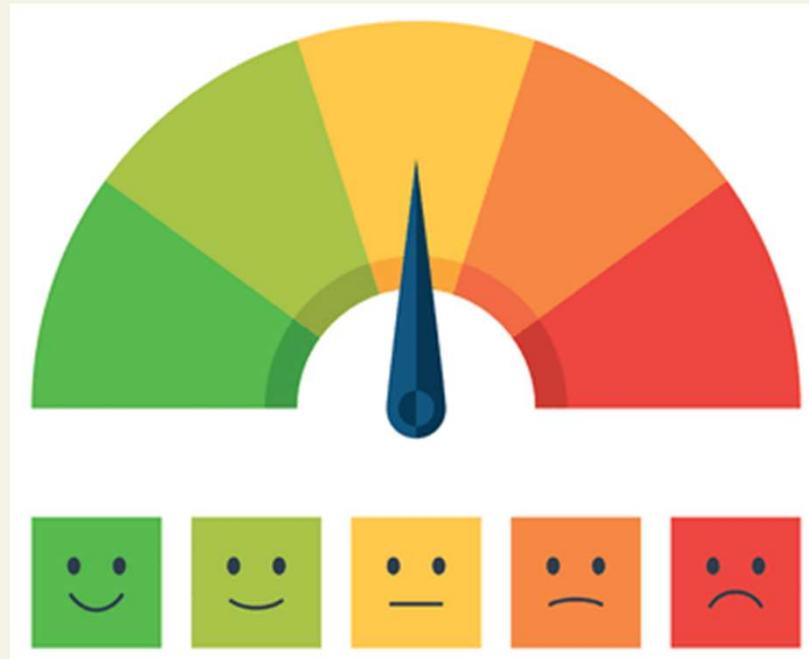


# *Your bad to best wisdom?*



## *Dust to dust & beyond?*

Ch 3:16 And I saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment — wickedness was there, in the place of justice — wickedness was there.

17 I thought in my heart, "God will bring to judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time for every deed."

18 I also thought, "As for men, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals.

19 Man's fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is meaningless.

20 All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return.

21 Who knows if the spirit of man rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?"

22 So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot. For who can bring him to see what will happen after him?

# Dust to Dust & beyond?

• Ch 3:16-22

## • **Apparent problem**

- *The animals and humans have the same after life?*

## • **Resolution**

- *Perspective of under the sun*

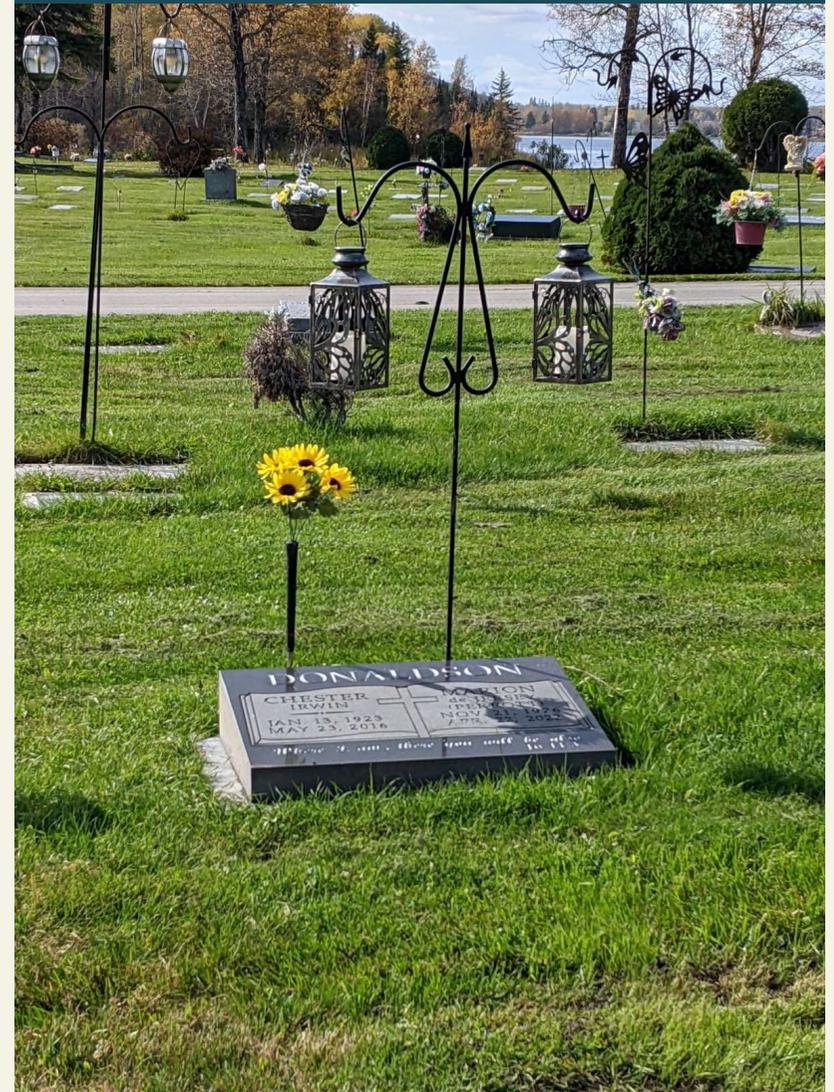
## • **Under the Sun**

- *Wickedness in place of justice*
- *All should live in light of the judgment of God for everything thought and done*
- *God allows all to make their choices*
  - *For them to see what the outcomes are in life when they refuse Him*
    - *When they live with the premise that they are no different than the animals*
    - *When they think that they cannot know whether there is a future for people*
- *And, who can change their mind or inform them?*
  - *The best under the sun is to enjoy your work..*

# Dust to Dust & Beyond

- *God is in heaven*
  - *Written eternity into the hearts of all*
- *Jesus: For God so loved the world...to bring eternal life*
- *Paul: ..the gift of God is eternal life*

• Ch 3:11



## Oppression & evil

Ch 4: 1 Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun: I saw the tears of the oppressed — and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors — and they have no comforter.

2 And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive.

3 But better than both is he who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun.

4 And I saw that all labour and all achievement spring from man's envy of his neighbour. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

5 The fool folds his hands and ruins himself.

6 Better one handful with tranquillity *than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.*

# Oppression & Evil

## • *Under the sun*

- *Oppressed*
- *No comforter, only tears*
- *Better to not be born or dead so not to see the evil*
- *The fool is motivated by envy*
- *Better to have tranquility*

• *Ch 4:1-6*



# Oppression & Evil

• Ch 4:1-6

## • *Solomon's Father's Collection*

- *Psalm 46:1 - "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*

## • *Jesus*

- *I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*



## *Being alone or ..*

**Ch 4:7 Again I saw something meaningless under the sun:**

**8 There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless — a miserable business!**

**9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:**

**10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no-one to help him up!**

**11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?**

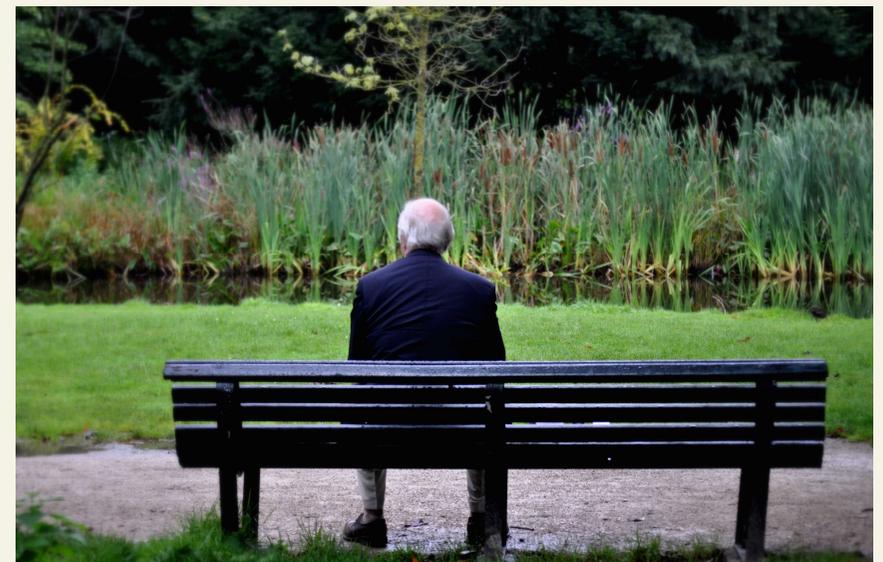
**12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.**

# Being Alone

## • Under the sun

- *Being alone is not the best*
- *Better is to be and work together, life is fleeting*
- *Better than 2 is three strands*
- *We are created to be in relationship*

• Ch 4:7-12



## *Being Alone or Being in Fellowship by God's Love & Grace*

*• God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.*

*• May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

- 1 Co 1:9*
- 2 Co 13:14*



## *Kingship?*

Ch 4:13 Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to take warning.

14 The youth may have come from prison to the kingship, or he may have been born in poverty within his kingdom.

15 I saw that all who lived and walked under the sun followed the youth, the king's successor.

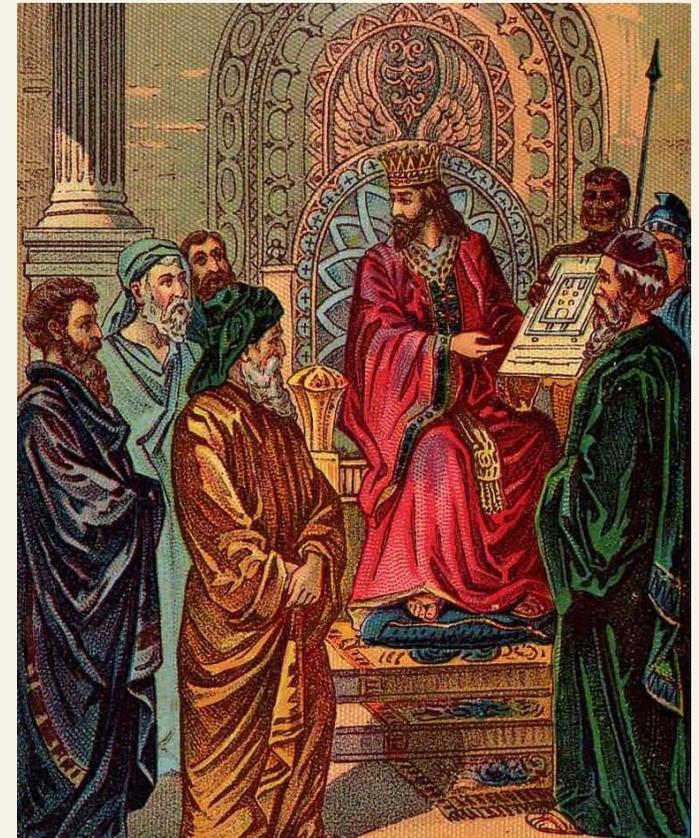
16 There was no end to all the people who were before them. But those who came later were not pleased with the successor. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

# Kingship

## • *Under the sun*

- *Two or three kings contrasted*
- *First one (himself)?*
  - *Old, (rich) and foolish*
  - *No longer heeds warnings (about succession?)*
- *Two youths become king (poor but wise)*
  - *Youth from (foreign) prison to kingship*
  - *Another from poverty within*

• *Ch 4:13-16*

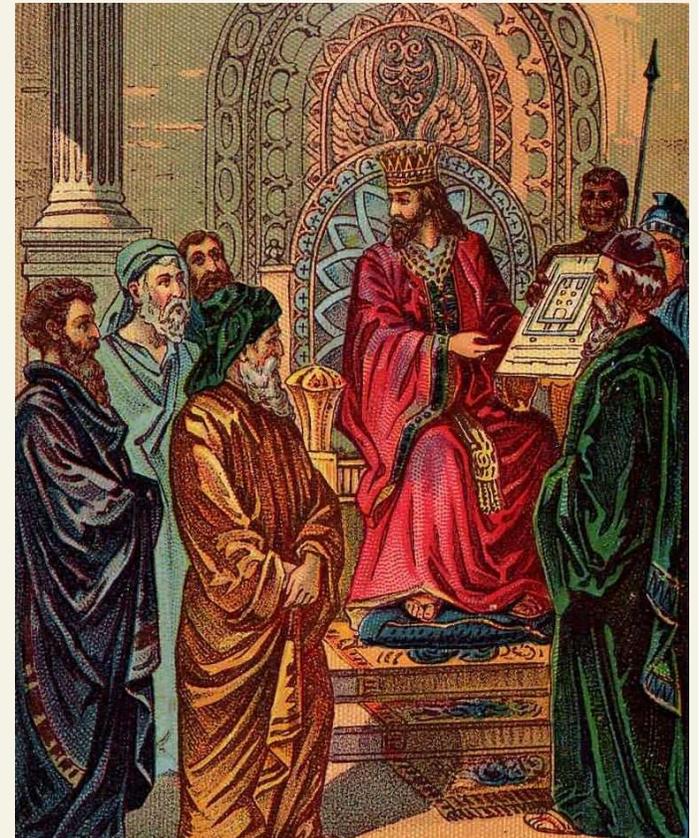


# Kingship

## • *Under the sun*

- *Both youth have the same outcome*
- *Large crowd follow, but those who come later are not pleased*
- *Seeking power and trying to control legacy for its own sake is valueless*

• *Ch 4:13-16*



## *The mouth and vows*

**Ch 5:1** Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong.

**2** Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.

**3** As a dream comes when there are many cares, so the speech of a fool when there are many words.

## *The mouth and vows*

Ch 5:4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfil your vow.

5 It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfil it.

6 Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the [temple] messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?

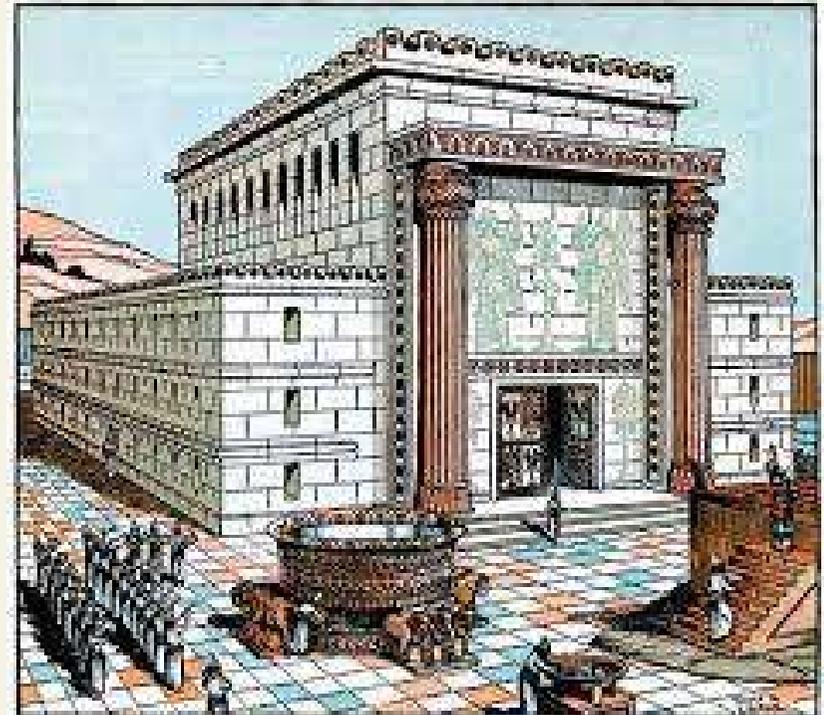
7 Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore stand in awe of God.

# The Mouth and Vows

*• God is in heaven for all under the Sun*

- *Solomon prays to God at the dedication of the Temple*
- *It seems he is remembering his own behaviour before God*
  - *Know when you do wrong*
  - *Guard your steps*
  - *Listen before speaking*
  - *When speaking, few words*
  - *Fulfill your vows made to Him*

*1 Kings 8:20..*



## The Mouth and Vows

The **BEST**

- We stand in awe  
of God

Ecc 5:7



## *Stand in Awe of God!*

- *Wicked to judgment*
- *Dust only to hope of eternity*
- *Turmoil to tranquility*
- *Inconsequential to significant*
- *Careless to reliable*

