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities. ^cAll *is* vanity.

3 ^dWhat profit does a man have in all his work that he does under the sun?

4 *One* generation passes away and *another* generation comes, but ^ethe earth abides forever.

5 ^fThe sun also rises and the sun goes down, and hastens to its place where it rose.

6 ^gThe wind goes toward the south and turns around to the north. It whirls around continually, and the wind returns again according to its circuits.

7 ^hAll the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea *is* not full. To the place from where the rivers come, there they return again.

8 ¶ All things *are* unspeakably tiresome. Man cannot express *it*. ⁱThe eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 ^jThe thing that has been, *it is that* which will be. And that which is done *is* that which will be done. And *there is* no new *thing* under the sun.

10 Is there anything of which it may be said, “See, this *is* new”? It has been already from old time that was

before us.

11 *There is* ^kno remembrance of former *things*, neither will there be *any* remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that will come after.

Wisdom is Vanity

12 ¶ I the Teacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and ^lsearch out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven. This ^mburdensome task God has given to the sons of men by which to be busy.

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun. And behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

15 ⁿ*That which is* crooked cannot be made straight. And that which is lacking cannot be counted.

16 ¶ I communed with my own heart, saying, “Behold, I have magnified and ^oincreased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me. Yes, my heart has great experience of wisdom and knowledge.”

17 ^pAnd I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is a vexation of spirit.

18 For ^qin much wisdom *is* much grief. And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

Chapter 1: a Pv 1:1 b Ps 39:5,6; 62:9; 144:4 c Rm 8:20,21 d Ec 2:22; 3:9 e Ps 104:5; 119:90 f Ps 19:4-6 g Jn 3:8 h Jr 5:22 i Pv 27:20 j Ec 3:15 k Ec 2:16 l Ec 7:25; 8:16,17 m Ec 3:10 n Ec 7:13 o 1 Kg 3:12,13 p Ec 2:3,12; 7:23,25 q Ec 12:12

Chapter 2

Pleasures are Vanity

1 ¶ I said ^ain my heart, “Come now, I will test you with ^bpleasure, therefore enjoy good.” And behold, ^cthis also was vanity.

2 I said of laughter, “*It is madness,*” and of pleasure, “What does it accomplish?”

3 ^dI searched in my heart *how* to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, until I might see what was ^egood for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.

4 I made my works great. I built my ^fhouses. I planted my vineyards.

5 I made gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits.

6 I made pools of water to irrigate a plantation of growing trees.

7 I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves born in my house. I also had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me.

8 ^gI gathered also silver and gold, and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* musical instruments of all kinds.

9 ¶ ^hSo I was great and increased ⁱmore than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also remained with me.

10 And whatever my eyes desired, I

did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any joy, for my heart rejoiced in all my labor. And ^jthis was my reward from all my labor.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had accomplished, and on the labor that I had labored to do. And behold, all was ^kvanity and vexation of spirit. And *there was* no profit under the sun.

Wisdom and Folly are Vanity

12 ¶ And I turned myself to consider wisdom and ^lmadness and folly, for what *will* the man *do* who comes after the king *except* what has already been ^mdone?

13 Then I saw that wisdom ⁿexcels folly, as far as light excels darkness.

14 ^oThe wise man’s eyes *are* in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And I myself perceived also ^pthat one event happens to them all.

15 Then I said in my heart, “As it happens to the fool, so it happens even to me. Why then have I been extremely wise?” So I said to myself, “This too is vanity.”

16 For *there is* ^qno remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever, seeing that which now *is* in the days to come will all be forgotten. And how does the wise *man* die? As the fool.

Labor is Vanity

17 ¶ Therefore, I hated life because the work that is done under the sun

Chapter 2: a Lk 12:19 b Ec 7:4; 8:15 c Ec 1:2 d Ec 1:17 e Ec 3:12,13; 5:18; 6:12 f 1 Kg 7:1-12 g 1 Kg 9:28; 10:10,14,21 h Ec 1:16 i 2 Ch 9:22 j Ec 3:22; 5:18; 9:9 k Ec 1:3,14 l Ec 1:17; 7:25 m Ec 1:9 n Ec 7:11,14,19; 9:18; 10:10 o Pv 17:24 p Ps 49:10 q Ec 1:11; 4:16

is grievous to me, for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 Yes, I hated all my labor in which I had labored under the sun, because ¹I must leave it to the man who will be after me.

19 And who knows whether he will be a wise *man* or a fool? Yet he will have rule over all my labor wherein I have labored, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.

20 Therefore, I turned in my heart to despair of all the labor that I had labored under the sun.

21 For there is a man whose labor *is* in wisdom and in knowledge and in equity. Yet to a man who has not labored for it, he will leave it *for* his heritage. This also *is* vanity and a great evil.

22 ^sFor what does man have for all his labor, and for the vexation of his heart, by which he has labored under the sun?

23 For all his days *are* ^tsorrowful, and his work burdensome. Yes, his heart does not take rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24 ¶ ^uThere is nothing better for a man *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God.

25 For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him?

26 For to a person who is good in His sight He has given ^vwisdom and knowledge and joy. But to the sinner

He gives the task of toil of gathering and heaping up in order that ^wHe may give to *him who is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

Chapter 3

A Time for Everything

1 ¶ To everything *there is* a season and a ^atime to every purpose under the heaven—

2 a time to be born and a ^btime to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up *what is* planted;

3 a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up;

4 a time to ^cweep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance;

5 a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together; a ^dtime to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 a time to gain and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away;

7 a time to tear apart and a time to sew; a ^etime to keep silence and a ^ftime to speak;

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

9 ¶ ^hWhat profit has he who works in that wherein he labors?

10 ⁱI have seen the travail that God has given to the sons of men with which to occupy themselves.

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in their hearts so that ^jno man can find out the work that God has done from the beginning to the end.

r Ps 49:10 s Ec 1:3; 3:9 t Jb 5:7; 14:1 u Ec 3:12,13,22 v Pv 2:6 w Pv 28:8 Chapter 3: a Ec 3:17; 8:6 b Hb 9:27 c Rm 12:15 d Jl 2:16 e Am 5:13 f Pv 25:11 g Lk 14:26 h Ec 1:3 i Ec 1:13 j Rm 11:33

12 I know that there is nothing ^kbetter for them than to rejoice and to do good in their lifetimes,

13 and also that ^levery man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor. It *is* the gift of God.

14 I know that whatever God does, it will be forever. There is ^mnothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has worked so that men should fear Him.

15 ⁿWhatever is has already been and what will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.

16 ¶ And moreover ^oI saw under the sun the place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there; and the place of righteousness, *that* iniquity *was* there.

17 I said in my heart, ^p“God will judge the righteous and the wicked,” for *there is* a time for every purpose and for every work.

18 I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, “God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts.”

19 ^qFor that which happens to the sons of men happens to beasts, even one thing happens to them: as the one dies, so dies the other. Yes, they have all one breath, so that a man has no preeminence above a beast, for all *is* vanity.

20 All go to one place. ^rAll are of the dust and all turn to dust again.

21 ^sWho knows the spirit of man that goes upward, and the spirit of the beast that goes downward to the earth?

22 ^tTherefore, I perceive that *there is* nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for ^uthat *is* his heritage. ^vFor who will bring him to see what will be after him?

Chapter 4

Oppression, Labor, Loneliness

1 ¶ So I returned and considered all the ^aoppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of *such as were* oppressed and *those* who had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors *there was* power. But they had no comforter.

2 ^bTherefore, I praised the dead that are already dead more than the living that are still alive.

3 ^cYes, better *is he* than both of them is the one who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

4 ¶ Again, I considered all toil and every skillful work for which a man is envied by his neighbor. This *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

5 ^dThe fool folds his hands together and eats his own flesh.

6 ^eBetter *is* one handful *with* quietness than both hands full *together with* toil and vexation of spirit.

7 ¶ Then I returned and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There was a certain man without a dependent, having neither a son nor a brother. *And* yet there was no end to all his labor. Neither is ^fhis eye satisfied with riches. ^g*He never says,*

k Ec 2:3,24 l Ec 2:24 m Js 1:17 n Ec 1:9 o Ec 5:8 p Rm 2:6-10 q Ec 2:16 r Gn 3:19 s Ec 12:7 t Ec 2:24; 5:18 u Ec 2:10 v Ec 6:12; 8:7 Chapter 4: a Ec 3:16; 5:8 b Jb 3:17,18 c Jb 3:11-22 d Pv 6:10; 24:33 e Pv 15:16,17; 16:8 f 1 Jn 2:16 g Ps 39:6

“For whom do I labor and deprive my soul of ^hpleasure?” This *is* also vanity. Yes, it *is* a grievous toil.

9 ¶ Two *are* better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, for *he has* no one to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat. But how can one be warm *alone*?

12 And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Vanity of Achievement

13 ¶ Better *is* a poor and a wise youth than an old and foolish king who will no longer be admonished.

14 For he comes out of prison to reign, though he was born poor in his kingdom.

15 I considered all the living who walk under the sun with the second youth who will stand up in his place.

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

Chapter 5

Awesomeness of God

1 ¶ ^aGuard your steps when you go to the house of God. And be more ready to hear ^bthan to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not consider that they do evil.

2 Do not be ^crash with your mouth, and do not let your heart be hasty to utter anything before God. For God *is* in heaven and you on earth. Therefore, let your words ^dbe few.

3 For a dream comes through much work, and a ^efool's voice *is known* by a multitude of words.

4 ¶ ^fWhen you vow a vow to God, do not be late in ^gpaying it, for *He has* no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed.

5 ^hBetter that you should not vow, than that you should vow and not pay.

6 Do not allow your ⁱmouth to cause your flesh to sin, ^jnor say before the messenger *of God* that it *was* an error. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands?

7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are also different* vanities. But ^kfear God.

Riches are Vanity

8 ¶ If you ^lsee the oppression of the poor and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, do not marvel at the matter, for ^mhigh official watches over another official, and there are higher officials over them.

9 Furthermore, the profit of the land is for all. The king *himself* is served by the field.

10 ¶ He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, nor he who loves abundance with increase. This *is* also vanity.

11 When goods increase, they are

h Ec 2:18-21 Chapter 5: a Ex 3:5 b 1 Sm 15:22 c Pv 20:25 d Mt 6:7 e Pv 10; 19 f Nm 30:2 g Ps 66:13, 14 h At 5:4 i Pv 6:2 j 1 Ch 11:10 k Ec 12:13 l Ec 3:16 m Ps 12:5; 58:11; 82:1

increased who eat them. So what good *is there* to the owners, except the beholding *of them* with their eyes?

12 The sleep of a laboring man *is* sweet, whether he eats little or much. But the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep.

13 ¶^aThere is a grievous evil *that* I have seen under the sun, *specifically*, riches being hoarded by their owner to his hurt.

14 But those riches perish through misfortune. And he begets a son and *there is* nothing in his hand.

15 °As he came forth from his mother's womb, naked will he return to go as he came. And he will take nothing from his labor that he may carry *it* away in his hand.

16 And this also *is* a grievous evil, *that* in all points as he came, so will he go. And ^bwhat profit has he ^cwho has labored for the wind?

17 All his days ^dhe also eats in darkness, and *he has* much sorrow and anger with his sickness.

18 ¶ Behold *that* which I have seen. ^e*It is* good and fitting *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life that God gives him, ^ffor it *is* his portion.

19 When God gives ^gany man riches and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, and to take his portion and to rejoice in his labor—this *is* the ^hgift of God.

20 For he will not often remember

the days of his life, because God answers *him* in the joy of his heart.

Chapter 6

1 ¶^aThere is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men:

2 a man to whom God has given riches, wealth and honor, ^bso that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires, ^cyet God does not give him power to eat of it, but a foreigner eats it. This is vanity and an evil affliction.

3 ¶ If a man beget a hundred *children*, and live many years, so that the days of his years are many, and his soul is not satisfied with goodness, and also ^dhe has no burial, I say *that* a ^estillborn child *is* better than he.

4 For he comes in with vanity and departs in darkness, and his name will be covered with darkness.

5 Furthermore, he has not seen the sun, nor known *anything*. This one has more rest than the other.

6 Yes, though he live a thousand years twice, yet he has seen no good. Do not all go to one ^fplace?

7 ¶ ^gAll the labor of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.

8 For what has the wise more than the fool? What does the poor gain who knows *how* to conduct himself before others?

9 Better *is* the ^hsight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire. This *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

n Ec 6:1,2 o 1 Tm 6:7 p Ec 1:3 q Pv 11:29 r Ps 127:2 s 1 Tm 6:17 t Ec 2:10; 3:22 u Ec 6:2 v Ec 2:24; 3:13 **Chapter 6:** a Ec 5:13 b Jb 21:10 c Lk 12:20 d Is 14:19,20 e Jb 3:16 f Ec 2:14,15 g Pv 16:26 h Ec 11:9

10 ¶ That which exists has ⁱalready been named, and it is known what man is, for ^jhe cannot dispute with him who is stronger than he is.

11 Seeing there are many things that increase vanity, how *is* man the better?

12 For who knows what *is* good for man in *this* life, *for* all the days of his vain life he spends as a ^kshadow? ^lFor who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun?

Chapter 7

Wisdom

1 ¶ A ^agood name *is* better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's ^bbirth.

2 *It is* better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will take *it* to ^cheart.

3 Sorrow *is* better than laughter, ^dfor by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

4 The mind of the wise *is* in the house of mourning, but the mind of fools *is* in the house of pleasure.

5 ^e*It is* better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools.

6 ^fFor as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool. This also *is* vanity.

7 Surely oppression makes a wise man mad, and a ^gbribe destroys the heart.

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than its beginning. ^hThe patient in spirit *is*

better than the proud in spirit.

9 ⁱDo not be hasty in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools.

10 Do not say, "Why is it that the former days were better than these?" For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom *is* good as an inheritance, and profitable ^jfor those who see the sun.

12 For wisdom *is* a defense, and money *is* a ^kdefense. But the excellency of knowledge *is that* wisdom gives ^llife to those who have it.

13 ¶ Consider the work of God. For ^mwho is able to straighten what He has bent?

14 ⁿIn the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, so that man should find nothing *that comes* after him.

15 ¶ All *things* I have seen in the days of my vanity. ^oThere is a just *man* who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked *man* who prolongs *his life* in his wickedness.

16 ^pDo not be overly righteous, ^qneither make yourself overly wise. Why should you destroy yourself?

17 Do not be overly wicked, neither be foolish. ^rWhy should you die before your time?

18 *It is* good that you should take hold of this; yes, also from this do not withdraw your hand, for he who ^sfears God will escape them all.

i Ec 1:9; 3:15 j Jb 9:32 k Js 4:14 l Ec 3:22 **Chapter 7:** a Pv 22:1 b Ec 4:2 c Ps 90:12 d 2 Co 7:10 e Ps 141:5 f Ec 2:2 g Ex 23:8 h Pv 14:29 i Js 1:19 j Ec 11:7 k Ec 9:18 l Pv 3:18 m Jb 12:14 n Dt 28:47 o Ec 8:12-14 p Pv 25:16 q Rm 12:3 r Jb 15:32 s Ec 3:14; 5:7; 8:12,13

19 ¹Wisdom strengthens the wise more than ten mighty *men* who are in the city.

20 ²For *there is* not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.

21 ¶ Also take no heed to all words that are spoken, lest you hear your servant curse you.

22 For many times also your own heart knows that you yourself have likewise cursed others.

23 ¶ All this I have proved by wisdom: ³I said, “I will be wise,” but it *was* far from me.

24 ⁴That which is far off and ⁵exceedingly deep, who can find it out?

25 ⁶I applied my heart to know and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason *for things*, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness.

26 ⁷And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart *is* snares and nets, *and* whose hands *are* chains. Whoever pleases God will escape from her, but the sinner will be taken by her.

27 ¶ “Behold, this I have found,” says the ⁸Teacher, “*adding* one thing to another, to find out the reason,

28 “that I am still seeking but have not found. I have found ⁹one man among a thousand, but I have not found a woman among all these.

29 “Behold, this only I have found, ¹⁰that God has made man upright. But ¹¹they have sought out many schemes *for evil*.”

Chapter 8

1 ¶ Who *is* as the wise *man*? And who knows the interpretation of a thing? A ²man’s wisdom makes his face shine, and the ³sternness of his face will be changed.

Obedience to the King

2 I *counsel you* to keep the king’s commandment, ¹because of *your* oath before God.

3 ²Do not be hasty to leave his sight. Do not join in an evil thing, for he does whatever pleases him.

4 Where the word of a king *is*, *there is* power. And ³who may say to him, “What are you doing?”

5 Whoever keeps the commandment will experience no evil thing, for a wise man’s heart discerns both time and judgment.

6 Because ⁴there is a time and judgment for every purpose, therefore the misery of man *is* great on him.

7 ⁵For if no one knows what will happen, who can tell him when it will happen?

8 ⁶*There is* no man who has power over the wind to retain the wind, neither *has anyone* power in the day of death. And *there is* ⁷no release in *the time of war*, neither will wickedness deliver those who practice it.

9 All this I have seen, and applied my heart to every work that is done under the sun. *There is* a time wherein one man rules over another to injure him.

10 ¶ And so I saw the wicked bur-

t Pv 21:22 u 1 Jn 1:8 v Rm 1:22 w 1 Tm 6:16 x Rm 11:33 y Ec 1:17 z Pv 5:3,4 a Ec 1:1,2 b Jb 33:23 c Gn 1:27 d Gn 3:6,7 Chapter 8: a At 6:15 b Dt 28:50 c 1 Ch 29:24 d Ec 10:4 e Jb 34:18 f Ec 3:1,17 g Ec 6:12 h Ps 49:6,7 i Dt 20:5-8

ied, who had come and gone from the place of the holy. And they were *soon*^j forgotten in the city where they had so done. This *is* also vanity.

11 ^kBecause sentence against an evil work is not executed quickly, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully established in them to do evil.

12 ^lThough a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his *days* are prolonged, yet surely I know that ^mit will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him.

13 But it will not be well with the wicked, neither will he prolong *his* days as a shadow, because he does not fear before God.

14 ¶ There is a vanity that is done on the earth, that is, there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked. Again, there are wicked *men* to whom it ⁿhappens according to the work of the ^orighteous. I say that this also *is* vanity.

15 ^pThen I commended pleasure because a man has no better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink and to be merry; for this will abide with him in his labor *all* the days of his life that God gives him under the sun.

16 ¶ When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on the earth, even though one should never sleep day or night,

17 then I beheld all the work of God, that a ^qman cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. Even though a man labor to discover it, yet

he will not find *it*. Furthermore, though a wise *man* attempts to know *it*, yet he will not be able to find *it*.

Chapter 9

Our Common Destiny

1 ¶ For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, ^athat the righteous and the wise and their works, *are* in the hand of God. No man knows either love or hatred *by* all *that is* before them.

2 ^bAll *things come* alike to all. *There is* one event for the righteous and for the wicked, for the good and for the clean, and for the unclean; for him who sacrifices, and for him who does not sacrifice. *As is* the good, so *is* the sinner; *and* he who swears, as *he* who fears an oath.

3 This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event to all. Yes, the heart of the sons of men is also full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live. Afterwards *they go* to the dead.

4 ¶ For to him who is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know that they will die, but ^cthe dead do not know anything, neither have they any more reward, for the ^dmemory of them is forgotten.

6 Also their love and their hatred and their envy, have now perished. Neither do they have any longer a share in anything that is done under the sun.

j Ec 2:16; 9:5 k Is 26:10 l Is 65:20 m Is 3:10 n Ps 73:14 o Ec 2:14; 7:15; 9:1-3 p Ec 2:24 q Rm 11:33
Chapter 9: a Ec 8:14 b Mt 3:15 c Is 63:16 d Is 26:14

7 ¶ Go your way *and* eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God now accepts your works.

8 Let your garments always be white, and let your head lack no ointment.

9 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of the life of your vanity that He has given you under the sun, all the days of your vanity; ^ffor this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.

10 ^gWhatever your hand finds to do, do it with your ^hmight, for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave where you go.

11 ¶ I returned and ⁱsaw under the sun that the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither still bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill. But time and ^jchance happen to them all.

12 For ^kman also does not know his time. As the fish that are taken in a cruel net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so *are* the sons of men ^lsnared in an evil time when it falls suddenly on them.

Wisdom over Foolishness

13 ¶ This wisdom I have seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great to me.

14 ^m*There was* a little city and few men within it. And there came a great king against it and besieged it. And he built great bulwarks against it.

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. However, no man remembered that same poor man.

16 Then I said, “Wisdom *is* better than ⁿstrength.” Nevertheless, the ^opoor man’s wisdom *is* despised and his words are not heard.

17 The words of wise *men are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him who rules among fools.

18 Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war, but ^pone sinner destroys much good.

Chapter 10

1 ¶ Dead flies putrefy the perfumer’s ointment, so does a little folly outweigh wisdom and honor.

2 A wise man’s heart *is* at his right hand, but a fool’s heart at his left.

3 Even when he who is a fool walks by the way, his wisdom fails *him*, and ^ahe says to everyone *that he is* a fool.

4 If the spirit of the ruler rises up against you, ^bdo not abandon your position, for ^cconciliation pacifies great offenses.

5 ¶ There is an evil *that* I have seen under the sun, as an error *that* proceeds from the ruler.

6 ^dFolly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in humble places.

7 I have seen servants ^eon horses, and princes walking as servants on the earth.

8 ¶ ^fHe who digs a pit will fall into it, and a serpent will bite whoever breaks through a wall.

e Ec 8:15 f Ec 2:10 g Cl 3:17 h Rm 12:11 i Am 2:14,15 j 1 Sm 6:9 k Ec 8:7 l Pv 29:6 m 2 Sm 20:16-22 n Ec 7:12,19 o Mk 6:2,3 p Ja 7:1-26 Chapter 10: a Pv 13:16;18:2 b Ec 8:3 c 1 Sm 25:24-33 d Et 3:1 e Pv 19:10; 30:22 f Pv 26:27

9 Whoever removes stones will be hurt by them, *and* he who splits logs will be endangered by them.

10 If the axe is blunt, and he does not sharpen the edge, then he must exert more strength. Wisdom has the advantage of giving success.

11 Surely the serpent will bite ^ewhen *it is* not charmed, and a babbler is no better.

12 ¶ ^hThe words of a wise man's mouth *are* gracious, but ⁱthe lips of a fool will consume him.

13 The beginning of the words of his mouth *is* foolishness, and the end of his talk *is* perverse stupidity.

14 ^jA fool also is full of words. A man cannot tell what will be, and ^kwhat will be after him. Who can tell him?

15 The labor of the foolish wearies all of them because he does not know how to go to the city.

16 ¶ ^lWoe to you, O land, when your king *is* a child and your princes eat in the morning!

17 Blessed *are* you, O land, when your king *is* the son of nobles, and your ^mprinces eat at the appropriate time for strength and not for drunkenness!

18 By much slothfulness the building decays, and ⁿthrough idleness of the hands the house leaks.

19 A feast is made for merry-making, and ^owine makes merry, and money does it all.

20 ^pDo not curse the king, even in your thought. And do not curse the

rich in your bedchamber, for a bird of the air will carry the voice. And that which has wings will tell the matter.

Chapter 11

Bread on the Waters

1 ¶ Cast your bread ^aon the waters, ^bfor you will find it after many days.

2 ^cGive a portion ^dto seven, and also to eight, ^efor you do not know what evil will be on the earth.

3 If the clouds are full of rain, they empty *themselves* on the earth. And if the tree falls toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falls there it will be.

4 He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

5 As ^fyou do not know what *is* the path of the wind, *nor* ^ghow the bones *grow* in the womb of her who is with child, even so you do not know the works of God who makes all.

6 In the morning sow your seed and in the evening do not withhold your hand, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good.

Remember Your Creator

7 ¶ Truly, the light *is* sweet, and *it is* good for the eyes ^hto see the sun.

8 But if a man lives many years *and* ⁱrejoices in them all, nevertheless, let him ^jremember the days of darkness, for they will be many. All that comes

g Jr 8:17 h Pv 10:32 i Pv 10:14 j Pv 15:2 k Ec 3:22; 8:7 l Is 3:4,5; 5:11 m Pv 31:4 n Pv 24:30-34 o Ps 104:15 p At 23:5 **Chapter 11:** a Is 32:20 b Dt 15:10 c 1 Tm 6:18,19 d Mc 5:5 e Ep 5:16 f Jn 3:8 g Ps 139:14 h Ec 7:11 i Ec 9:17 j Ec 12:1

is nothingness.

9 ¶ Rejoice, O young man, in your youth. And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth, and ^hwalk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes. But know that ^lGod will bring you to judgment for all these things.

10 Therefore, remove sorrow from your heart and ^mput away evil from your flesh, ⁿfor childhood and youth are vanity.

Chapter 12

1 ¶ ^aRemember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near ^bwhen you will say, “I have no pleasure in them”;

2 before the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, are darkened and clouds return after the rain;

3 in the day when the keepers of the house will tremble, and the strong men stoop and the grinders cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows are darkened,

4 and the doors on the street are shut as the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one will rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the ^cdaughters of music will be brought low.

5 Also, they will be afraid of *that which is high*, and fear *will be in the way*, and the almond tree will flourish, and the grasshopper drags himself along, and desire will fail. For

man goes to ^dhis eternal home and the ^emourners go about in the streets.

6 Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 ^fThen will the dust return to the earth as it was. And ^gthe spirit will return to God ^hwho gave it.

8 ⁱ“Vanity of vanities,” says the Teacher, “all is vanity.”

9 ¶ And furthermore, because the Teacher was wise he taught the people knowledge. Yes, he pondered, searched out and ^jarranged many proverbs.

10 The Teacher sought to find out acceptable words. And *that which was written was upright, even words of truth.*

11 ¶ The words of the wise *are* as goads, and masters of *these* collections are like well-driven nails. They are given by one Shepherd.

12 And furthermore, by these, my son, be admonished. *In* the writing of many books there is no end, and ^kexcessive devotion *to books* is wearying to the body.

13 ¶ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. ^lFear God and keep His commandments, for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.

14 For ^mGod will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it is* good or whether *it is* evil.

k Nm 15:39 l Ec 3:17; 12:14 m 2 Co 7:1 n Ps 39:5 Chapter 12: a Lm 3:27 b 2 Sm 19:35 c 2 Sm 19:35 d Jb 17:13 e Jr 9:17 f Gn 3:19 g Ec 3:21 h Jb 34:14 i Ps 62:9 j 1 K 4:32 k Ec 1:18 l Dt 6:2; 10:12 m Mt 12:36