

## Ecclesiastes 4

### New King James Version (NKJV)

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1 Then I returned and considered all the oppression that is done under the sun:

And look! The tears of the oppressed,  
But they have no comforter—  
On the side of their oppressors there is power,  
But they have no comforter.

2 Therefore I praised the dead who were already dead,  
More than the living who are still alive.

3 Yet, better than both is he who has never existed,  
Who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

### The Vanity of Selfish Toil

4 Again, I saw that for all toil and every skillful work a man is envied by his neighbor. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind.

5 The fool folds his hands  
And consumes his own flesh.

6 Better a handful with quietness  
Than both hands full, together with toil and grasping for the wind.

7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun:

8 There is one alone, without companion:  
He has neither son nor brother.

Yet there is no end to all his labors,  
Nor is his eye satisfied with riches.  
But he never asks,

“For whom do I toil and deprive myself of good?”  
This also is vanity and a grave misfortune.

### The Value of a Friend

9 Two are better than one,  
Because they have a good reward for their labor.

10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.  
But woe to him who is alone when he falls,  
For he has no one to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep  
warm;

But how can one be warm alone?

12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two  
can withstand him.

And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

### Popularity Passes Away

13 Better a poor and wise youth

Than an old and foolish king who will be admonished  
no more.

14 For he comes out of prison to be king,  
Although he was born poor in his kingdom.

15 I saw all the living who walk under the sun;  
They were with the second youth who stands in his  
place.

16 There was no end of all the people over whom he  
was made king;

Yet those who come afterward will not rejoice in him.  
Surely this also is vanity and grasping for the wind.