

## Ecclesiastes 2:14-26

In Ecclesiastes 2:13, Solomon says: *Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.* In verse 14, he carries this thought on when he says, *The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness...* We go back to Genesis Chapter 1, and we read that “in the beginning, God.” If you keep reading, you’ll see that God divided the darkness from the light. He said, “Let there be light.” God brought light into this dark world. And Solomon carries this thought further when he says that “the fool walketh in darkness.” There’s a way that every person in this world can walk in the light.

In John 3:19, it says, *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* Men and women are born into this world in sin, according to the Word of God. It’s by Adam that sin entered into this world, and death came upon all men. The Bible goes on to say that all have sinned, and we’ll see that in just a few moments. We’ll look at that further, but in John 8:12, it says, *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the light that brings us to a realization that we need to be walking with Him, that we need to trust Him as our Savior. That’s true wisdom, according to what Solomon is saying here.

Although the wise person is wise in his thinking, his head, according to verse 14, the fool is the opposite and doesn’t pay attention to the light, the understanding of wisdom. The wise and the foolish are different, but the same thing happens to each of them, according to verse 14. That verse goes on to

say, *And I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.* It makes no difference who you are, something happens.

Ecclesiastes 2:15-16 says this: *<sup>15</sup>Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity. <sup>16</sup>For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.*

Yet the same end is death, according to what he is saying here. Death befalls the wise and the fool, and both are soon forgotten, according to verses 15-16. Who dies? And why? Romans 3:23 says, *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* And in Romans 6:23 in the first part of that verse, it goes on to say, *For the wages of sin is death.* This, of course, means everyone, whether rich, poor, wise, or the fool, all have an appointment with death.

How does death come? Death comes when the breath of life leaves the body. In Genesis 2:7, it says, *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* When the breath of life leaves this body, that means the person is dead. All die the same way.

Thank God, one of these days, and I believe it’s going to be soon, the Christian is not going to taste death as we know it, because Jesus Christ is coming back in the clouds and He’s going to say, “Come up hither.” He’s going to say that not to the fool who walks in darkness, but He’s going to say that to the person who is walking in the light, walking

with Jesus, that person who has trusted Jesus as Savior. And that time is coming when Jesus is coming back and He's going to say, "Come up hither," to those of us who are alive and remain. He's going to say, "Come up hither," and, of course, that's the rapture of the church.

Some people do not believe that that's going to happen. Well, may I say they don't believe the Bible, because the Bible tells us that we are to look for Him, that we are to use these words, telling each other that Jesus is coming soon for us in the clouds, and when we do that, that brings comfort to our hearts because we know that Jesus is coming for us.

It makes no difference if He comes back like that for us. It makes no difference if this body gives up the ghost and gives up the Spirit, gives up the breath of life. I'm going to be with Him one way or the other because I have walked in the light. I have chosen the light instead of the darkness.

Ecclesiastes 2:17 says... Solomon is looking at it now through the human eyes. He says, *Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

The realization about who dies prompts Solomon to say he hated life because he realized who dies... everyone. Everyone dies. So he concludes this: What is left of life where only earthly things are done? Nothing. Living for earthly... this is under the sun he's talking... under the sun... living for earthly things and pleasures that do not last only produces frustration, because in reality they are useless things, according to verse 17. He's saying, thinking humanly speaking, "What's going to happen? What's going to happen to the things I'm doing on this earth? For the things of this Earth? For the things of this

world? Nothing." Nothing is going to be left; it's all vanity, according to what he's seeing.

And in verses 18-23, he starts reflecting upon his wealth. Verse 18-19 says this: *<sup>18</sup>Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. <sup>19</sup>And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.*

Solomon came to hate his earthly labor and toil under the sun. Why? Because he must leave it to one after him, not knowing whether those who inherit it will be wise or foolish, all the things he's worked for, everything that he's done, all of his kingdom. He's looking at it now through the earthly eyes of a man. He's saying, "What's the use? When I go, I don't know who's going to take over. I don't know if they're going to do the same thing and carry on the work that I've started and do it the way that I've done it. What is the use? Is he going to be wise or foolish, this person who takes over after I'm gone?" he's saying.

In verse 20 Solomon says: *Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.* He's discouraged now. In verse 21, he goes on to say, *For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not labored therein shall he leave it for his portion.*

He had a feeling of hopelessness here, despair over his labor, his earthly labor, because in spite of one's wisdom, he's saying here, knowledge and skill, one's heritage is left to one who does not have the wisdom, knowledge, or skill, no experience, and

Solomon sees the result of his work as emptiness, worthless, and wicked. It's evil.

In verses 22-23, Solomon says this: *<sup>22</sup>For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun? <sup>23</sup>For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.*

He's looking at it here and he's saying that in the end, all one has as a result of his labor and the striving of his heart is sorrowful days, restless nights, and grievous works leading to worthless insignificance... vanity. In other words, the person is wondering now, "Everything I've done, really, it's worthless. I'm going to leave it all behind and why should I even do it?"

We see a man who's in despair. We see so many people in this world today who get discouraged. Why? Because they're not walking in the light. They've never trusted Jesus Christ as Savior. He's the One who pulls us up and lets us know that there is something worthwhile and that something worthwhile is not to only labor here on this Earth.

And the Bible, once again, tells us that man is going to work by the sweat of his brow. He's going to work, but as a man works in this life, he needs to dedicate his life to the Lord. He needs to look to the light, the One who has given him life, the One who wants to give him eternal life, and that eternal life, once again, comes by receiving Jesus Christ as Savior.

Notice here now in verses 24-26 of Chapter 2 of Ecclesiastes. Here's the preacher's conclusion from his search in this area. He says: *<sup>24</sup>There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he*

*should make his soul enjoy good in his labour.* Man should enjoy the good in his labor, according to verse 24, in the first part of that verse, and there is nothing better than to live it up and have pleasure and enjoy. And this should be the result of labor according to his work. This is what Solomon sees now as a human being, as a person who's not looking at it spiritually.

As you continue reading verse 24, it says, *This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.* Solomon now is looking at the fact about his labor and enjoying it, to enjoy his labor is actually a gift from God. In other words, we should enjoy what we're doing and do it as unto the Lord.

In verse 25, he says, *<sup>25</sup>For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I? <sup>26</sup>For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

Solomon saw that whatever he had came from God, and there is no other explanation for him having more than any other person. He didn't do it on his own. Everything came from God, and anything in this life that is worthwhile comes from God. God even gives us the ability to enjoy what we're doing. No one can truly enjoy life without God, according to verse 26.

To those good in His sight, in God's sight, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy, and to the person who has never trusted Jesus as Savior, God gives the work of gathering and collecting. The sinner works and gathers to give to the one who is good before God. The sinner's work becomes vanity and grasping for nothing, emptiness, and frustration. Solomon's conclusion here is that a man can work his

finger to the bone, but without Jesus Christ, it all amounts to nothing. It's gone. When that person leaves, it's over with.

Trust Jesus as your Savior today. Ask Him to come into your heart. Receive Him as the light of life.

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