

# 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 Superiority of Wisdom”

(Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:20)

### Ecclesiastes 9:16–18 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> Then I said: “Wisdom *is* better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom *is* despised, And his words are not heard. <sup>17</sup> Words of the wise, *spoken* quietly, *should be* heard Rather than the shout of a ruler of fools.



# "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

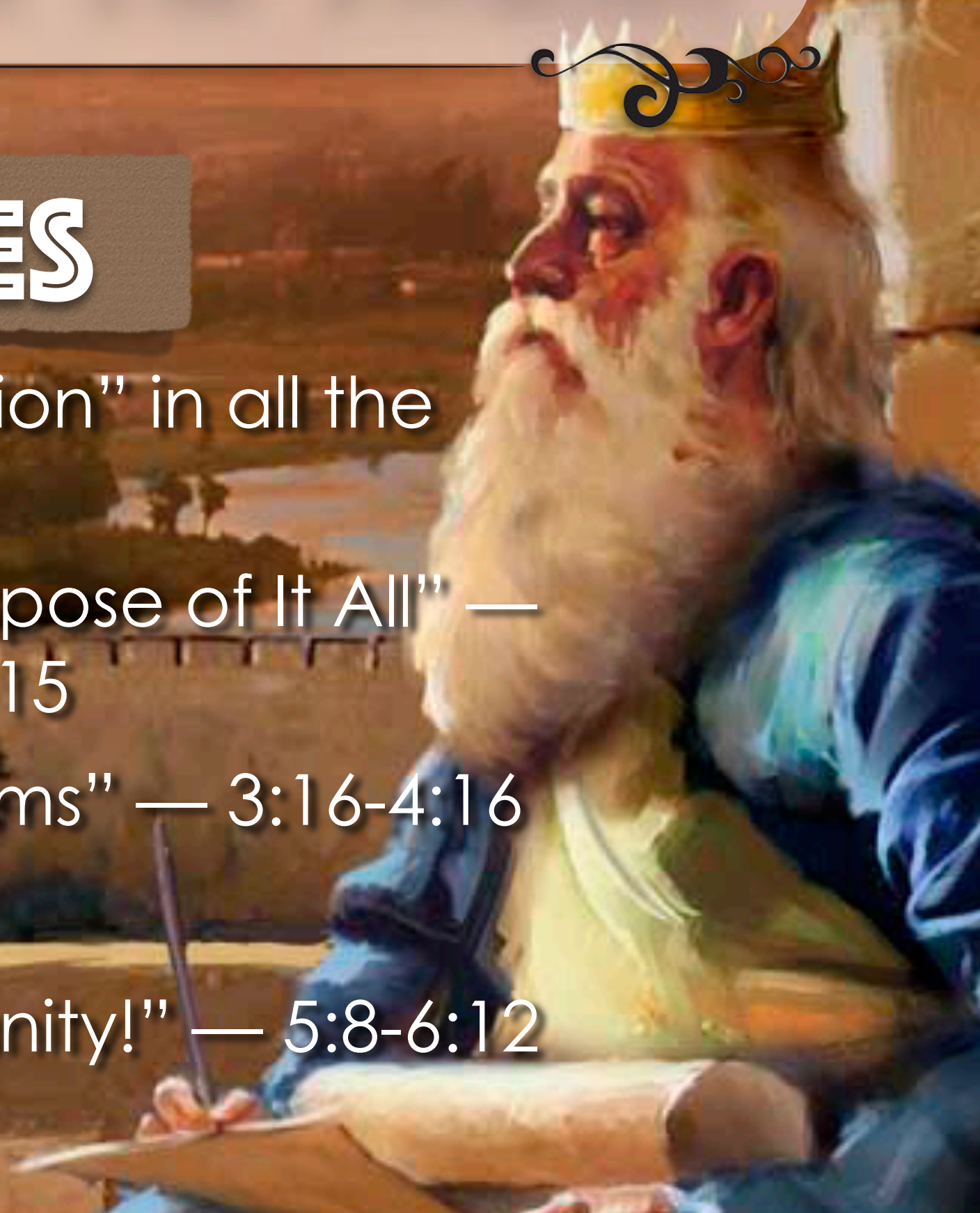




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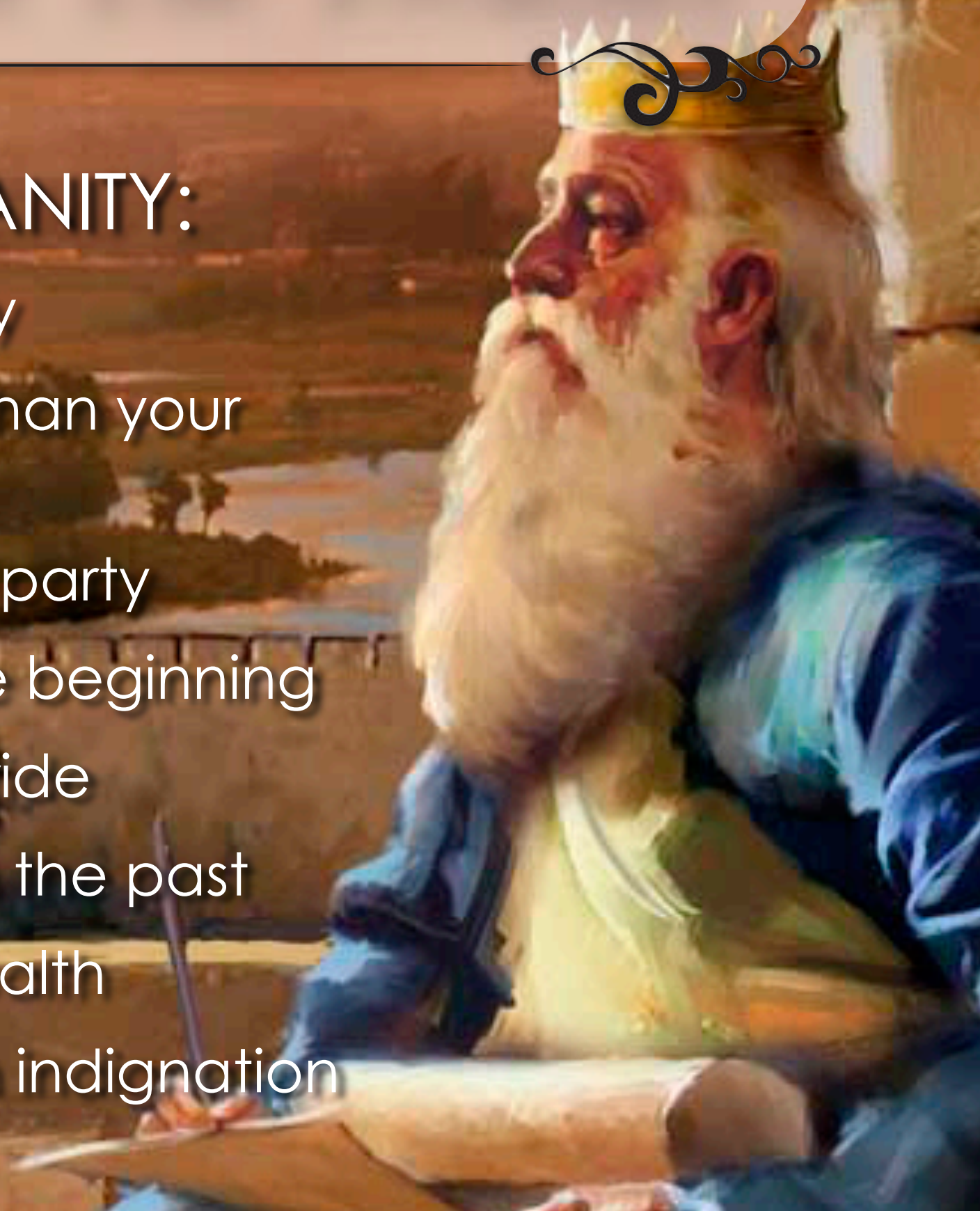
- "The Quest for satisfaction" in all the wrong places — 2:1-16
- "To Understand The Purpose of It All" — God is in control — 3:1-15
- "The Problem of Problems" — 3:16-4:16
- "Fear God" — 5:1-7
- "Everything Really Is Vanity!" — 5:8-6:12





# "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)

<sup>8</sup> 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 9:13–10:20 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> This wisdom I have also seen under the sun, and it *seemed* great to me: <sup>14</sup> *There was* a little city with few men in it; and a great king came against it, besieged it, and built great snares around it. <sup>15</sup> Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that same poor man. <sup>16</sup> Then I said: “Wisdom *is* better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom *is* despised, And his words are not heard. <sup>17</sup> Words of the wise, *spoken* quietly, *should be* heard Rather than the shout of a ruler of fools.



# Ecclesiastes 9:13–10:20 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war; But one sinner destroys much good.” <sup>1</sup> Dead flies putrefy the perfumer’s ointment, And cause it to give off a foul odor; *So does* a little folly to one respected for wisdom *and* honor. <sup>2</sup> A wise man’s heart *is* at his right hand, But a fool’s heart at his left. <sup>3</sup> Even when a fool walks along the way, He lacks wisdom, And he shows everyone *that he is* a fool. <sup>4</sup> If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, Do not leave your post; For conciliation pacifies great offenses.



# Ecclesiastes 9:13–10:20 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> There is an evil I have seen under the sun, As an error proceeding from the ruler: <sup>6</sup> Folly is set in great dignity, While the rich sit in a lowly place. <sup>7</sup> I have seen servants on horses, While princes walk on the ground like servants. <sup>8</sup> He who digs a pit will fall into it, And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent. <sup>9</sup> He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, *And* he who splits wood may be endangered by it. <sup>10</sup> If the ax is dull, And one does not sharpen the edge, Then he must use more strength; But wisdom brings success. <sup>11</sup> A serpent may bite when *it is* not charmed; The babbler is no different.



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# **Ecclesiastes 9:13–10:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> Because of laziness the building decays, And through idleness of hands the house leaks. <sup>19</sup> A feast is made for laughter, And wine makes merry; But money answers everything. <sup>20</sup> Do not curse the king, even in your thought; Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom; For a bird of the air may carry your voice, And a bird in flight may tell the matter.



# “The Superiority of Wisdom”

## WISDOM BETTER THAN STRENGTH (9:13–18)

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13 This wisdom I have also seen under the sun, and it *seemed* great to me: 14 *There was a little city with few men in it; and a great king came against it, besieged it, and built great snares around it.*

► An example of “great wisdom” — A “small city” was besieged by a “great king ... 13,14



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Yet no one remembered that same poor man.

► An example of “great wisdom” — A “small city” was besieged by a “great king ... 13,14

- But the city is saved by the actions of a wise man — 15
- A similar thing really happened — 2 Sam. 20:14-22
- “yet no man remembered that same poor man.” He fell back into his insignificance, and was thought of no more (9:14–15).



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### ► Nevertheless - wisdom is often forgotten or rejected — 16-18

- Wisdom can accomplish what physical strength & resources cannot — (16; 7:19; Prov. 21:22)
- However, the counsel of a poor wise man is usually rejected & despised — (16)
- Wise counsel is given quietly, calmly, deliberately / On the other hand, a fool attempts to loudly manipulate acceptance.



# “The Superiority of Wisdom”

## MUCH GOOD RUINED BY FOLLY (9:18-10:3)

Ecclesiastes 9:18–10:1  
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### ► Wisdom can be nullified by a **LITTLE** folly — 9:18-10:3

- Such a small thing as a fly can spoil a costly substance which had been prepared with care, time and skill -
- All the good which the counsel of the wise man might accomplish may be quickly overthrown by the villainy and perversity of one bad man (9:18)



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### ► Wisdom can be nullified by a **LITTLE** folly — 9:18-10:3

- Likewise, one foolish act can mar a good reputation built over a life-time — (Gal. 2:12-14)
- Also true in groups or congregations. One foolish member can undo or cancel out the efforts of many. (Joshua 7)
- There is no such thing as a little sin (1 Corinthians 5:6; Acts 5:1 ff; 2 Samuel 6:6-7)



# “The Superiority of Wisdom”

## MUCH GOOD RUINED BY FOLLY (9:18-10:3)

Ecclesiastes 10:2–3  
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### ► Wisdom can be nullified by a **LITTLE** folly — 9:18-10:3

- Wisdom or folly is a heart problem - wisdom and folly go in opposite directions. — Prov 4:23; 23:7
- The wise man chooses to set his mind on knowledge and the consequences of his choices — Jer 6:16; Rom 6:16-18
- The fool never learns and shows all he is a fool ... Mat 15:13-20; Luke 6:43,44



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## FOLLY IN HIGH PLACES: 10:4-7

Ecclesiastes 10:4  
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### Wisdom avoids rash action

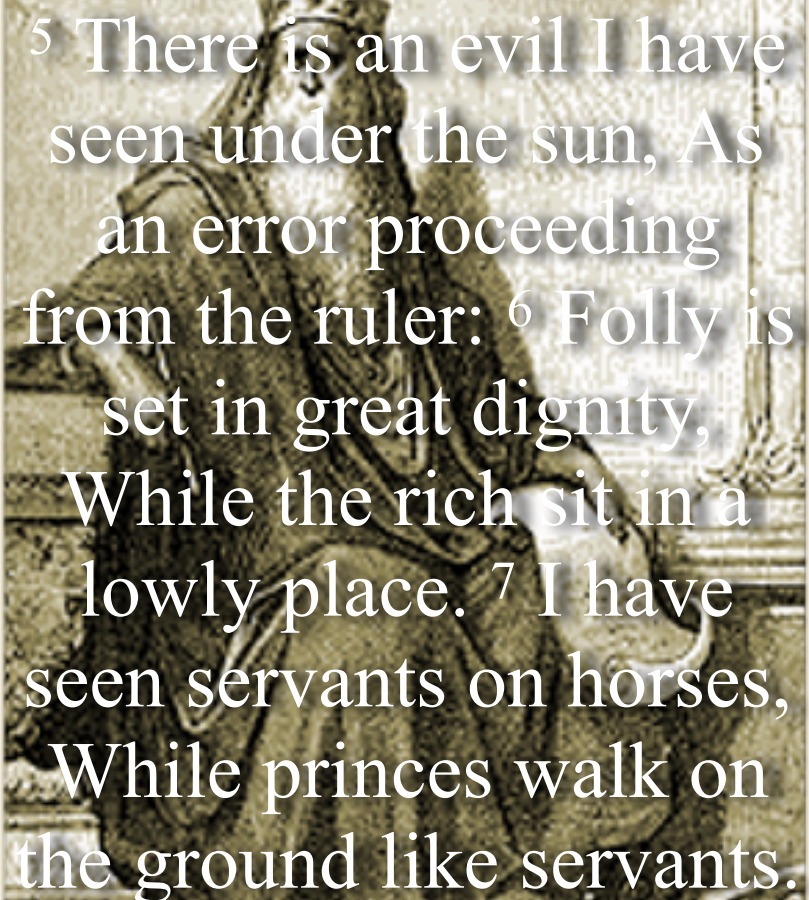
- The picture here is of a monarch who becomes angry at the advice of his counselor and shows his resentment by scorn and reproach - The natural reaction would be a hasty resignation -
- It is wise to respond with humility, avoid irrational or impulsive behavior, - don't incriminate yourself further before the king.



# “The Superiority of Wisdom”

## FOLLY IN HIGH PLACES: 10:4-7

### Ecclesiastes 10:5–7 (NKJV)



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### ► When the unqualified gain power and control. - 5-7

- When fools are placed in power - when folly is exalted and wisdom rejected - bad things happen —
- The unqualified gain control and demote those who are qualified - things are turned upside down and the value of wisdom is often nullified. — cf. 1 Kings 12
- Unqualified rulers are worse than no rulers at all ...



# “The Superiority of Wisdom”

## VARIOUS CONTRASTS BETWEEN WISDOM & FOLLY



### Ecclesiastes 10:8–20 (NKJV)

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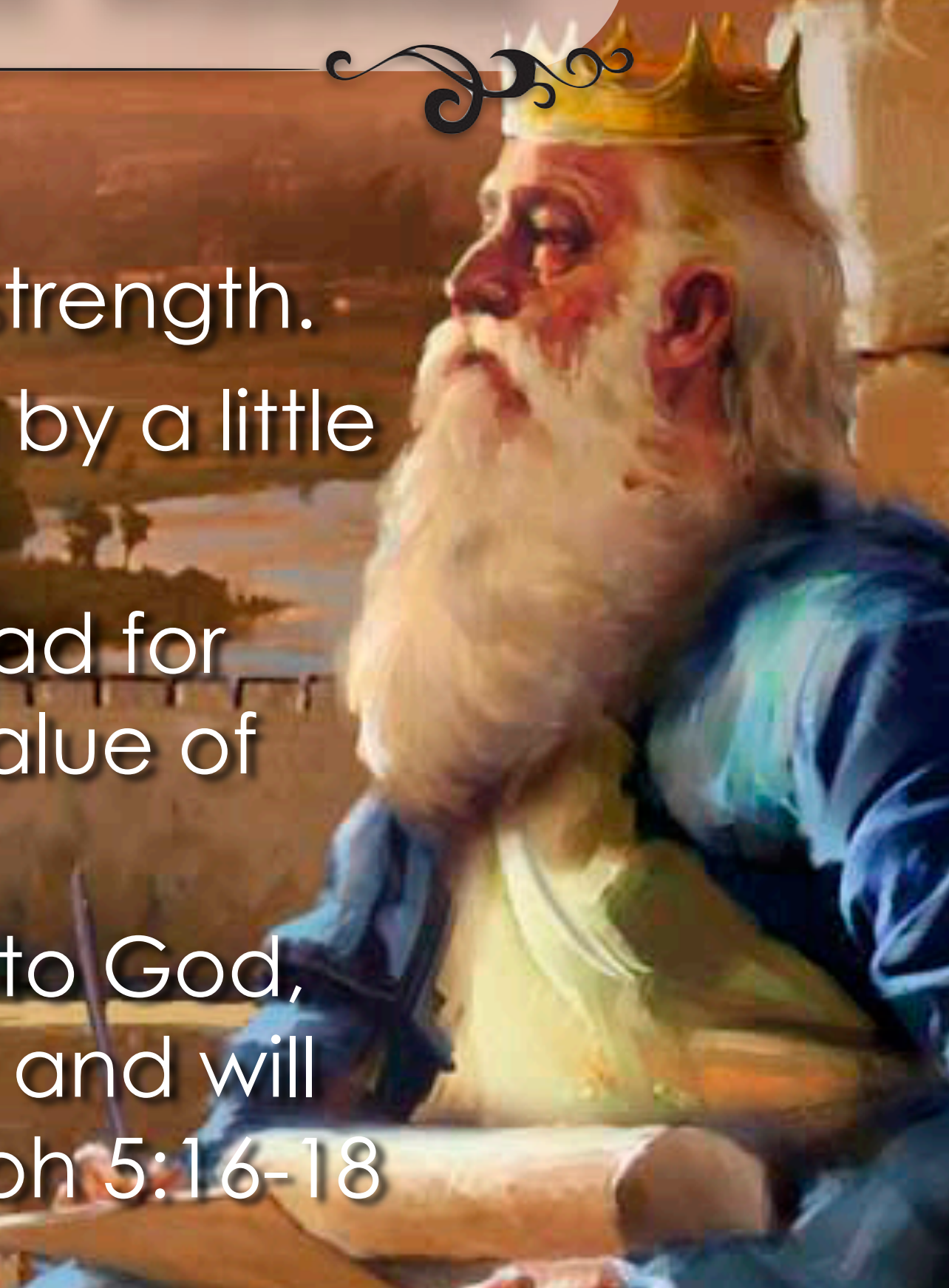
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# “The Superiority of Wisdom”

- Wisdom is better than strength.
- Wisdom can be ruined by a little folly.
- Folly in high places is bad for everyone — thus the value of wise counsel ...
- True wisdom is to listen to God, seeking His knowledge and will and obeying Him! — Eph 5:16-18









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

## “The Wisdom of a Submissive Heart”

(Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:20)

**Charts by Don McClain**

Preached June 9, 2019

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# 1 Peter 2:13–21 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—<sup>16</sup> as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. <sup>17</sup> Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood.

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

<sup>19</sup> For this is commendable, if because of conscience



# 1 Peter 2:13–21 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: