

UNDER THE SUN

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

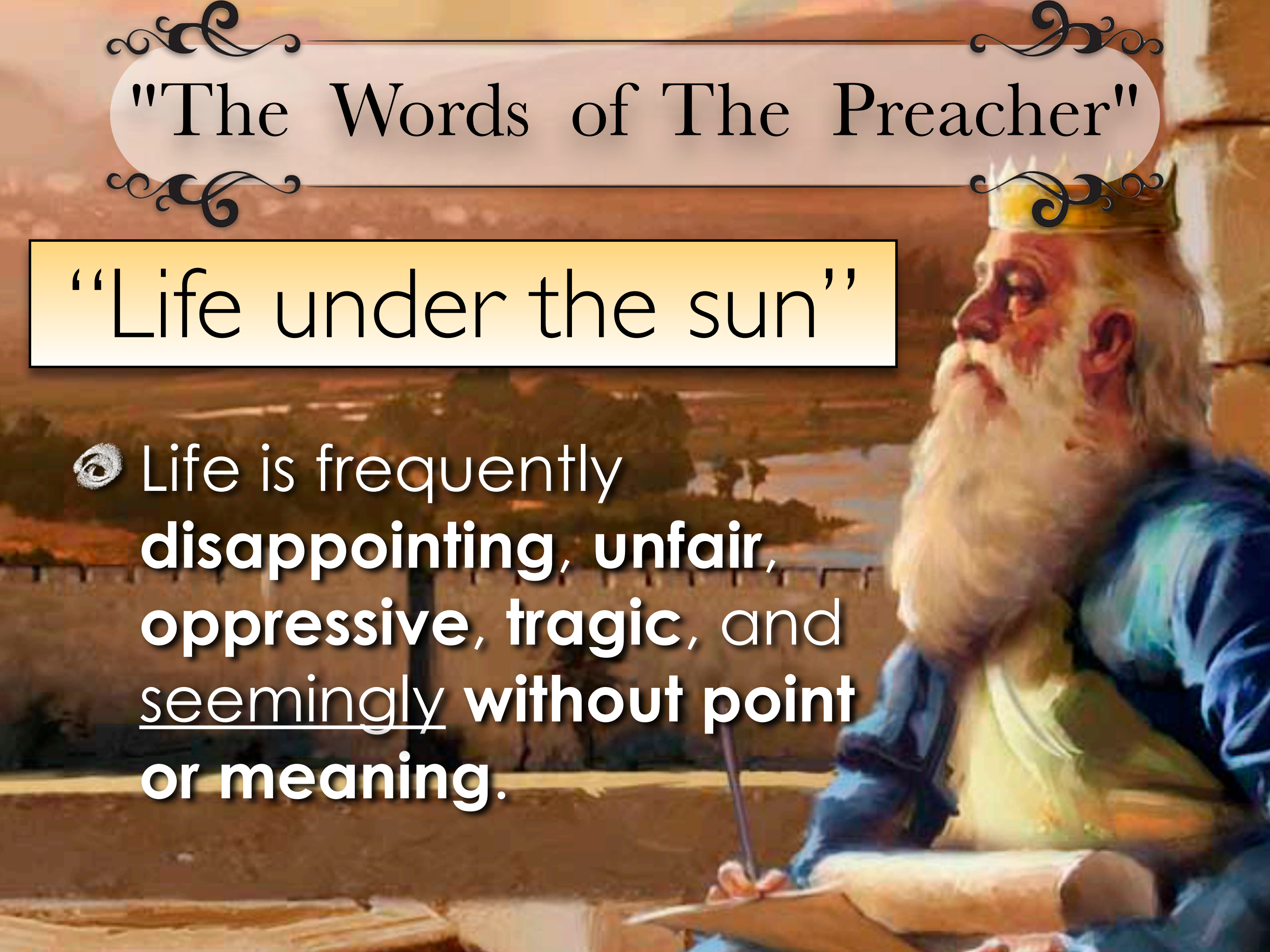
Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. -Ecclesiastes 12:13

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

(Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:8)

Ecclesiastes 12:1 (NKJV)

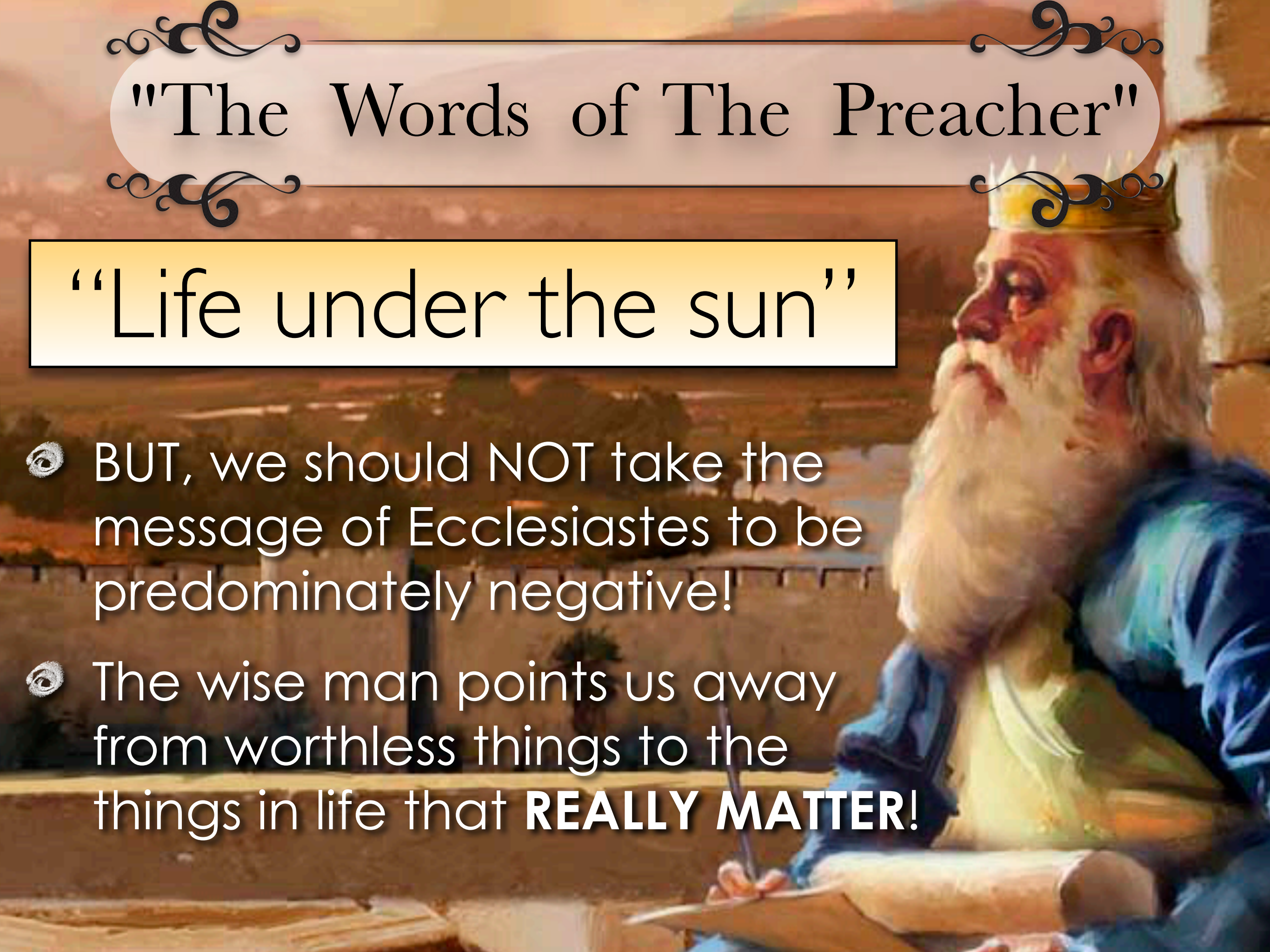
¹ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”:



"The Words of The Preacher"

"Life under the sun"

- Life is frequently **disappointing, unfair, oppressive, tragic, and seemingly without point or meaning.**



"The Words of The Preacher"

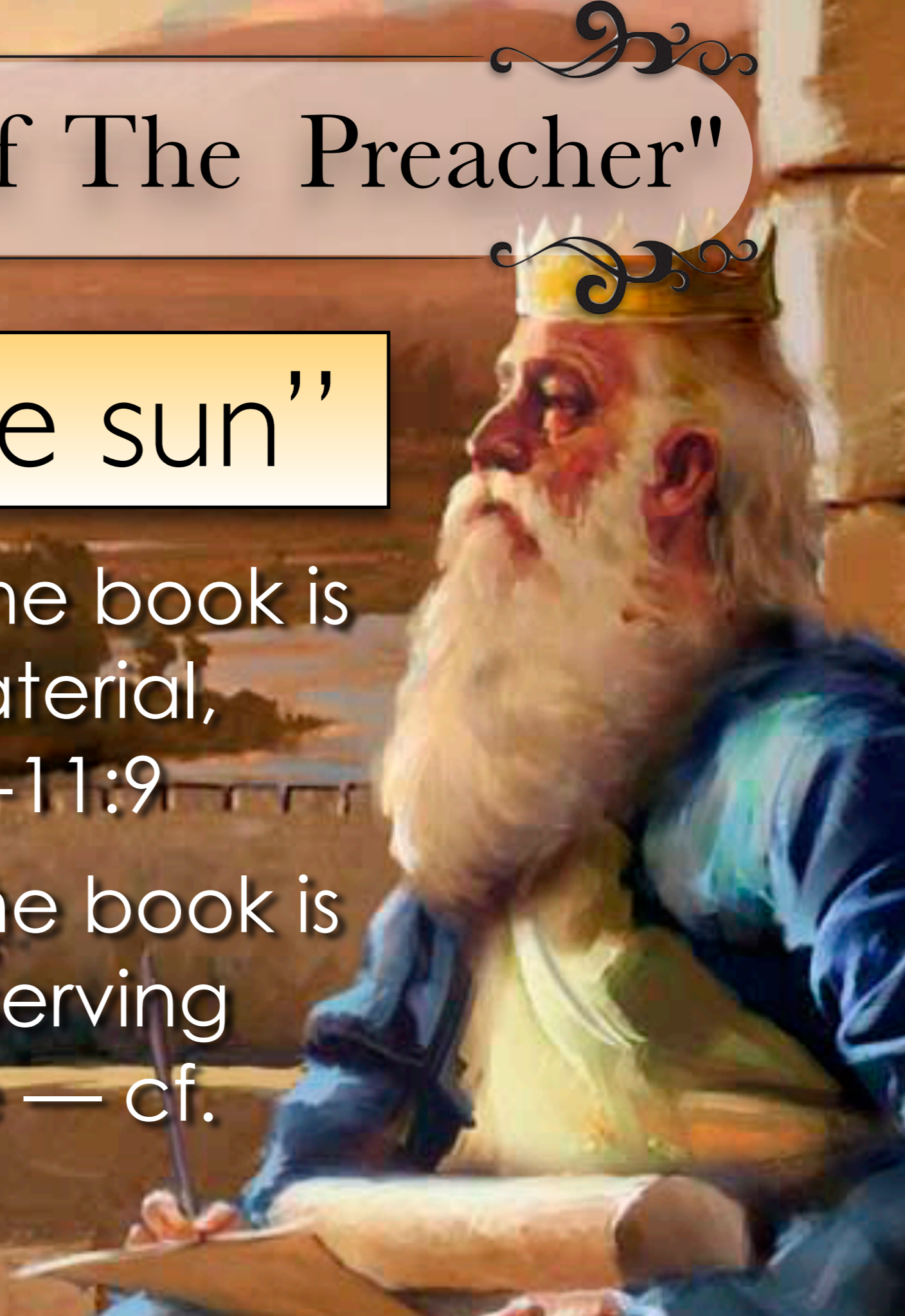
"Life under the sun"

- BUT, we should NOT take the message of Ecclesiastes to be predominately negative!
- The wise man points us away from worthless things to the things in life that **REALLY MATTER!**

"The Words of The Preacher"

"Life under the sun"

- 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"

"Life under the sun"

- The last 2 chapters emphasize the need to **INVEST** our resources, time, efforts, & abilities toward that which will **LAST** instead of towards things that will **PERISH** — 12:7
- God will hold us all accountable to our **PURPOSE** in the end. — 12:13,14



Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:8 (NKJV)

⁹ Rejoice, O young man, in your youth,
And let your heart cheer you in the days
of your youth; Walk in the ways of your
heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But
know that for all these God will bring
you into judgment. ¹⁰ Therefore remove
sorrow from your heart, And put away
evil from your flesh, For childhood and
youth *are* vanity.

Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:8 (NKJV)

¹ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”: ² While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain; ³ In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim;

Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:8 (NKJV)

⁴ When the doors are shut in the streets,
And the sound of grinding is low; When
one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all
the daughters of music are brought low. ⁵

Also they are afraid of height, And of
terrors in the way; When the almond tree
blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden,

And desire fails. For man goes to his
eternal home, And the mourners go about
the streets.

Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:8 (NKJV)

⁶ *Remember your Creator* before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well. ⁷ Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. ⁸ “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “*All is vanity.*”

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

REJOICE IN YOUR YOUTH (11:9-10)

Ecclesiastes 11:9
(NKJV)

⁹ Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.

■ Let your heart cheer you

- ▶ How many young people are bitter, depressed, discouraged, resentful, bored, unhappy, confused, etc..?
- ▶ With the continual rise of broken homes, godless influences, materialism it should be no surprise that depression & suicide rates have **SIKED** in recent years ...

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”



REJOICE IN YOUR YOUTH (11:9-10)

Depression Striking More Young People Than Ever

FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES

By Robert Preidt

HealthDay Reporter

FRIDAY, May 11, 2018 (HealthDay News) -- Americans are fast becoming a very depressed lot.

New research shows there's been a sharp spike in cases of **major depression** in the United States in recent years, especially among **teens** and millennials.

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association analysis of medical claims data showed that the overall rate of major depression was 4.4 percent and that diagnosis rates rose 33 percent between 2013 and 2016. Those rates increased 63 percent among teens and 47 percent among millennials. ...

"Major depression diagnoses are growing quickly, especially for adolescents and millennials," said Trent Haywood, senior vice president and chief medical officer for Blue Cross Blue Shield.

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■ Let your heart cheer you

- ▶ Solomon's charge is the need for cultivating the virtue of joy during youth.
- ▶ Even while young, believers should set their hearts to enjoy the blessings with which God surrounds them.
- ▶ The happiest period of one's life should be his youth!

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■ Let your heart cheer you

- ▶ Joy and cheerfulness depends upon the perspective, or attitude one has.
- ▶ How would a child's home life affect his/her happiness?
- ▶ How would one's belief system affect his/her happiness?
- ▶ How would a believer differ from an agnostic?

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

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■ Follow After Your Desires & Dreams ... (11:9)

- ▶ Solomon has said to enjoy life by eating & drinking (2:24; 3:13; 8:15; 9:7), enjoying marital bliss (9:9), & finding satisfaction in one's work (2:24; 3:22; 5:18).
- ▶ Now “follow the impulses of your heart & the desires of your eyes,” 11:9; nasb). BUT REMEMBER - God will judge.

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

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■ Follow After Your Desires & Dreams ... (11:9)

- ▶ Nothing here is encouraging a young man to engage in sinful or irresponsible activities. In fact, such activities deprive life of real and true joy (Titus 3:3).
- ▶ If God's will governs our desires & goals then joy will be the result of our labor & efforts.

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

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“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

REJOICE IN YOUR YOUTH (11:9-10)



■ Get RID of Things That Destroy TRUE JOY (11:10)

- ▶ “remove sorrow” from his
“heart.” - (ka‘as) refers to low
spirits or discontent with existing
circumstances.
- ▶ These feelings are to be put
away from the mind by a
deliberate act of the will. One
must force himself to think
positively.

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

REJOICE IN YOUR YOUTH (11:9-10)



■ Get RID of Things That Destroy TRUE JOY (11:10)

- ▶ Second, he must “put away” evil from his “flesh.” - it is moral evil which is in view here.
- ▶ In his enjoyment of life the youth must not defile his body with carnal sins which arouse God's anger.
- ▶ Foolishness in youth can follow you for the rest of your life!!!

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

REJOICE IN YOUR YOUTH (11:9-10)



**Ecclesiastes 11:10
(NKJV)**

¹⁰ Therefore remove
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For childhood and
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■ Get RID of Things That Destroy TRUE JOY (11:10)

- ▶ “For childhood and youth are vanity.” — This time of youth soon passes away; the capacity for enjoyment is soon curtailed.
- ▶ Therefore one should use these years aright, remembering they are short. “Vanity” here means “fleeting” as in 7:15 and 9:9.

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

THE FUNDAMENTAL ADMONITION (12:1A)

**Ecclesiastes 12:1
(NKJV)**

**¹ Remember now
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■ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth

- ▶ As Creator, God HAS the moral right to expect obedience.
- ▶ As creator, God knows what is TRULY best for me.
- ▶ Therefore, I should submit to His will cheerfully and have the confidence in knowing that the path of obedience is the best path for me. — Psalm 1:1-3

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- ▶ Youth is often known for demanding ‘rights’, resisting & questioning authority, including God’s authority.
- ▶ There is great temptation to concentrate on earthly goals - careers, possessions, & the quest for fun & excitement - taking young people away from God.

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■ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth

- ▶ Young people, (people in their 20's, 30's and 40's), need to remember that all they are and all they have is due to the fact that there is a God.
- ▶ The days of strength and vigor are when you can really accomplish something for God, spreading the gospel, doing good deeds, etc...(Titus 2:14)

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- ▶ Youth is THE ideal time to commit ourselves fully to God:
- ▶ Youth is when self-surrender is easiest, but a life lived for self can harden the heart.
- ▶ Will we squander the days of our strength? Or will we give God the best of our youth?
- ▶ The time of strength ends!

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

THE TIME OF OLD AGE (12:1B-7)

Ecclesiastes 12:1b,2 (NKJV)

¹ ... Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”;

² While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain;

■ General Description of Old Age (12:1b–2)

- ▶ The reference is to the grievances, inconveniences and afflictions of old age.
- ▶ As time marches on the bad days outnumber the good days. Bad days become bad years ...
- ▶ Older people find it more difficult to find pleasure in life.

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■ General Description of Old Age (12:1b–2)

- ▶ NO PLEASURE - Especially, if one hasn't chosen to serve God, the supposed “golden years” can turn out to be very depressing.
- ▶ One cannot be a miserable and selfish child, teenager, 20,30,40, etc., year-old and then expect to enjoy the final years of your life on earth.

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■ General Description of Old Age (12:1b–2)

- ▶ “The following metaphors all describe the deterioration of the body as old age comes on” (Garrett p. 341).
- ▶ Our productiveness might end a good number of years prior to our actual death. How long will you be productive? How long really do you have to serve God effectively?

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■ General Description of Old Age (12:1b–2)

- ▶ The picture is of darkened days - not just the loss of sight, but the loss of effectiveness, of vitality -
- ▶ Symbolic of trouble. “one storm succeeds another” (P. P. Comm. p. 297). - old age brings one complication or problem after another.

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■ The Infirmities of Old Age (12:3–4)

- ▶ (1) “the keepers of the house shall tremble.” - metaphor for the hands and arms - In old age they tremble.
- ▶ (2) “The men of power shall bow themselves.” These are a metaphor for the legs which become feeble and bent.
- ▶ (3) “The grinders cease because they are few.” the teeth can no longer perform grind the food.

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

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■ The Infirmities of Old Age (12:3–4)

- ▶ (4) “Those that look out of the windows be darkened.” The eyes are impaired with age. (12:3).
- ▶ (5) “The doors shall be shut in the streets.” - loss of hearing or loss of participation w/ outside.
- ▶ (6) The old man “rises to the bird’s voice.” This is usually taken to be a reference to the light sleep of the old man. or the voice becomes weak

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■ The Infirmities of Old Age (12:3–4)

- ▶ (7) “And the daughters of music shall be brought low.” — “these cheerful evidences of a living world about us grow remote and faint; one feels no longer fully part of it” (Kidner p. 103).
- ▶ (8) Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; (vs. 5) The aged are often afraid of falling & feel unsafe, incapable of self-protection.

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■ The Infirmities of Old Age (12:3–4)

- ▶ (9) When the almond tree blossoms, [5] — Hair turn white
- ▶ (10) The grasshopper is a burden, — “the body being bent and one’s walk being slowed” BKC -
- ▶ (11) And desire fails — all desires, physical and mental, die down, - loss of appetite, whether for food, or a loss of sexual desire.

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■ The Infirmities of Old Age (12:3–4)

- ▶ Even aged Christians can feel that they are isolated from the world and even other believers.
- ▶ The time to serve God is NOW!
- ▶ “For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.” — 12:5c

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

EN ROUTE TO THE GRAVE (12:5B-8)

**Ecclesiastes 12:6
(NKJV)**

*6 Remember your
Creator before the
silver cord is loosed,
Or the golden bowl is
broken, Or the
pitcher shattered at
the fountain, Or the
wheel broken at the
well.*

■ The Finality of Death (12:6)

- ▶ Serve God now while you have youth, energy, and vigor!
“Seize the day—not for self, but for God” - cf. 12:1
- ▶ “silver cord, and golden bowl” — the reservoir of oil in a lamp - When this is broken it becomes useless, the light is extinguished.
- ▶ “pitcher by the well” — is easily broken - Man’s life is not only precious, it is fragile.

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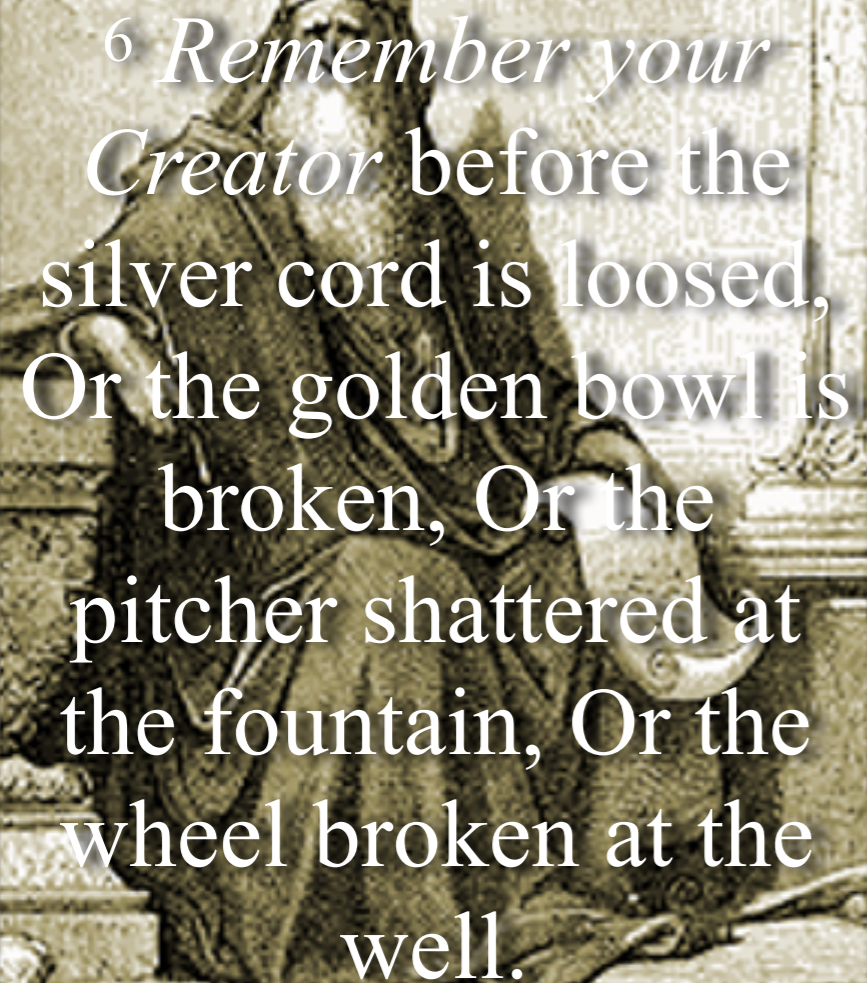
■ The Finality of Death (12:6)

- ▶ The fourth figure is that of the broken wheel at the cistern.
- ▶ The picture is of a deep well or cistern with an apparatus for drawing water. This apparatus consists of a wheel with a rope upon it, to which was attached a bucket. The wheel fails and falls into the well, the bucket is dashed to pieces, and no water can be drawn.

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*7 Then the dust will return
to the earth as it was,
And the spirit will return to
God who gave it. ⁸
“Vanity of vanities,” says
the Preacher, “All is
vanity.”*

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(Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:8)

“Life under the sun”

- **ARE WE INVESTING** our resources, time, efforts, & abilities **IN THINGS** which will **LAST ETERNALLY** or in things that will **PERISH**?

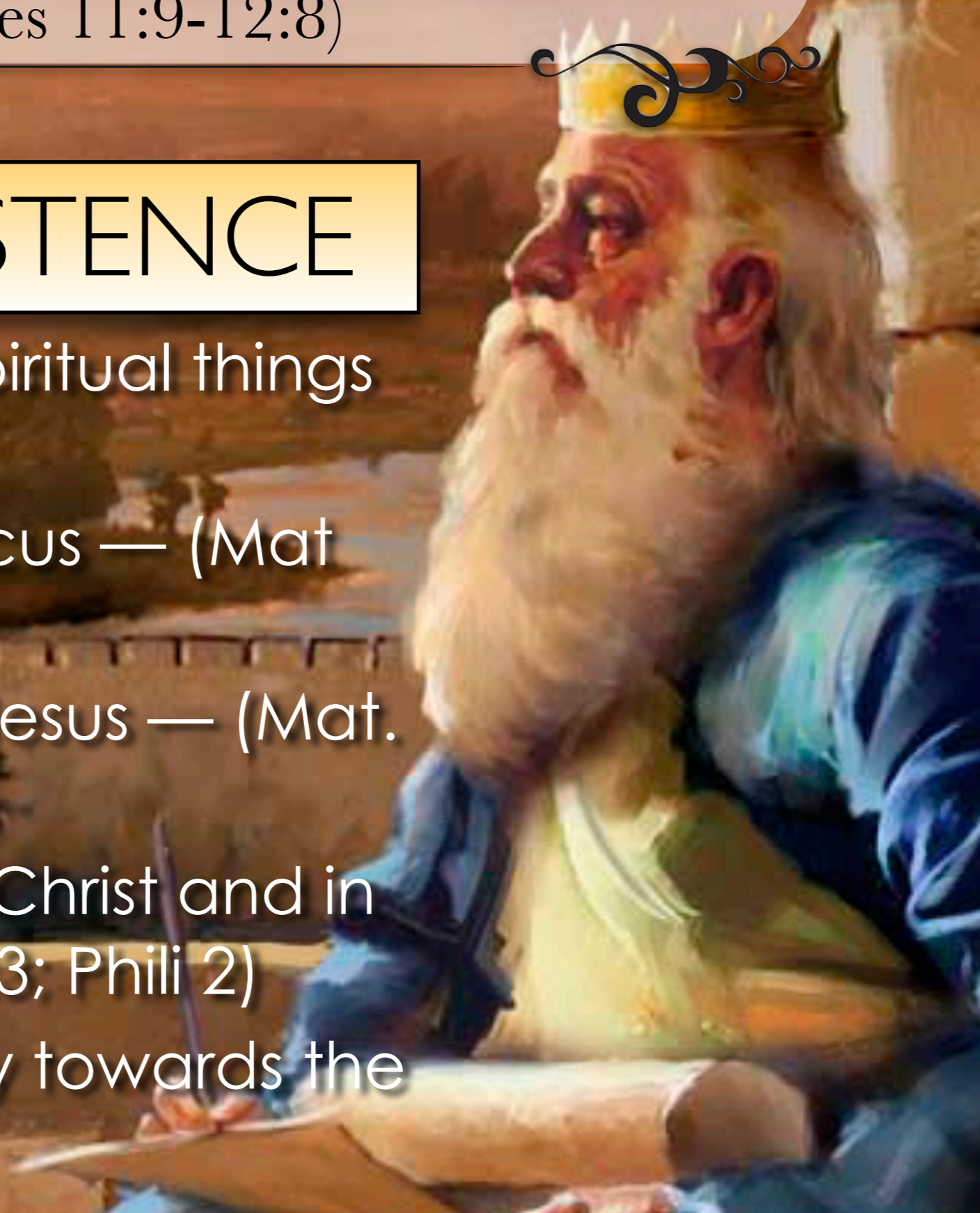


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DILIGENT PERSISTENCE

- Directing my values on spiritual things — Mat. 6:19-21,33
- Increasing my spiritual focus — (Mat 6:22,23; Col. 3:1,2)
- Increasing my loyalty to Jesus — (Mat. 6:24; Luke 9:23)
- Bearing fruit / growing in Christ and in His likeness — (Gal. 5:22,23; Phili 2)
- Press even more diligently towards the goal — (Phili 3:14)



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

“Remember Now Your Creator ...”

(Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:8)

Charts by Don McClain

Preached June 30, 2019

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Prepared using Keynote

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2 CHRONICLES 34:1-7 (NKJV)

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. ² And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. ³ For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images.

2 CHRONICLES 34:1-7 (NKJV)

⁴ They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which were above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵ He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶ And so he did in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes.

2 CHRONICLES 34:1-7 (NKJV)

7 When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.