

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

“Our Common End”

(Ecclesiastes 9:1-12)

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ I returned and saw under the sun that— The race *is* not to the swift, Nor the battle to the strong, Nor bread to the wise, Nor riches to men of understanding, Nor favor to men of skill; But time and chance happen to them all.

"The Words of The Preacher"

ECCLESIASTES

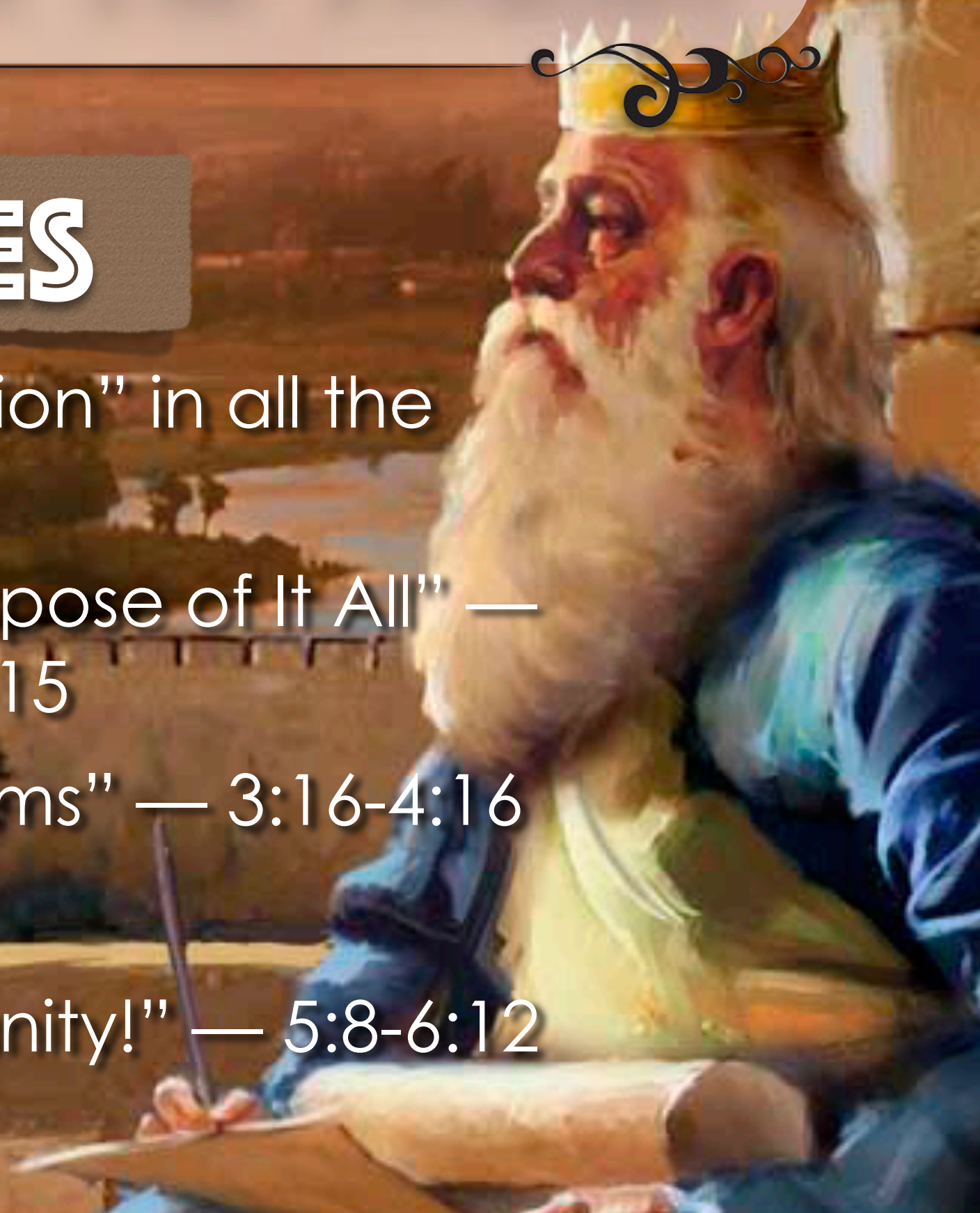
- The main focus of the book is the VANITY of of material, earthly things — 1:1-11:9
- The main point of the book is the importance of serving God throughout life — cf. 11:9-12:1, 13-14



"The Words of The Preacher"

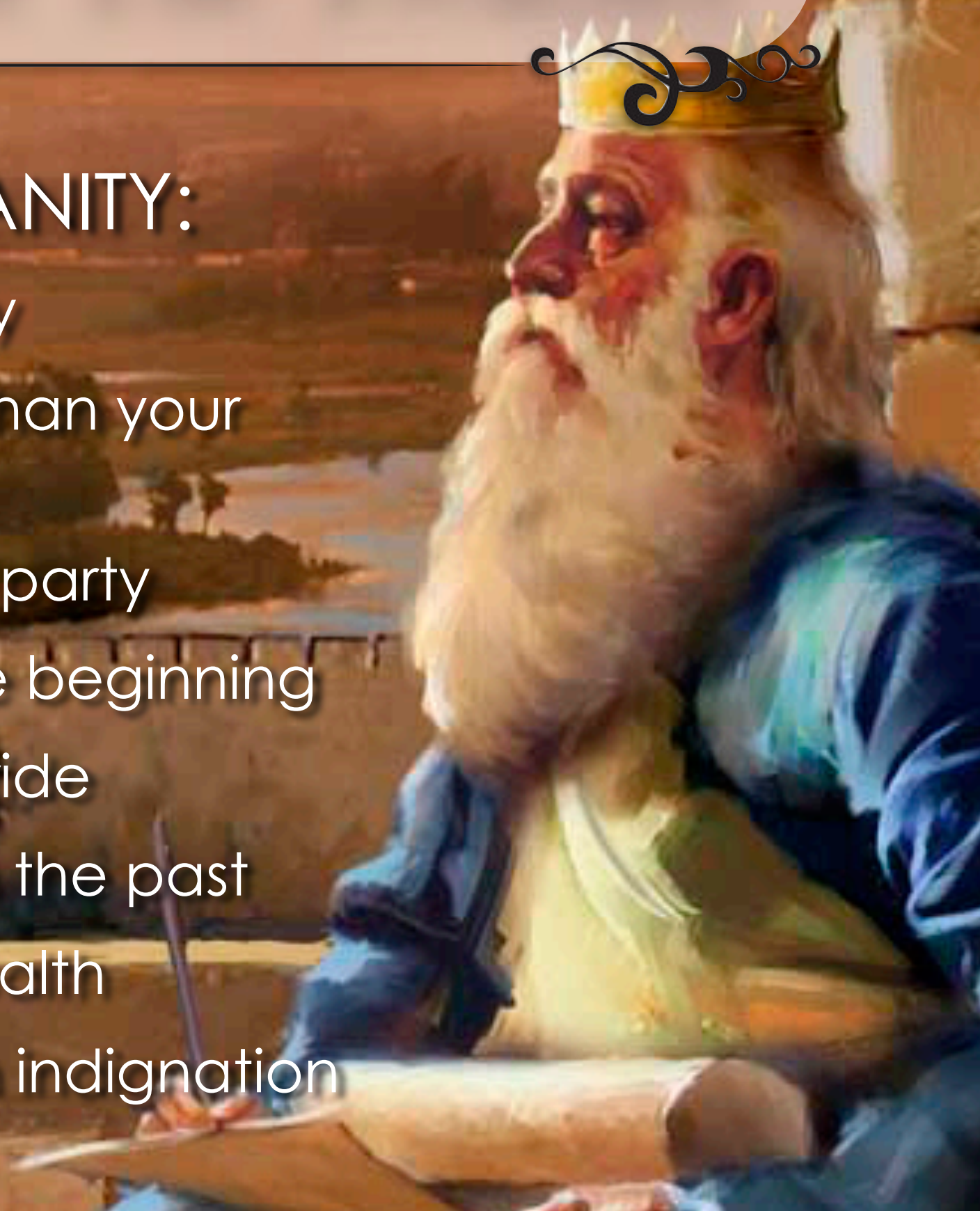
ECCLESIASTES

- "The Quest for satisfaction" in all the wrong places — 2:1-16
- "To Understand The Purpose of It All" — God is in control — 3:1-15
- "The Problem of Problems" — 3:16-4:16
- "Fear God" — 5:1-7
- "Everything Really Is Vanity!" — 5:8-6:12



"The Words of The Preacher"

- Things Better Than VANITY:
 - ✓ Honor is better than luxury
 - ✓ Your deathday is better than your birthday
 - ✓ A funeral is better than a party
 - ✓ The end is better than the beginning
 - ✓ Patience is better than pride
 - ✓ The present is better than the past
 - ✓ Wisdom is better than wealth
 - ✓ Resignation is better than indignation



“This World Is Unfair, Confusing & Dangerous”

- Be WISE - Ovoid Extremes -
- Do not be over demanding
- We all need mercy - for
we have all sinned -
- Wisdom will not find all the
answers!





“The Wisdom of a Submissive Heart”

- ❖ Do we truly recognize the value of a humble & submissive heart? (Mat 5:3)
- ❖ We are surrounded by wickedness and evil - life seems so unfair - TRUST GOD ANYWAY! -
- ❖ Fearing God is the ONLY response that makes sense - Be WISE!

Philippians 2:8 (NKJV)

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.

Ecclesiastes 9:1–12 (NKJV)

¹ For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works *are* in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred *by* anything *they see* before them. ² All things *come* alike to all: One event *happens* to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so *is* the sinner; He who takes an oath as *he* who fears an oath. ³ This *is* an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing *happens* to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness *is* in their hearts while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead.

Ecclesiastes 9:1–12 (NKJV)

⁴ But for 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 the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten. ⁶ Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun. ⁷ Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted your works. ⁸ Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil.

Ecclesiastes 9:1–12 (NKJV)

⁹ Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that *is* your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun. ¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with your might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

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not know his time: Like fish taken in a
cruel net, Like birds caught in a snare, So
the sons of men *are* snared in an evil time,
When it falls suddenly upon them.

“Our Common End”

ONE EVENT HAPPENS TO ALL - 9:1-3

Ecclesiastes 9:1
(NKJV)

¹ For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works *are* in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred *by anything they see* before them.

► All evidence acquired leads to one conclusion – “Our works are in the hand of God.”

- Here again the sovereignty of God is stressed — (*He leads, provides & rewards the righteous*)
- Does God “love” (approve of) him, or “hate” (disapprove of) him? Outward circumstances are no criterion of inward disposition or of final judgment. (Ec 8:14, 17).

“Our Common End”

ONE EVENT HAPPENS TO ALL - 9:1-3

Ecclesiastes 9:2 (NKJV)

² All things *come* alike to all: One event *happens* to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so *is* the sinner; He who takes an oath as *he* who fears an oath.

► “All things come alike to all:”

- No discrimination between the good & evil when it comes to natural disasters, pestilences, tempests, or calm — Mat 5:45;
- The righteous trust the Lord in whatever circumstance - the wicked do not — Mat 6:24-34
- But the circumstances are not indicators of a persons standing w/ God — Job 1,2

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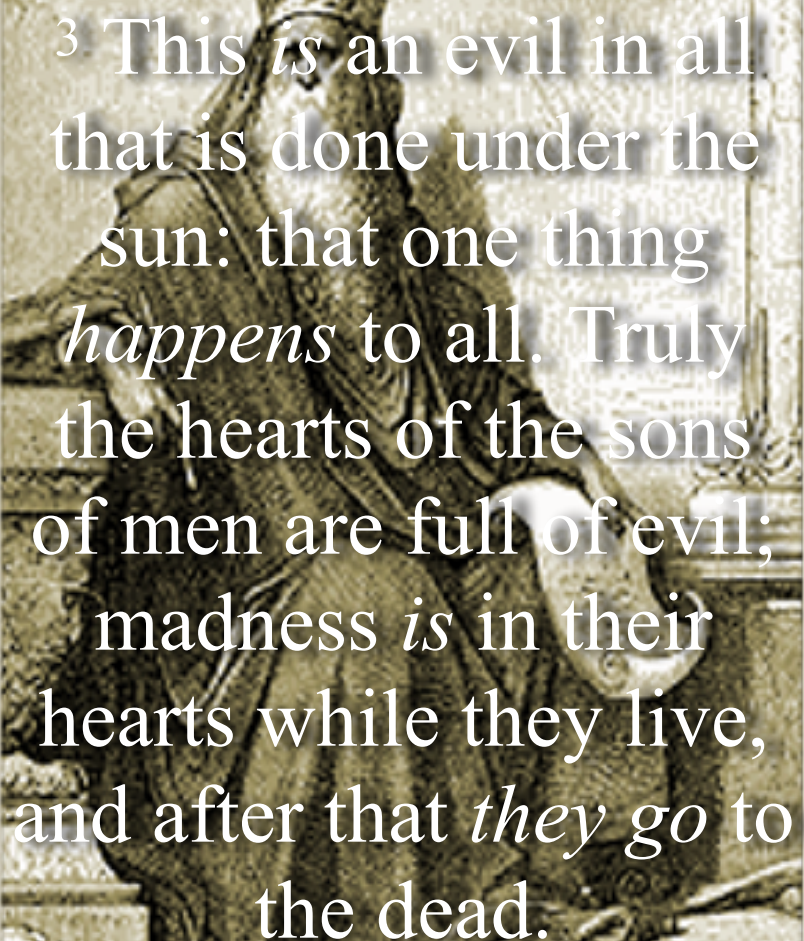
► “All things come alike to all:”

- The good & bad - The clean & unclean - To him who sacrifices & him who does not sacrifice - As is the good, so is the sinner;
- He who takes an oath as he who fears an oath. (takes an oath lightly, carelessly, or falsely and one who regards it as a holy thing, or shrinks in awe from invoking God's name in any way)

“Our Common End”

ONE EVENT HAPPENS TO ALL - 9:1-3

Ecclesiastes 9:3 (NKJV)



³ This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing *happens* to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness *is* in their hearts while they live, and after that *they* go to the dead.

► “All things come alike to all:”

- From all appearances “under the sun” there is little benefit to living godly, righteous lives.
- Therefore many continue in their evil ways - their hearts are filled with “madness” - blind & ignorant of their spiritual state - like cattle to slaughter - cf. 8:11
- Death comes to all READY or NOT — 2:16; 3:19; 5:15; 6:12; Heb 9:27

“Our Common End”

OPPORTUNITY ENDS AT DEATH— 9:4-6



► The living know they will die ...

- Men have hope while alive - the nature & quality of that hope differs from person to person — Mat 6:19-21; Rom 8:24,25
- “A living dog is better than a dead lion.” — The vilest creature is better off alive than the most noble is dead - i.e., things can never get better for a person in this world if he is dead. - Heb 9:27

“Our Common End”

OPPORTUNITY ENDS AT DEATH— 9:4-6

**Ecclesiastes 9:5
(NKJV)**

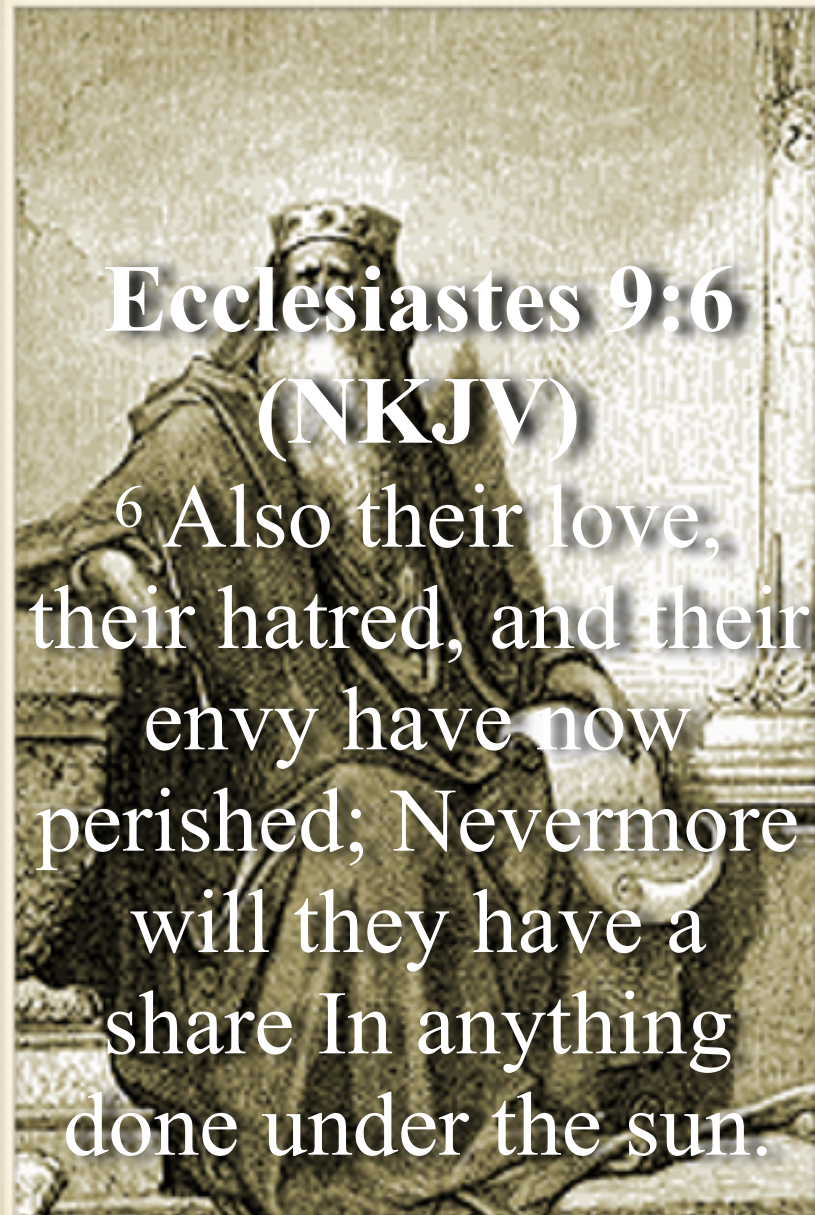
⁵ For the living know
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reward, For the
memory of them is
forgotten.

► **The living know they will die ...**

- **But the dead know nothing** —
They are cut off from the world —
Job 14:21; Luke 16:22-31
- **They have no more reward** — i.e.,
no fruit for the labor they have
done. — Luke 12:16-21
- **For the memory of them is
forgotten** — With the passing of
time you will be forgotten. — Job
7:8–10; Eccl. 1:11; 2:16; 8:10;

“Our Common End”

OPPORTUNITY ENDS AT DEATH— 9:4-6



► The living know they will die ...

- **“Their love, hatred, & envy have now perished”** — With the passing of time attitudes of the living toward the dead, positive or negative disappear.
- **“Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun”** - While alive on earth, we are actors upon the stage of life. With death, the curtain falls, our role here ends forever — (9:6;)

“Our Common End”

DO NOT WASTE YOUR TIME — 9:7-10

**Ecclesiastes 9:7–8
(NKJV)**

⁷ Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted your works. ⁸ Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil.

► Enjoy God's blessings ...

- **“Go,”** — i.e., be up and doing. don't sit around brooding about life's inequities & vexations — stop worrying about problems which cannot be solved.
- **“Eat & drink with a merry heart”** — see also (e.g., 2:24; 3:12). Asceticism would only intensify the gloom which arises from the problems of life. - Resolve rather to enjoy all the gifts of God.

“Our Common End”

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► Enjoy God's blessings ...

- **“For God has already accepted your works,”** — The “works” here refers to the “works” of the righteous and wise of verse 1.
- God has accepted them and you & intends for his good gifts to be received with reverence & thanksgiving, and that they be enjoyed — 9:7,8; James 1:17
- Only a righteous person can **TRULY** enjoy God's gifts!

“Our Common End”

DO NOT WASTE YOUR TIME — 9:7-10

Ecclesiastes 9:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that *is* your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun

► Enjoy God's blessings ...

- **“Live joyfully with the wife whom you love”** — traveling on life's highway is made so much better by the company of a beloved spouse! — Gen 2:18-20; Pr. 5:18, 19; 18:22; 19:14. Mal. 2:15.
- **“All your days of vanity”** — This relationship is viewed as lifelong — Mal. 2:14-16; Mat 19:6
- The enjoyment of life with a good wife is man's **“portion in this life.”**

“Our Common End”

DO NOT WASTE YOUR TIME — 9:7-10

► Work while it is day ...

- Honest labor leads to success and provisions - for self and others — Eph 4:28 - While Laziness leads to ruin and sorrow — Prov 18:9.
- Kingdom work is even more gratifying — Mat 6:33
- Time is of the essence. The hour will come when no man can work (John 9:4).
- Every opportunity to do good must be seized (Gal 6:10)



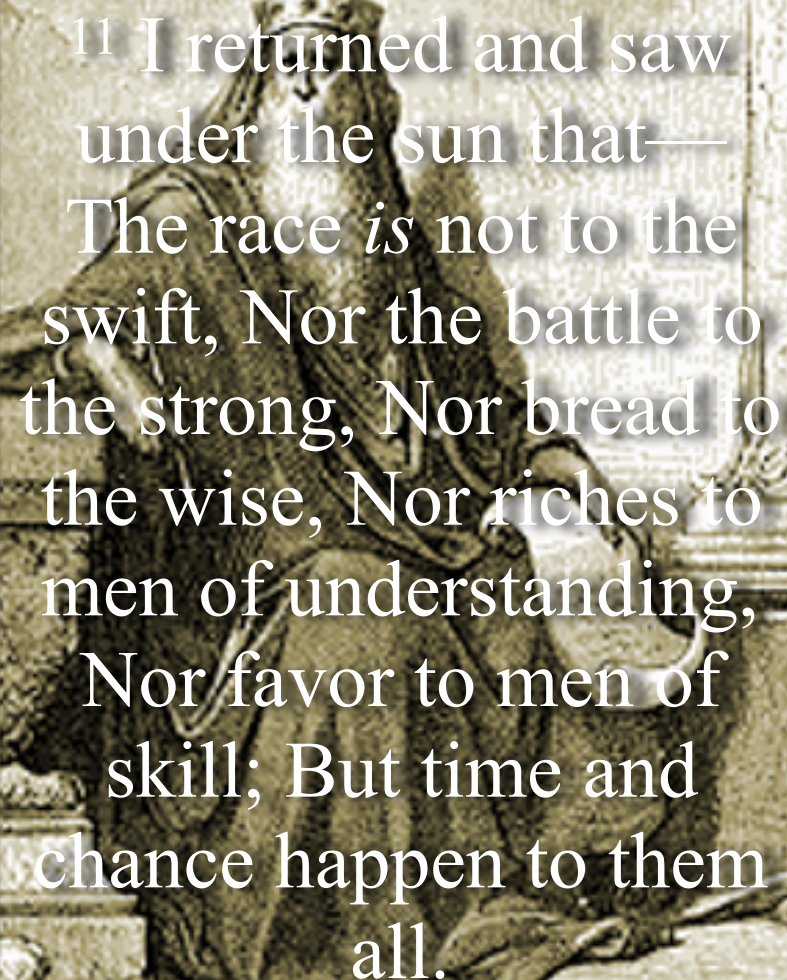
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“Our Common End”

CANNOT KNOW FUTURE — 9:11,12

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all.

► The race is not to the swift, ...

- Man must work; he ought to work; but the results are uncertain and beyond his control. One's own efforts do not guarantee success in life.
- The point in all this is that human ability and resources do not guarantee success.
- Success is conditioned by various laws of “chance” which work unexpected results (9:11).

“Our Common End”

CANNOT KNOW FUTURE — 9:11,12

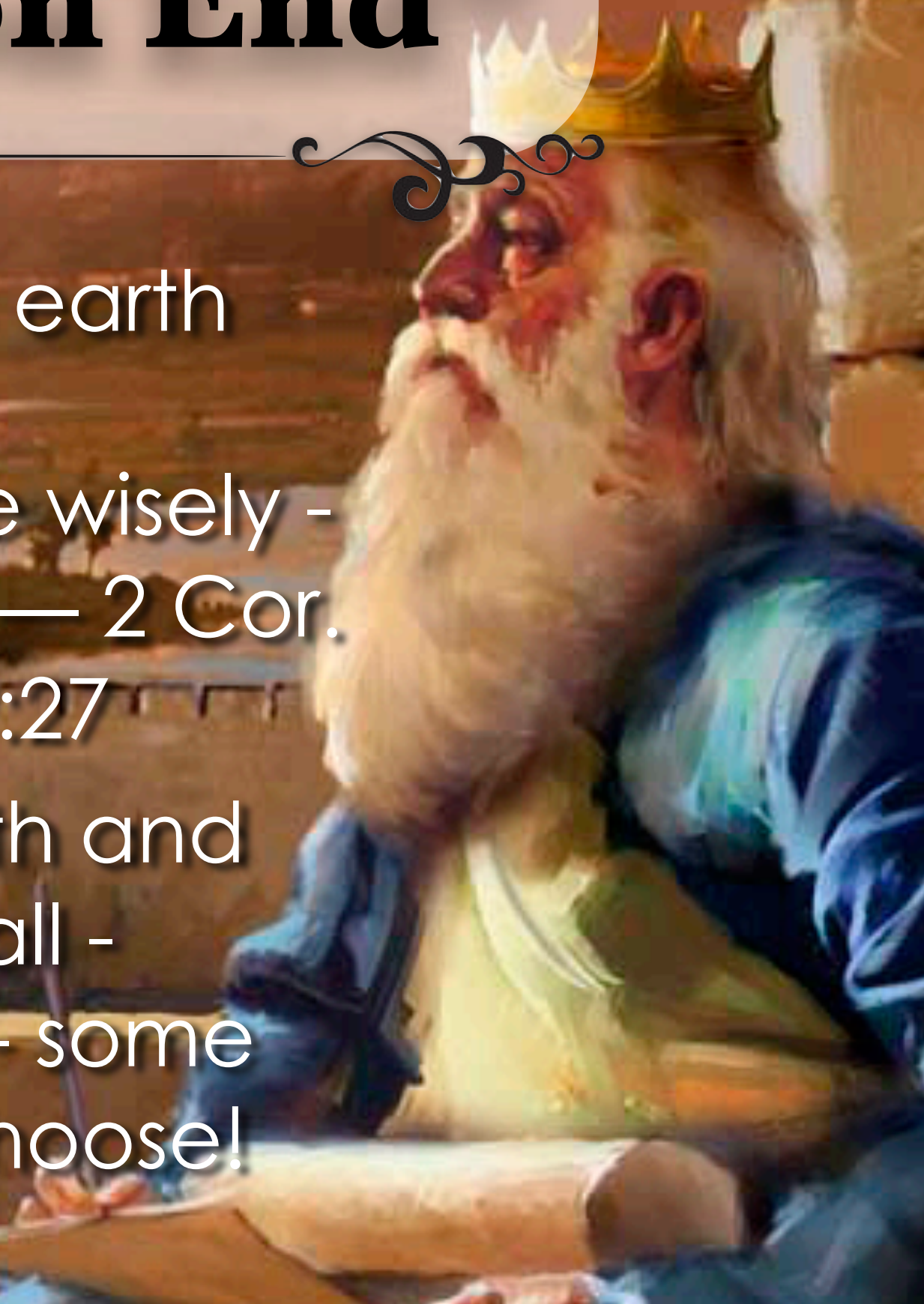


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“Our Common End”

- Knowing that life on this earth will end, we should be motivated to to prepare wisely - seek the things of God! — 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:5-11; Heb 9:27
- Jesus is the way, the truth and the life - He will raise us all - some to everlasting life - some to eternal death - we choose!



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

“The Wisdom of a Submissive Heart”

(Ecclesiastes 8:1-17)

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1 Peter 2:13–21 (NKJV)

¹³ Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—¹⁶ as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. ¹⁷ Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood.

Fear God. Honor the king. ¹⁸ Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.

¹⁹ For this is commendable, if because of conscience

1 Peter 2:13–21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰ For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: