

ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 4

¹ So I returned, and saw all the oppressions that were done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of them that oppressed them was power; but they had no comforter. ² And I praised all the dead that had already died more than the living, as many as are alive until now. ³ Better also than both these is he who has not yet been, who has not seen all the evil work that is done under the sun.

⁴ And I saw all labor, and all the diligent work, that this is a man's envy from his neighbor. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind. ⁵ The fool folds his hands together, and eats his own flesh. ⁶ Better is a handful of rest than two handfuls of trouble and grasping for the wind.

⁷ So I returned, and saw vanity under the sun. ⁸ There is one *alone*, and there is not a second; yes, he has neither son nor brother: yet there is no end to all his labor; neither is his eye satisfied with wealth. And for whom do I labor, and deprive my soul of good? This is also vanity, and an evil trouble.

⁹ Two *are* better than one, *seeing* they have a good reward for their labor. ¹⁰ For if they fall, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to him that is alone when he falls, and there is not a second to lift him up. ¹¹ Again if two should lie together, they also have warmth. But how shall one be warmed who is *alone*? ¹² And if one should prevail against *him*, the two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord cannot easily be broken.

¹³ Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king, who knows not how to take heed any longer. ¹⁴ For he shall come forth out of the house of the prisoners to reign, because *he* also that was in his kingdom has become poor. ¹⁵ I beheld all the living who were walking under the sun, with the second youth who shall stand up in each one's place. ¹⁶ There is no end to all the people, to all who were before them; and the last shall not rejoice in him; for this also is vanity and grasping for the wind.