

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

The End of the Wise and the Fool

¹² 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.

¹³ Then I saw that wisdom excels folly As light excels darkness.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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."

¹⁶ 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!

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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.

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

²¹ 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.

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

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

²⁴ 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).

²⁵ For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment, more than I?*

²⁶ 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.