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CHASING EVERYTHING BUT GOD

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Ecclesiastes 7:1-14 (NIV)

A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.

²It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart.

³Frustration is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart.

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⁴The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure.

⁵It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person than to listen to the song of fools.

⁶Like the crackling of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of fools. This too is meaningless.

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⁷Extortion turns a wise person into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart.

⁸The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride.

⁹Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

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¹⁰Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?" For it is not wise to ask such questions.

¹¹Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun.

¹²Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it.

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¹³Consider what God has done: Who can straighten what he has made crooked?

¹⁴When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future.

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What is wisdom?

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Appropriate application of knowledge.

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Ecclesiastes 6:12 (NIV)

For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few and meaningless days they pass through like a shadow?

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Wisdom for the Better Life

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Seek to do the right thing

A good name is better than fine perfume (v. 1)

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Live everyday for one day

...and the day of death better than the day of birth. It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart. (vv. 1-2)

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Learn to grief

Frustration is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure. (vv. 3–4)

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Listen to right rebuke

It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person
than to listen to the song of fools. Like
the crackling of thorns under the pot, so is the
laughter of fools. (vv. 5-6)

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Be patient

Extortion turns a wise person into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart. The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

(vv. 7-9)

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Prefer wisdom than wealth

Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun. Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it. (vv. 11-12)

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Look forward

Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?" For it is not wise to ask such questions.

(v. 10)

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The better things come from God!

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Consider what God has done: Who can straighten what he has made crooked? When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future. (vv. 13-14)