

## Ecclesiastes 2:12-26 **Comparison between the Wise and the Fool**

### *The End of the Wise and the Fool*

<sup>12</sup> Then I turned myself to consider wisdom and madness and folly;  
For what *can* the man *do* who succeeds the king? –*Only* what he has already done.

<sup>13</sup> Then I saw that wisdom excels folly As light excels darkness.

<sup>14</sup> The wise man's eyes *are* in his head, But the fool walks in darkness.  
Yet I myself perceived That the same event happens to them all.

<sup>15</sup> So I said in my heart, "As it happens to the fool, It also happens to me,  
And why was I then more wise?" Then I said in my heart, "This also *is* vanity."

<sup>16</sup> For *there is* no more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever, Since all that  
now *is* will be forgotten in the days to come.

And how does a wise *man* die? As the fool!

<sup>17</sup> Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun *was* distressing  
to me, for all *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

<sup>18</sup> Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it  
to the man who will come after me.

<sup>19</sup> And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in  
which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also *is* vanity.

<sup>20</sup> Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled  
under the sun.

<sup>21</sup> For there is a man whose labor *is* with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must  
leave his heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also *is* vanity and a great  
evil.

<sup>22</sup> For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has  
toiled under the sun?

<sup>23</sup> For all his days *are* sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart  
takes no rest. This also *is* vanity.

<sup>24</sup> Nothing *is* better for a man *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* his soul  
should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of Elohiym (God).

<sup>25</sup> For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment, more than I?\*

<sup>26</sup> For *God* gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who *is* good in His sight; but  
to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that he may give to *him*  
*who is* good before Elohiym (God). This also *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

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Facts Revealed:

- ✧ Then I turned myself to consider wisdom and madness and folly;  
For what *can* the man *do* who succeeds the king? –*Only* what he has already done.  
[Ecclesiastes 2:12]
  - ✧ Still searching for wisdom, Solomon considered the difference between wisdom, madness and folly as it relates to following generations.
  - ✧ Solomon concluded that there is nothing new under the sun. [Ecclesiastes 1:9-10]
  - ✧ Succeeding generations can therefore do nothing different than preceding generations.
  - ✧ With all his wisdom, Solomon can not imagine any successor being able to do anything better than himself.
- ✧ Then I saw that wisdom excels folly As light excels darkness.  
The wise man's eyes *are* in his head, But the fool walks in darkness.  
Yet I myself perceived That the same event happens to them all.  
So I said in my heart, "As it happens to the fool, It also happens to me,  
And why was I then more wise?" Then I said in my heart, "This also *is* vanity."  
[Ecclesiastes 2:13-15]
  - ✧ Wisdom is superior to folly as light excels darkness.
  - ✧ The wise man walks in enlightenment while the fool walks in ignorance.
  - ✧ Still they all die in the end.
  - ✧ So Solomon asked, why he was more wise?
  - ✧ This also is vanity.
- ✧ For *there is* no more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever, Since all that now *is* will be forgotten in the days to come.  
And how does a wise *man* die? As the fool!  
Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun *was* distressing to me, for all *is* vanity and grasping for the wind. [Ecclesiastes 2:16-17]
  - ✧ Solomon realized that both the wise and the fool are not remembered in future generations.
  - ✧ Therefore he found all his work was distressing and a futile grasping for useless satisfaction.
- ✧ Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will come after me.  
And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also *is* vanity.  
Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under the sun.  
For there is a man whose labor *is* with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also *is* vanity and a great evil.  
For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun?  
For all his days *are* sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity. [Ecclesiastes 2:18-23]
  - ✧ Considering who might inherit all that Solomon left behind was vexation to him.
  - ✧ He considered that also was vanity.
- ✧ Nothing *is* better for a man *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of Elohiym (God).  
For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment, more than I?\*  
For *God* gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who *is* good in His sight; but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that he may give to *him*

*who is good before Elohiym (God). This also is vanity and grasping for the wind.*

[Ecclesiastes 2:24-26]

- ✧ Solomon concluded that the best for a man was to enjoy life and be satisfied with the good in his labor.
- ✧ This is from the hand of Elohiym.
- ✧ Elohiym gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to the man pleasing in His sight.
- ✧ The labor of sinners will go to those who are pleasing in the sight of Elohiym.
- ✧ Solomon declared that this also was vanity and grasping for the wind.