**Ecclesiastes (New American Bible)
*Chapter 9***

1

All this I have kept in mind and recognized: the just, the wise, and their deeds are in the hand of God. Love from hatred man cannot tell; both appear equally vain,

2

in that there is the same lot for all, for the just and the wicked, for the good and the bad, for the clean and the unclean, for him who offers sacrifice and him who does not. As it is for the good man, so it is for the sinner; as it is for him who swears rashly, so it is for him who fears an oath.

3

Among all the things that happen under the sun, this is the worst, that things turn out the same for all. Hence the minds of men are filled with evil, and madness is in their hearts during life; and afterward they go to the dead.

4

Indeed, for any among the living there is hope; a live dog is better off than a dead lion.

5

For the living know that they are to die, but the dead no longer know anything. There is no further recompense for them, because all memory of them is lost.

6

For them, love and hatred and rivalry have long since perished. They will never again have part in anything that is done under the sun.

7

Go, eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a merry heart, because it is now that God favors your works.

8

At all times let your garments be white, and spare not the perfume for your head.

9

Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of the fleeting life that is granted you under the sun. This is your lot in life, for the toil of your labors under the sun.

10

Anything you can turn your hand to, do with what power you have; for there will be no work, nor reason, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the nether world where you are going....

11

Again I saw under the sun that the race is not won by the swift, nor the battle by the valiant, nor a livelihood by the wise, nor riches by the shrewd, nor favor by the experts; for a time of calamity comes to all alike.

12

Man no more knows his own time than fish taken in the fatal net, or birds trapped in the snare; like these the children of men are caught when the evil time falls suddenly upon them.

13

On the other hand I saw this wise deed under the sun, which I thought sublime.

14

Against a small city with few men in it advanced a mighty king, who surrounded it and threw up great siegeworks about it.

15

But in the city lived a man who, though poor, was wise, and he delivered it through his wisdom. Yet no one remembered this poor man.

16

Though I had said, "Wisdom is better than force," yet the wisdom of the poor man is despised and his words go unheeded.

17

"The quiet words of the wise are better heeded than the shout of a ruler of fools"--!

18

"A fly that dies can spoil the perfumer's ointment, and a single slip can ruin much that is good."

***Chapter 10***

1

More weighty than wisdom or wealth is a little folly!

2

The wise man's understanding turns him to his right; the fool's understanding turns him to his left.

3

When the fool walks through the street, in his lack of understanding he calls everything foolish.

4

Should the anger of the ruler burst upon you, forsake not your place; for mildness abates great offenses.

5

I have seen under the sun another evil, like a mistake that proceeds from the ruler:

6

a fool put in lofty position while the rich sit in lowly places.

7

I have seen slaves on horseback, while princes walked on the ground like slaves.

8

He who digs a pit may fall into it, and he who breaks through a wall may be bitten by a serpent.

9

He who moves stones may be hurt by them, and he who chops wood is in danger from it.

10

If the iron becomes dull, though at first he made easy progress, he must increase his efforts; but the craftsman has the advantage of his skill.

11

If the serpent bites because it has not been charmed, then there is no advantage for the charmer.

12

Words from the wise man's mouth win favor, but the fool's lips consume him.

13

The beginning of his words is folly, and the end of his talk is utter madness;

14

yet the fool multiplies words. Man knows not what is to come, for who can tell him what is to come after him?

15

When will the fool be weary of his labor, he who knows not the way to the city?

16

Woe to you, O land, whose king was a servant, and whose princes dine in the morning!

17

Blessed are you, O land, whose king is of noble birth, and whose princes dine at the right time (for vigor and not in drinking bouts).

18

When hands are lazy, the rafters sag; when hands are slack, the house leaks.

19

Bread and oil call forth merriment and wine makes the living glad, but money answers for everything.

20

Even in your thoughts do not make light of the king, nor in the privacy of your bedroom revile the rich. Because the birds of the air may carry your voice, a winged creature may tell what you say.

***Chapter 11***

1

Cast your bread upon the waters; after a long time you may find it again.

2

Make seven or eight portions; you know not what misfortune may come upon the earth.

3

When the clouds are full, they pour out rain upon the earth. Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, wherever it falls, there shall it lie.

4

One who pays heed to the wind will not sow, and one who watches the clouds will never reap.

5

Just as you know not how the breath of life fashions the human frame in the mother's womb, So you know not the work of God which he is accomplishing in the universe.

6

In the morning sow your seed, and at evening let not your hand be idle: For you know not which of the two will be successful, or whether both alike will turn out well.

7

Light is sweet! and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.

8

However many years a man may live, let him, as he enjoys them all, remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that is to come is vanity.

9

Rejoice, O young man, while you are young and let your heart be glad in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart, the vision of your eyes; Yet understand that as regards all this God will bring you to judgment.

10

Ward off grief from your heart and put away trouble from your presence, though the dawn of youth is fleeting.