

UNDER THE SUN

Joy, Sorrow, Vanity, and What Really Matters in Life

Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. -Ecclesiastes 12:13

“Fear God”

“Be Careful What You Do & Say Before Him”

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

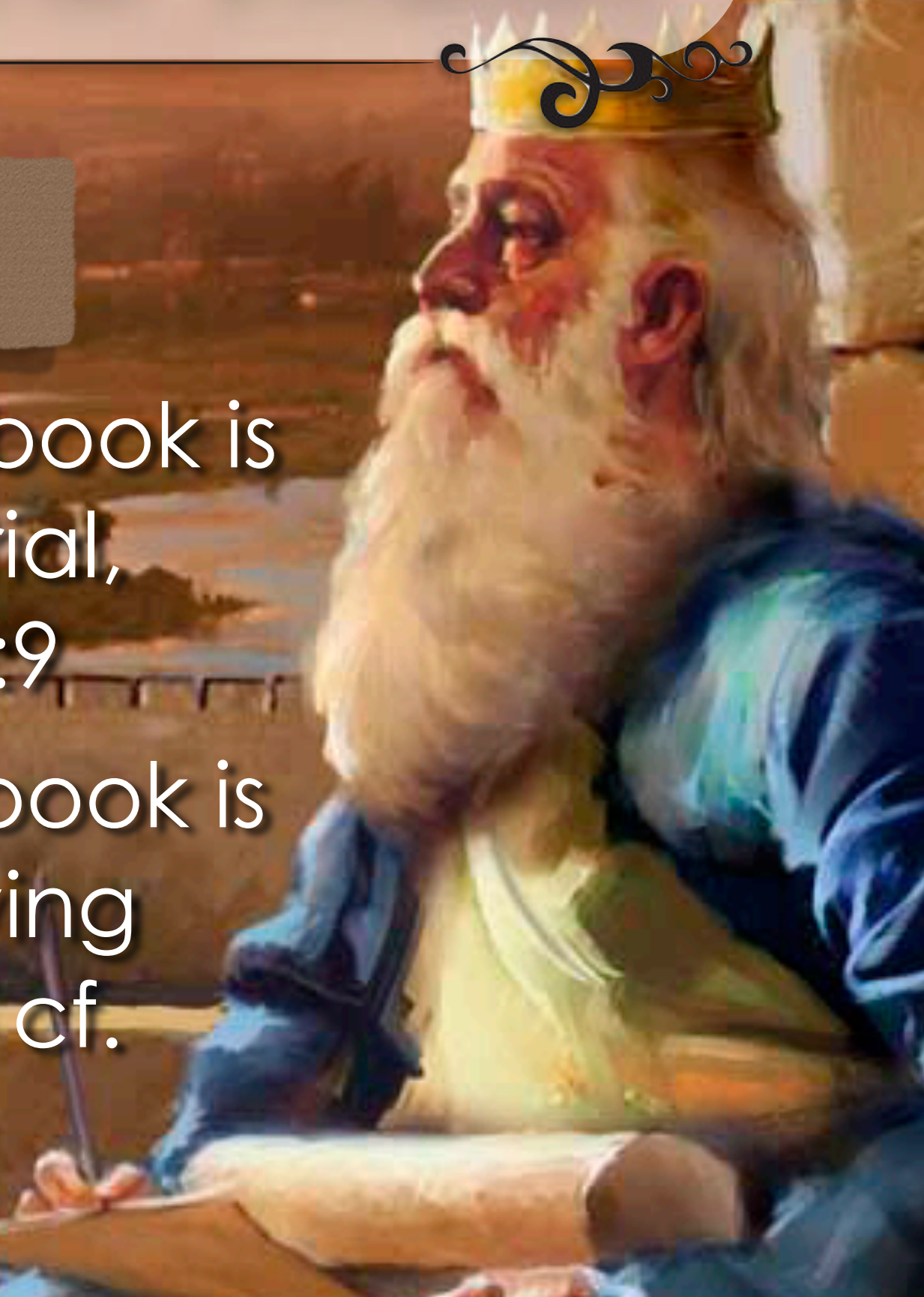
Ecclesiastes 5:1 (NKJV)

¹ Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil.

"The Words of The Preacher"

ECCLESIASTES

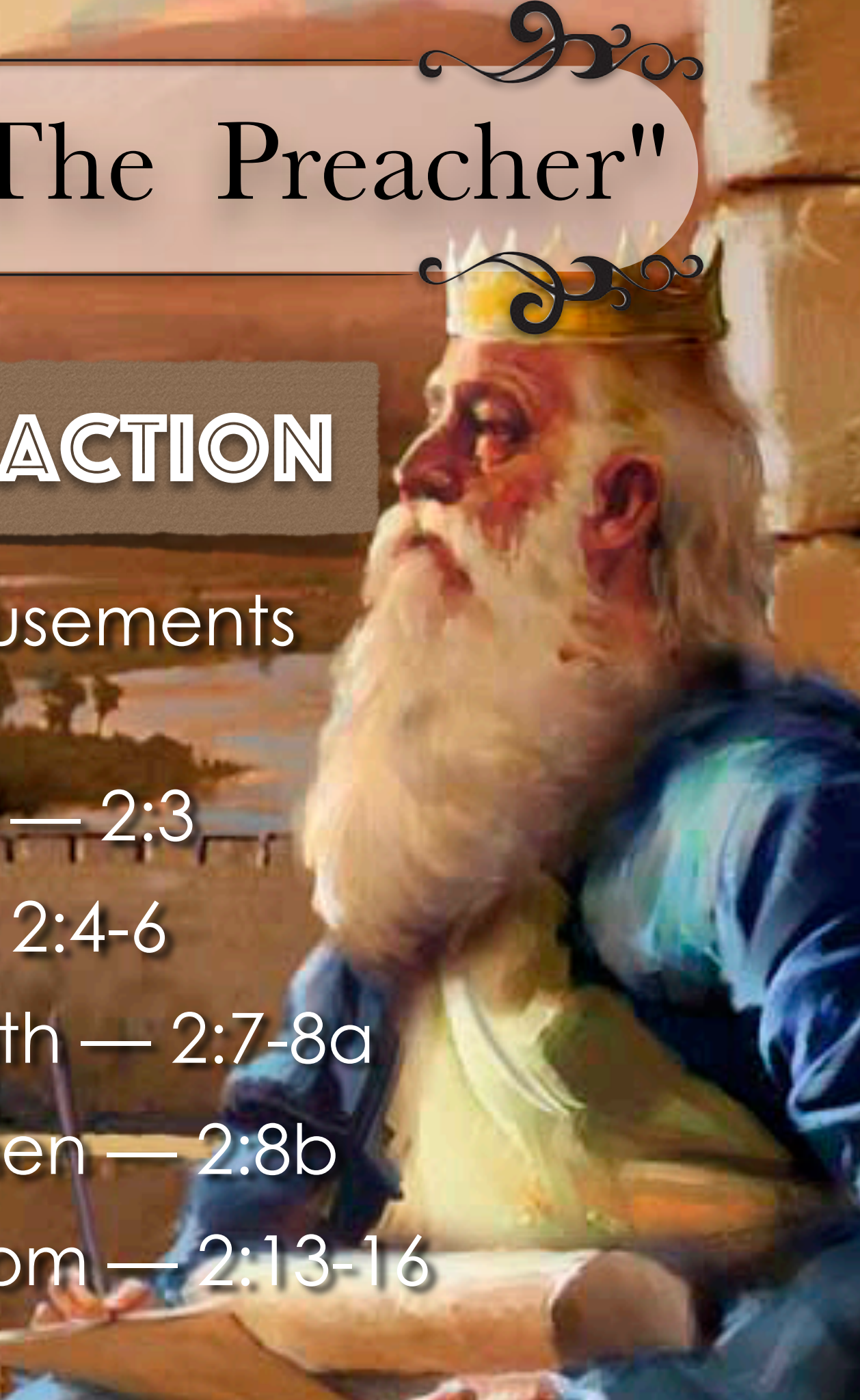
- The main focus of the book is the VANITY of of material, earthly things — 1:1-11:9
- The main point of the book is the importance of serving God throughout life — cf. 11:9-12:1, 13-14



"The Words of The Preacher"

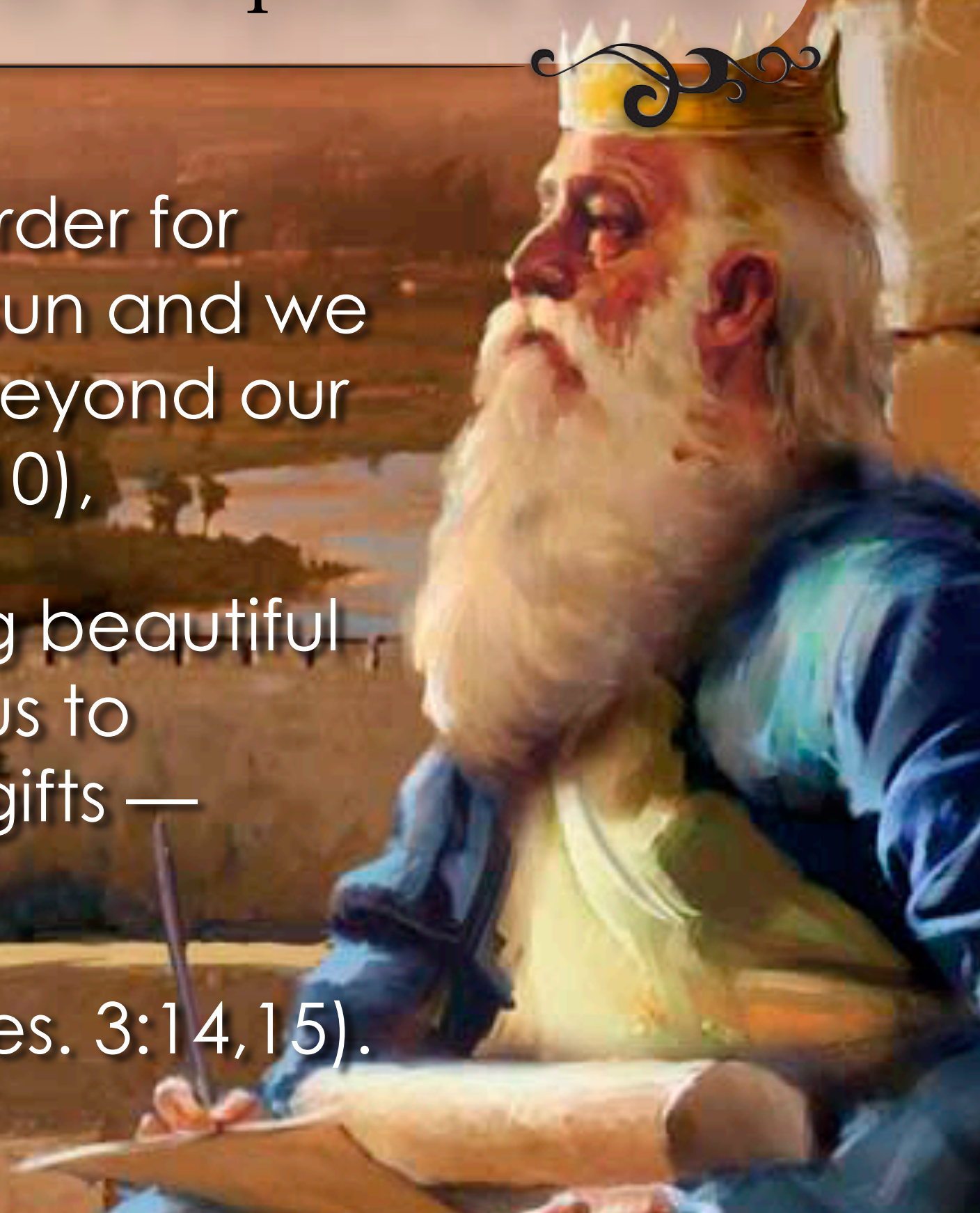
THE QUEST FOR SATISFACTION

- Cannot be found in “amusements and delights?” — 2:1,2
- Cannot be found in wine — 2:3
- Cannot be found in work 2:4-6
- Cannot be found in wealth — 2:7-8a
- Cannot be found in women — 2:8b
- Cannot be found in wisdom — 2:13-16



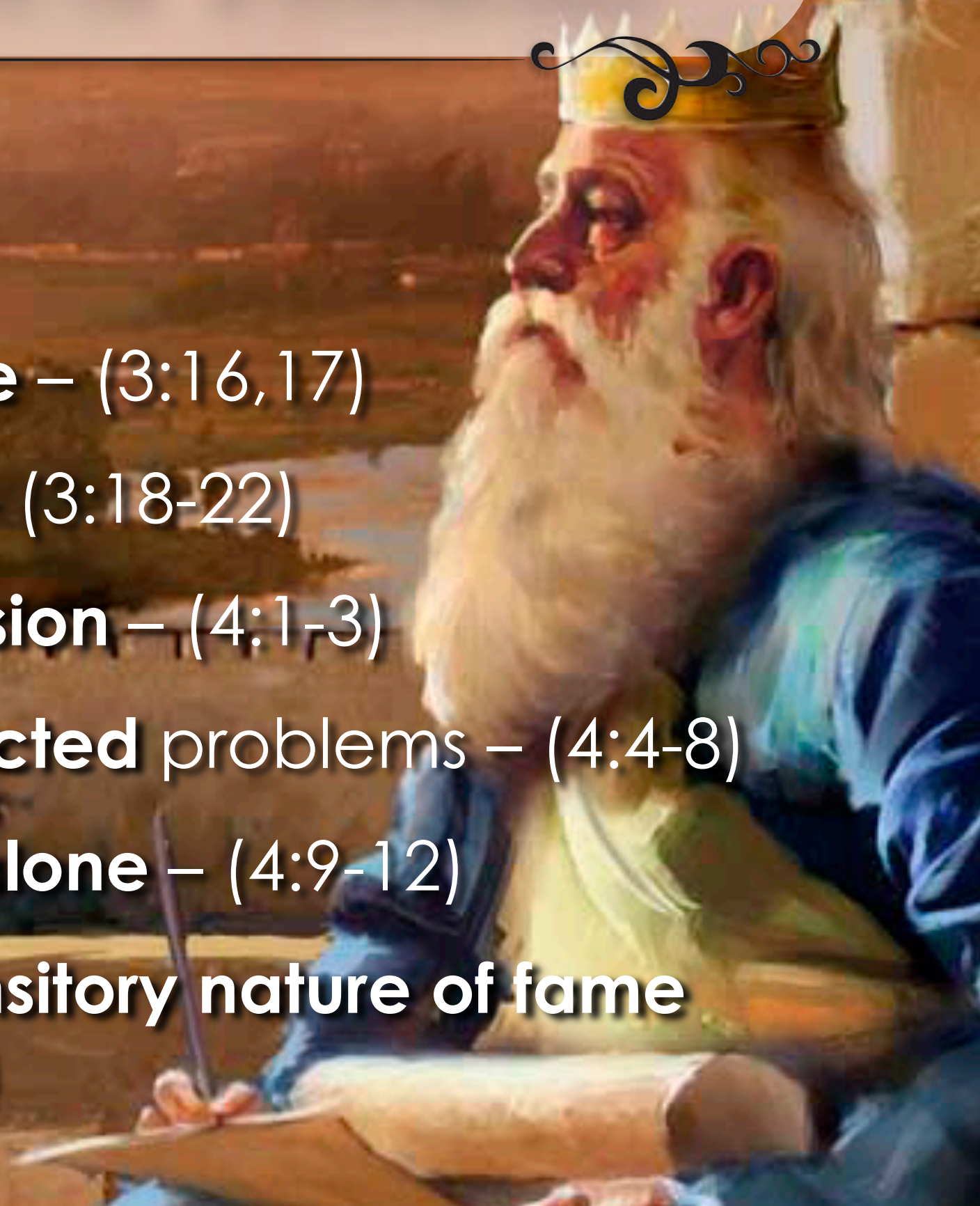
“To Understand The Purpose of It All”

- There is a purpose & order for everything under the sun and we are subject to things beyond our control— (Eccles. 3:1-10),
- God makes everything beautiful in its season, & wants us to moderately enjoy His gifts — (Eccles. 3:11,12).
- God is in control (Eccles. 3:14,15).



“The Problem of Problems”

- The problem of **injustice** – (3:16,17)
- The problem of **death** – (3:18-22)
- The problem of **oppression** – (4:1-3)
- The problem of **self inflicted** problems – (4:4-8)
- The problem of **being alone** – (4:9-12)
- The problem of the **transitory nature of fame and prestige** – (4:13-16)



Ecclesiastes 5:1–7 (NKJV)

¹ Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil. ² Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God *is* in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few. ³ For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice *is known* by *his* many words.

Ecclesiastes 5:1–7 (NKJV)

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For *He has* no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— ⁵ Better not to vow than to vow and not pay. ⁶ Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger *of God* that it *was* an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands? ⁷ For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there is* also vanity. But fear God.

“Fear God”

“Be Careful What You Do & Say Before Him”

IN THE LORD'S HOUSE ...

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“Life under the sun” is NOT made BETTER by false worship!



Since God is the object of worship and therefore has ultimate worth, the ultimate vanity would be to worship Him unacceptably.



The ultimate mistake in life would be to serve God in vain! (Matthew 15:1-9).

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The **“house of God”** is the Jerusalem temple - Reverence is demanded in the use of things dedicated to the service of God



Just because someone goes to the “LORD's House” does NOT mean their worship & service is accepted by God — Isaiah 1:12; Mal. 1:6-14; Mat. 15:7-9

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► “Watch your step”

- **Cain** — Gen 4:1-12
- **Nadab & Abihu** — Lev. 10:1-4; Exo. 19:22
- **Saul** — I Sam 13:8-14; 15:1-22
- **David** — 1 Chron. 13; 15
- **Jeroboam** — 1 Kings 12:28-33; 13:2,3; 1 Kings 15:34; etc.
- **Uzziah** — 2 Chron. 26:16-21

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► “Draw near to hear”

- Listening involves paying attention and being prepared to obey (1 Samuel 15:22 “to obey is better than sacrifice”)
- We should be EAGER to hear “let everyone be quick to hear” — James 1:19,22
- God CANNOT be worshipped by those ignorant of Him & His will — Acts 17:23

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► “Sacrifice of fools”

- These are not necessarily the sacrifices of the overtly wicked (Prov. 21:27). They are unaware they are doing evil.
- Would include treating lightly that which is holy (Matthew 7:21; 23:16; 1 Cor. 11:27).
- No amount of emphasis on grace can justify taking liberties with God — (Lev 10:3; Heb 12:28,29)

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► “Sacrifice of fools”

- Unfortunately, in many circles entertainment has replaced true worship —
- Man says, “come & feel better about yourself - FEEL GOOD!”
- God says, “come, & be prepared to hear & obey His will — discard sinful ways & attitudes — be prepared to be rebuked & admonished — (2 Tim. 4:2).

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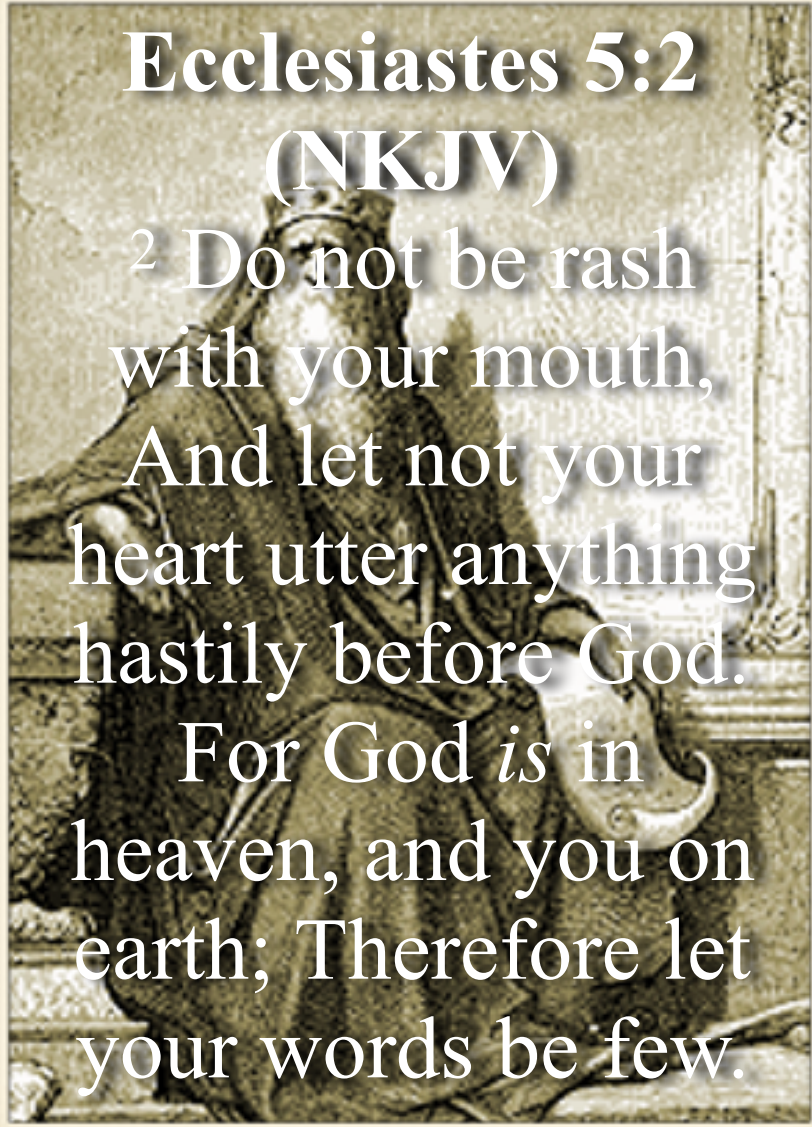
- ▶ God made it very clear that He does NOT tolerate irreverence — (Lev. 10:1-3; 2 Samuel 6:1 ff; 2 Chron. 26:16-23).
- ▶ Those who entered knew death was the consequence for irreverence (Lev. 10:1-3; 15:31).
- ▶ The same respect and purity is demanded of Christians in the New Covenant — (Heb. 10:19ff)

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IN THE LORD'S HOUSE ...

Ecclesiastes 5:2
(NKJV)

2 Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God.

For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few.

► “Watch Your MOUTH!”

- Do NOT question God's wisdom, justice and why He lets certain things happen -
- It is FOOLISH to rashly accuse God of wrongdoing, to question His righteousness, & to blame Him for evil — (James 1:5, 13, 17; 1 John 1:5; Job 38:1 ff).
- Includes insincere, careless & rote prayers — (Matthew 6:7).

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► “Watch Your MOUTH!”

- We must be careful about every word we speak before the Lord — PRAYER or SONG!
- This admonition is grounded in the nature of God — The infinite distance between the holy God & sinful man — He demands the deepest reverence.
- Presumptuous chatter shows disrespect for his majesty (5:2).

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► “Watch Your MOUTH!”

- There seems to be a comparison here. Just like a dream or nightmare often results from excess effort (too many earthly cares), folly is often the result of too many words.
- The MORE we say - the more we embellish - the more of a fool we make ourselves out to be. — Mat 6:5-8; 23:14



Ecclesiastes 5:3
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³ For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice *is known by his many words.*

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Ecclesiastes 5:4–5
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⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For *He has* no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed—⁵ Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

► “Watch Your MOUTH!”

- God expects us to keep our word — (Deut. 23:21-23)
- IF we make a promise to God that we do NOT keep, we are fools — (Romans 10:9-17; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 5:4)
- When married, people make **vows** not only to their mate, but also to God. — God holds us to our promises — (Mal. 2:14-17)

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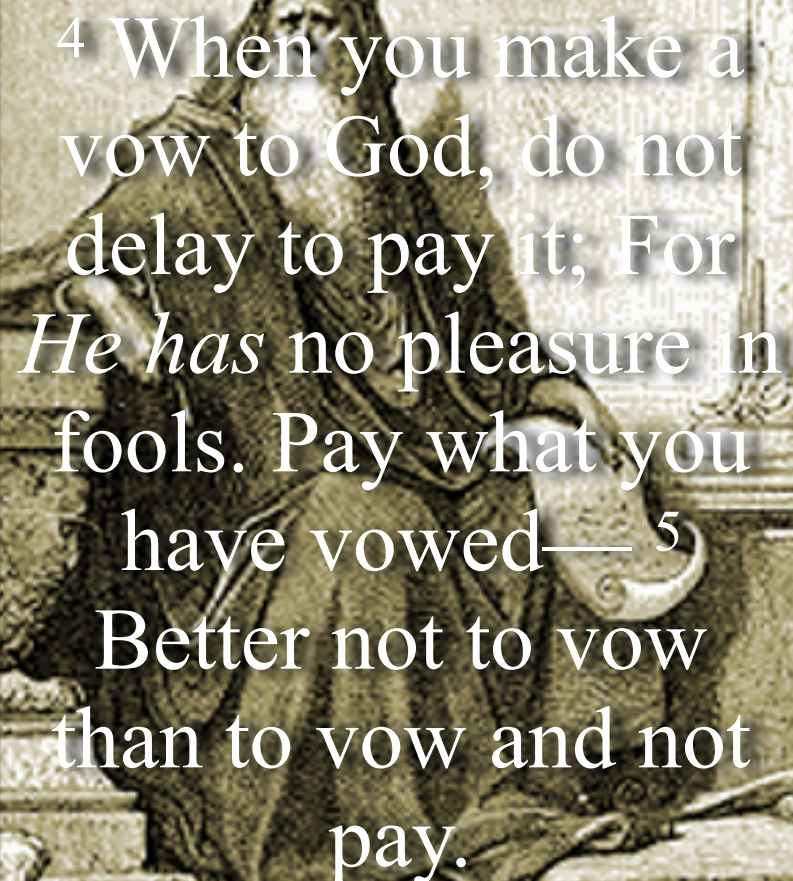
- You are better off NOT vowing than to vow and NOT PAY!! Remember Jesus' arguments supporting God's will in marriage — (Mt. 19:1-9)
- The disciples response - “If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry.” — (Mt. 19:10)
- Jesus' RESPONSE — (Mt 19:11,12)

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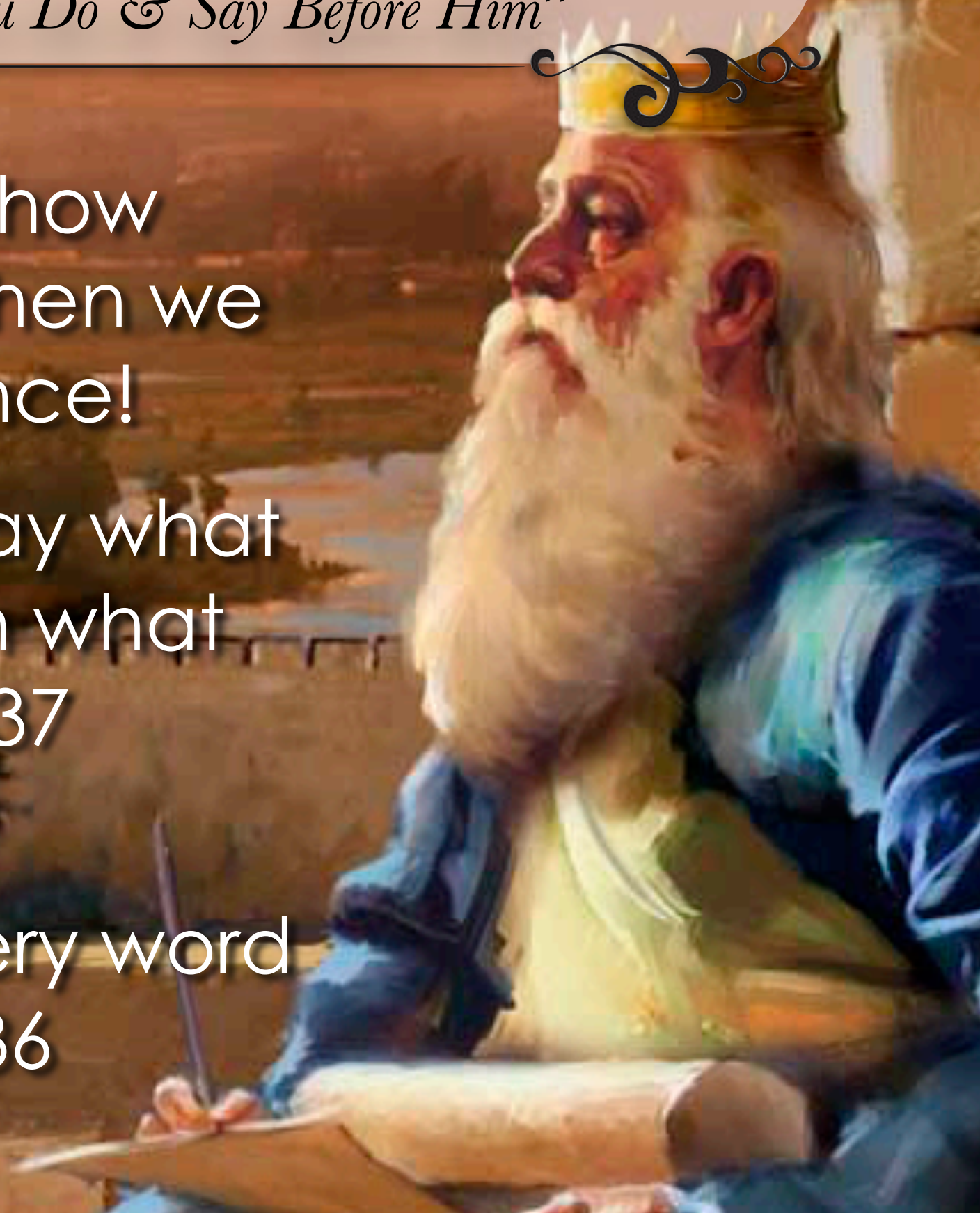
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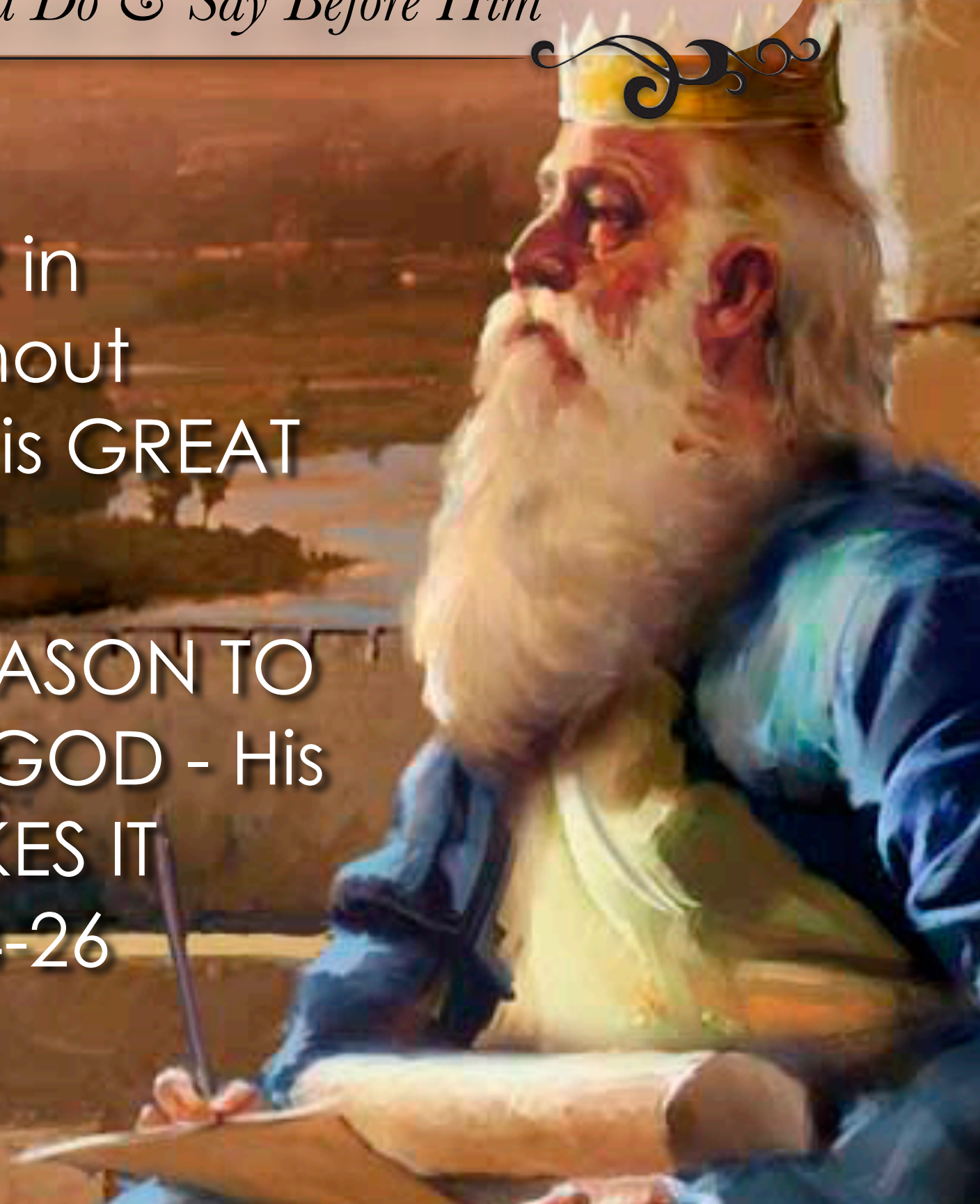
- God DEMANDS we show proper reverence when we come into His presence!
- God demands we say what we mean and mean what we say! — Mat 5:33-37
- We will be held accountable for every word — Prov. 6:2; Mat 12:36



“Fear God”

“Be Careful What You Do & Say Before Him”

- There is REAL DANGER in approaching Him without reverence - but there is GREAT JOY IN TRUE WORSHIP!
- Certainly WE HAVE REASON TO PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD - His provision in Christ MAKES IT POSSIBLE! — John 4:24-26



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Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

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Hebrews 12:25–29 (NKJV)

²⁵ See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven, ²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “*Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.*”

Hebrews 12:25–29 (NKJV)

²⁷ Now this, “*Yet once more,*” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God *is* a consuming fire.