

The Church's Hidden Sin

[Short Word Meditation (34)]

James Kim

A poor but wise boy ...

A poor but wise boy is better than a foolish old president who rejects all advice (Ref.: Ecclesiastes 4:13).

For giving confusion to the minds of the wisest men

When God punishes the wisest people in the organization, they may be confused and give wrong and foolish advice, which can cause the organization members to stumble like drunkards (Ref.: Isaiah 19:11, 14).

The deceitful person ...

The deceitful person not only deceives the innocent with flattering words and lies (Ref.: Romans 16:18; 2 Corinthians 11:3) but also delights in harmful speech (Ref.: Psalms 52:4).

We must become true Christians without deceit (Ref.: John 1:47).

Even dogs know their masters, but we, humans, ...

Even dogs know their masters,
but we, humans, do not know or understand the Lord
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:3).

The holy seed will survive.

Even if a chestnut tree or an oak tree is cut down,
the stump, the holy seed, will survive
(Ref.: Isaiah 6:13).

God will show his holiness.

Almighty God will show his greatness by doing what is right
and his holiness by judging his people
(Isaiah 5:16).

God will definitely punish false pastors.

God will definitely punish false pastors who are deceiving God's children
and leading them down the path of destruction
(Ref.: Isaiah 9:14-16).

Despair and darkness do not always persist for those who suffer.

Despair and darkness do not always persist for those who suffer.
God will turn that despair into a thirst for the Lord and a hope in the Lord.
Also, God will turn the darkness around and shine light on those who are suffering,
saving them from the darkness.
Therefore, God will free them from suffering and give them the joy of salvation
(Ref.: Isaiah 9:1-3).

We must be interested and think.

We must be interested in the Lord's work
and think about what He has done
(Ref.: Isaiah 5:12).

The glory of proud and arrogant people

The day will come when the glory of proud and arrogant people
will fade and their wealth will turn into poverty
(Ref.: Isaiah 17:4).

God's proud and arrogant children

The righteous and loving Father God disciplines His proud and arrogant children
by raising up our enemies to strike us, causing us to repent of our sins in our suffering
and return to the Lord, seeking the Almighty God
(Ref.: Isaiah 9:9-13).

The proud

The Lord will always humble the proud!
(Ref.: Isaiah 26:5)

**God will break the arrogance of the proud,
and humble the arrogant and cruel.**

God will bring disaster on the world to punish the wicked for their sins,
break the arrogance of the proud, and humble the arrogant and cruel
(Ref.: Isaiah 13:11).

Hasn't our church now become useless trash?

Hasn't our church now become useless trash?
Isn't the church that was like good wine now mixed with water?
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:22)

How long will the church continue to rebel against the Lord?

How long will the church continue to rebel against the Lord?
The church is now sick, its heart is weak, and from the sole of its foot to the top of its head,
there is no soundness, only wounds, bruises, and sores
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:5-6).

Our church learns how to live well ...

Our church learns how to live well and pursues justice.

We are to help the downtrodden, protect the orphans,
and advocate for widows (Ref.: Isaiah 1:17).

The unconcealable sins of our church

Aren't the unconcealable sins of our church now
like those of the Sodomites, and now doomed to destruction?
Isn't this a disaster we brought upon ourselves?
(Ref.: Isaiah 3:9)

The work of salvation

The work of salvation was begun by the Lord
and will be completed by the Lord!
(Ref.: Philippians 1:6)

His pride is in vain.

Just as we have heard, he is really proud and arrogant,
and no matter how much he pretends to be proud, his pride is in vain
(Ref.: Isaiah 16:6).

It is a gift from God.

If God gives someone wealth and possessions to enjoy and be blessed
so that they can enjoy what they have worked hard for, it is a gift from God.
God has filled his heart with joy, so he doesn't have to take the shortness of life too seriously
(Ecclesiastes 5:19-20).

The Lord became their refuge from the storm.

The Lord has been a protector for the poor
and helpless in their distress, a refuge from the storm.
(Ref.: Isaiah 25:4).

They will never succeed.

No matter how much our enemies plot and strategize to attack and overthrow us,
they will never succeed. The reason is that God is with us
(Ref.: Isaiah 8:7-10).

They do not learn to do right.

The Lord gives grace to the wicked,
but they do not learn to do right
(Isaiah 26:10).

They can lead them astray.

If God punishes, even wise leaders will be deceived.
Even though they are the cornerstone of their followers,
they can lead them astray
(Ref.: Isaiah 19:13).

They will not remember.

Just as we do not remember what happened in the past,
so the generations to come will not remember what happened in our day
(Ecclesiastes 1:11).

Their paths are smooth.

The Lord makes straight the paths of the righteous,
so their paths are smooth
(Isaiah 26:7).

Don't we understand it?

Even though we keep hearing the word of God, don't we understand it,
and even though we keep seeing God work, we don't understand it?
(Ref.: Isaiah 6:9)

We must realize ...

We must realize that this too is an attempt to catch the wind
(Ecclesiastes 1:17).

When I thought of my beloved brothers and sisters who were suffering ...

Have I ever felt so sad that my intestines were cut out
when I thought of my beloved brothers and sisters who were suffering?
(Ref.: Isaiah 16:11)

I am a person who needs pain.

I am a person who needs pain.
We must learn to obey the Lord even through suffering
(Ref.: Hebrews 5:8).

I am a servant of the Lord like the prophet Jonah.

The Lord's servant, the prophet Jonah, disobeyed God's command, endangering the unbelieving captain and sailors who were with him on the ship (Jonah 1:1-10).

In contrast, the Lord's servant, the Apostle Paul, while preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, ultimately stood trial before the Roman Emperor (Acts 25:10-21).

While traveling to Italy on a ship with other prisoners, the ship and all 276 people on board faced mortal danger.

When all hope of survival seemed lost, Paul received a promise from God, comforted everyone on board, and ultimately, everyone was saved (Acts 27).

I reflect on myself and introspect whether I am a servant of the Lord like the Apostle Paul or a servant of the Lord like the prophet Jonah.

“Who should I send? “Who will go for us?”

“Who should I send?

When we hear the voice of God saying,

“Who will go for us?” we say, “I will go.

I hope you can answer, “Send me”

(Ref.: Isaiah 6:8).

"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"?

Right now, we Christians should be weeping, mourning, repenting, and returning to God. Instead, are we rejoicing and saying, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"?

(Ref.: Isaiah 22:12-13)

'Blessed are you.'

There will be a day when all of God's people will worship God together. Then they will be a blessing to the whole world. Almighty God will bless them and say:

'Blessed are you, O people whom I created and whom I chose'

(Ref.: Isaiah 19:23-25).

A worker and a rich

A worker can sleep well regardless of whether he has a lot to eat or not, but a rich person has a lot of property and cannot sleep because he worries about this and that

(Ecclesiastes 5:12).

God will set us free from all that troubles us.

God will break every chain of guilt or wounds binding His children
and set us free from all that troubles us.

(Reference: Isaiah 9:4,

God will bring back and gather back His people who have left Him

I pray that God will demonstrate His power again,
raise a banner of salvation over the whole world,
and bring back and gather back God's people who have left Him

(Ref.: Isaiah 11:11-12).

Two are better than one.

Two are better than one
because they can work together more effectively.
If one falls, the other can help him up,
but if someone falls alone,
there is no one to help him up, so he faces difficulty.
If two lie down together, they will keep warm,
but how can one keep warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

When our heart is shaking like trees in the wind out of fear ...

When our heart is shaking like trees in the wind out of fear,
that is precisely the opportune moment to hear God's voice
(Ref.: Isaiah 7:2).

God's voice says, "Do not be afraid,
for I am with you. Do not be dismayed,
for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (41:10).

"Don't be afraid or dismayed."

When King Ahaz of Judah and all the people of Judah heard
that the kings of Israel, Pekah son of Remaliah,
and Syria, Rezin, had formed an alliance, they were afraid.
Their hearts shook like trees in the wind due to fear.

At that time, God spoke to King Ahaz through the prophet Isaiah,
saying, "Be careful, keep calm, and don't be afraid or dismayed"
(Isaiah 7:1-4).

Why our heart is bold enough to sin again

The reason why a sinner does not fear God even after sinning a hundred times and is bold in his heart to sin again is because God does not punish the sinner immediately (Ecclesiastes 8:11-12).

God's purpose in doing this is to make the sinner repent due to God's abundant mercy, generosity, and patience (Romans 2:4).

**‘If you do not firmly believe my words,
you will not be able to stand firm and will not last long.’**

God told King Ahaz that the capital of Syria would always be confined to Damascus, and the capital of Israel would always be confined to Samaria.

He said that Rezin, king of Syria, would no longer enlarge his territory, and that the kingship of Pekah, king of Israel, would no longer be extended.

At the same time, God said to King Ahaz,

‘If you do not firmly believe my words,
you will not be able to stand firm and will not last long’
(Isaiah 7:7-9).

We must hear God's word of promise in a fearful and trembling situation and stand firm and believe in it.

**If our ears are accustomed to hearing
the exaggerated lies that people tell about us ...**

If our ears are accustomed to hearing the exaggerated lies that people tell about us,
'we will not only regard the lies as truth, but we will also regard the truth as lies
(Ref.: 2 Chronicles 18:12, 15).

They are never satisfied.

No matter how much people see and hear, they are never satisfied
(Ecclesiastes 1:8).

It is better to have little but feel comfortable ...

It is better to have little but feel comfortable
than to have a lot of things and work hard and chase after the wind
(Ecclesiastes 4:6).

**Jesus could have just spoken,
but only through Jesus, who is the Word!**

The Father God,
who created heaven and earth by His word
(Genesis 1),
even though we were spiritually dead because of disobedience and sin
(Ephesians 2:1),
if He had just said, 'Rise again!' (Revive! Be born again!)
by His word alone (Matthew 8:8),
we could have been spiritually revived
(born again, regenerated) and given eternal life.
However, He sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ
(John 1:1)
to this earth, and ultimately allowed Him to die on the cross,
thus resurrecting us and giving us eternal life.

If we talk too much, we will sound foolish.

If we worry too much, we will have dreams,
and if we talk too much, we will sound foolish.
Whether we have many dreams or many words, they are all in vain.
Therefore, we must fear God
(Ecclesiastes 5:3, 7).

Everyone's end is common.

Everything that happens to everyone is common.

Everyone's end is common (Ecclesiastes 9:2, 3).

The end for everyone is death (7:2).

It is not fair for humans to suffer the same fate like this.

People do not try to live a good life,

but live like crazy dogs their whole lives

and eventually go to the other world (9:3).

It is a gift from God what we feel satisfied all that we do.

There is nothing better for us than to rejoice and do good
while we live in this world for a while.

We need to know that it is a gift from God

that we eat, drink, and feel satisfied with all that we do

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 3:12-13).

Therefore, we must live joyfully in our work (Ref.: v. 22).

There is a right time and right way to do everything.

There is a right time and right way to do everything,

but we don't know much about it.

But a wise man knows when and how to carry out the Lord's commands

(Reference: Ecclesiastes 8:5-6,

As God's watchman, the pastor must ...

As God's watchman, the pastor must convey to the church members exactly what he heard from God
(Ref.: Isaiah 21:6, 10).

God frees us from our heavy burdens.

God frees us, His children, from the yoke of our enemies and their heavy burdens
(Ref.: Isaiah 14:25).

What pleasure is there ...?

What pleasure is there for a person in a short life that passes by like a shadow?
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 6:12)

As the waters cover the sea

The world will be filled with the knowledge of God
as the waters cover the sea
(Isaiah 11:9).

Than ten foolish, powerful people

One wise person can do more for a city
than ten foolish, powerful people
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:19).

What good is there in trying to catch the wind?

When humans are born, they are born naked,
so no matter how hard they work,
they will not be able to take anything with them
when they leave this world.
How sad this is!
Since people have no choice but to leave just as they came,
what good is there in trying to catch the wind?
(Ecclesiastes 5:15-16).

They will surely be surprised and ashamed.

Those who boast and rely on other people or things other than God
will surely be surprised and ashamed
(Ref.: Isaiah 20:5).

His people who do not repent even after they sin

God lovingly disciplines His people
who do not repent even after they sin,
but then He will restore them.
They will return to God
and He will hear their cries and heal them
(Ref.: Isaiah 19:22).

Wealth and honor are also vain.

Those who love money are not satisfied with it,
and those who wish to be wealthy are not satisfied with their income,
so this is also futile. Wealth and honor are also vain
(Ecclesiastes 5:7, 10).

We must sow seeds diligently.

We must sow the seeds of the word and prayer in the morning
and sow those seeds in the evening.

Because we do not know whose hearts

God will sow those seeds and make them grow.

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 11:6).

We must walk in God's light.

As God's children, we must walk in God's light

(Ref.: Isaiah 2:5).

The roots will rot and the flowers will wither away and scatter like dust.

Those who abandon the commands of the Almighty God
and disregard the holy words of God will be like straw and dry grass consumed by fire,
with their roots rotting and their flowers withering away and scattering like dust

(Ref.: Isaiah 5:24).

There is no need to try to listen to everything people say.

There is no need to try to listen to everything people say.
Then we may even hear someone close to us cursing us
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:21).

We shouldn't judge people like this.

Our church leaders should not judge people
based on their appearance or the rumors they hear
(Ref.: Isaiah 11:3).

A person's duty

A person's duty is to serve God
with a fearful heart and obey God's commands
(Ecclesiastes 12:13).

We should enjoy life with our beloved wife.

We should enjoy life with our beloved wife
during this fleeting life that God has given us on this earth.
This is our reward for all the labor we have done under the sun
(Ecclesiastes 9:9).

We should not submit our resignation.

Even if our superiors are angry with us, we should not submit our resignation.
Even big mistakes can be forgiven if you remain silent
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 10:4).

What does living mean to us?

What does living mean to us?
Everything in the world is just suffering and futility,
and it's like trying to catch the wind.
All our hard work is useless
because we have to pass it on to the next person.
But who knows whether he will be wise or foolish?
This too is in vain because he will manage everything
we have achieved with all our energy and wisdom.
Therefore, we may end up regretting our hard work in this world
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 2:17-20).

A live dog is better than a dead lion.

A live dog is better than a dead lion.

There is hope for the living

(Ecclesiastes 9:4).

There is nothing new.

There is nothing new in the world

(Ecclesiastes 1:9,

Our motivation for success

If our motivation for success is envy toward our neighbors,

this too is vain and like chasing after the wind

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 4:4).

There are many things in this world that are difficult to understand.

There are many things in this world
that are difficult to understand.

One of them is that
sometimes the righteous
receive the punishment of the wicked,
and sometimes the wicked
receive the reward of the righteous.

This too is meaningless (Ecclesiastes 8:14).

When I observed the work of God,
I saw that no one can comprehend
what goes on under the sun.

Despite all their efforts to search for the meaning,
they cannot find it.

Even if the wise claim to know,
they cannot really understand it
(Ecclesiastes 8:17).

When I look at everything that is happening in the world ...

When I look at everything that is happening in the world,
it seems like everything is vanity and a chasing after wind
(Ecclesiastes 1:14).

If we are trying to enjoy our life with alcohol ...

If the best way to live a short life is to try to enjoy it with alcohol,
then this too is in vain (Ref.: Ecclesiastes 2:1, 3).

Of what value is a human being who is but a breath?

We should not rely on insignificant people.
Of what value is a human being who is but a breath?
(Ref.: Isaiah 2:22)

Sad, sinning church!!

Sad, sinning church!
Corrupt and evil church members,
we have abandoned the Lord and betrayed the holy God
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:4).

We will be put into temptation.

If we do not forgive everyone who sins against us,
we will be put into temptation
(Ref.: Luke 11:4).

Why did the once faithful church become like a prostitute!

Why did the once faithful church become like a prostitute?
Was it once full of people who loved justice and truth,
but now there are only murderers who hate their neighbors?
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:21, 1 John 3:15)

A grave problem

A grave problem is that people toil relentlessly to amass wealth,
but then engage in risky investments that,
if they go wrong, can cause them to lose all their wealth in a single day
(Ecclesiastes 5:13).

“No, I will not ask. I will not test the Lord.”

God said to King Ahaz, "If you want to confirm my words, ask for a sign. It can be anything in the heavens or on the earth."

But King Ahaz replied, "No, I will not ask.

I will not test the Lord"

(Isaiah 7:11-12).

This reminds me of Judge Gideon.

Despite God telling Gideon, "I, the Lord, will be with you!

Therefore, you will defeat the Midianites

as easily as if they were one man," Gideon still said,

"If you are really going to use me to rescue Israel as you promised,

prove it to me in this way," and he tested God twice with a fleece

(Judges 6:15-16, 36-40).

The Bible says, "Do not test the Lord your God"

(Deuteronomy 6:16).

No matter how splendid a country may be in the eyes of the world and a source of pride ...

No matter how splendid a country may be
in the eyes of the world and a source of pride,
a country that does not repent and is arrogant and sinful
will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah
(Ref.: Isaiah 13:19).

**No matter how much we suffer
from disaster as a result of our sins ...**

No matter how much we suffer from disaster as a result of our sins,
the God of Emmanuel is with us!
God will surely protect us!
(Ref.: Isaiah 8:8).

They will fall into the deepest pit of hell.

The glory of the evil rulers, who climbed to the highest heights,
became like the highest, and enjoyed life with merry music, will end,
and they will fall into the deepest pit of hell
(Ref.: Isaiah 14:11, 14-15).

God will keep them safe.

God will be a shepherd to the poor of his children
and will keep them safe
(Ref.: Isaiah 14:30).

How long will this continue?

How long will our minds continue to be dull of understanding,
our ears to be clogged to hear, and our eyes to be closed to not see?
(Ref.: Isaiah 6:10)

What do we gain?

What do we gain from our lifetime of hard work?
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 1:3)

“O Lord, you are my God.”

We will exalt you and praise your name,
for you have faithfully carried out what you planned long ago.
The Lord has done amazing things.
“O Lord, you are my God”
(Ref.: Isaiah 25:1).

Longing for eternity

God made everything beautiful at different times
and gave us a heart that longs for eternity.
However, we cannot understand what God does from beginning to end
(Ecclesiastes 3:11).

We must always trust in the Lord, who is our eternal rock.

We must always trust in the Lord, who is our eternal rock.

The Lord gives perfect peace to one who trusts in Him and whose heart is steadfast

(Ref.: Isaiah 26:3-4).

He will remove the cloud of sorrow that covers all humanity and eliminate death forever.

When God sends His only begotten Son,

Jesus Christ, back to this earth,

He will remove the cloud of sorrow

that covers all humanity and eliminate death forever.

God will wipe away the tears from every eye

and remove His people's disgrace from all the earth.

Then we will say, "He is our God;

we trusted in Him, and He saved us.

He is the Lord we trusted in!

Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation"

(Ref.: Isaiah 25:7-9).

For our sins

Through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins,

we have become dead to sin

(Romans 6:2, 11).

**There is nothing better for us than to eat and drink
and feel satisfied with our work.**

There is nothing better for us than to eat and drink
and feel satisfied with our work.

We can enjoy this only if God gives it to us

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 2:24).

The only God we serve is the Lord.

Although we are governed by the leaders of this world,
the only God we serve is the Lord

(Ref.: Isaiah 26:13).

What do we gain from our efforts and toil in this world?

What do we gain from our efforts and toil in this world?

Even if you work hard all your life, you only end up with worry and pain,
and your mind cannot rest even at night.

This is also in vain (Ecclesiastes 2:22-23).

Our favorite tree in the world?

If we forget God, our strong rock who saves and protects us,
and instead transplant worldly trees that we like and plant the vines of worldly people,
even if they sprout and blossom and grow well the very next morning,
we will not reap their fruit. Instead, we will only have sorrow and pain
(Ref.: Isaiah 17:10-11).

There is a time to be silent and a time to speak.

There is a time for everything
and a season for every activity under the heavens.
There is a time to be silent and a time to speak
(Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7).

The wise keep silent in evil times
(Amos 5:13).

They remain silent and do not open their mouths
while the wicked are before them
(Psalms 39:1).

However, when God opens their mouths, they no longer remain silent
(Ezekiel 33:22) and, following God's command,
they continue to speak His words without fear
(Ref.: Acts 18:9, 11).

They do not stay silent but praise the Lord.
They say to God, "Lord my God, I will praise you forever,"
offering praise and thanksgiving
(Ref.: Psalms 30:12).

**We know the time of our birth,
but we do not know the time of our death.**

There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens.

We know the time of our birth, but we do not know the time of our death

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-2).

A wise person keeps in mind that everyone's end is death,

and that the day of death is better than the day of birth.

They think much about death while they are alive

(Ecclesiastes 7:1-2, 4).

Everything we do is in God's hands.

We don't know what our future holds.

Everything we do is in God's hands

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 9:1).

**We should go and eat our food
with gladness and drink with a joyful heart.**

The love, hatred, and jealousy of the dead vanish with their death,
and they can no longer participate in anything that happens under the sun.

Therefore, we who are alive should go and eat our food

with gladness and drink with a joyful heart.

For God has already approved of what we do

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 9:6-7).

We should avoid extremes.

There are righteous people who die young,
and there are wicked people who live long.
We should not be overly righteous or overly wise.
We must avoid extremes.
Those who serve with a reverent fear of God
will be able to avoid extremes
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:16, 18).

We should not fear anything.

We know that Almighty God is the only holy God we should truly fear,
and we should not fear anything
(Ref.: Isaiah 8:13).

We should be able to enjoy life.

We should be able to enjoy life.
Because there is nothing better in this world
than eating, drinking, and being merry.
But this joy must be found in hard work
while living the life God has given us in this world
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 8:15).

We love to do the Lord's will ...

We love to do the Lord's will,
and our desire is to glorify His name
(Isaiah 26:8).

We must thank God and call on Him.

We must thank God and call on Him.
We must declare the greatness of God
by making known to the whole world what God has done
(Ref.: Isaiah 12:4).

If we have made a promise to God ...

If we have made a promise to God,
we should not delay in keeping that promise.
We must quickly fulfill our promises.
The Bible says, "It is better not to promise at all
than to promise and not fulfill."
We must not say to God that our promises are wrong
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).

We must trust God and not be afraid.

The God who comforts us is the one who saves us.

Therefore, we must trust God and not be afraid.

(Ref.: Isaiah 12:1-2).

We must think about what God is doing.

We must think about what God is doing.

And we must rejoice when things are going well

and look back on our lives when we face difficulties.

Although God gives us times of prosperity in our lives,

there are times when God makes you suffer.

So, we don't know what will happen next

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:13-14).

The reason is that unexpected things can happen to us.

Just because we are fast runners doesn't mean we always come first in the race.

Just because we are competent doesn't always mean we get a high status.

The reason is that unexpected things can happen to us.

We never know when something bad will happen to us

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 9:11-12).

What if our souls are not satisfied with happiness ...?

No matter how many children a person may have
or if they live twice a thousand years,
if they cannot enjoy their prosperity
and their soul is not satisfied with such happiness,
and if they are not properly buried when they die,
it is considered better for a stillborn child than for that person.
The reason is that the stillborn child comes in vain
and departs in darkness without leaving a name.
It neither sees the light of day nor knows its existence,
yet it is more at peace than that person
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 6:3-6).

Looking back on our lives

We stop for a moment and look back on our lives
We need to take a good look at everything we have worked hard to achieve.
The reason is that it may all have no meaning in the eyes of God
and may be as useless as trying to catch the wind
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 2:11).

Though our sins be as scarlet ...

Though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they be as red as crimson, they shall be as wool
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:18).

The toil of fools

The toil of fools only tires them out
(Ecclesiastes 10:15).

The only object of hope and trust

We must trust and make the Lord our only hope
(Ref.: Isaiah 8:1).

The righteous vs. The wicked

The righteous will succeed in all they do
and will be fully rewarded for their efforts,
but the wicked will inevitably perish,
for they will have to pay for what they have done
(Isaiah 3:10-11).

A righteous person will certainly prosper.

A wicked person does not fear God,
so he will not do well, and his days are like a shadow,
and he will soon die.

However, a righteous person who serves God
with a fearful heart will certainly prosper

(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 8:12-13).

Even though we have heavy burdens placed on us by God while we toil in this world ...

Even though we have heavy burdens placed on us by God
while we toil in this world (Ecclesiastes 3:10),
we should humbly and faithfully respond to Jesus' invitation
when He says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28), and find rest in Him.

This too was in vain.

I thought I would have fun and be happy in this world,
but this too was in vain
(Ecclesiastes 2:1).

It is all meaningless, like chasing after the wind.

No matter how much greater we become than others,
no matter if we possess everything we desire
and deny ourselves nothing that our hearts delight in to enjoy life,
it is all meaningless, like chasing after the wind
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 2:3, 7-11).

This is the destiny of man.

The best thing to do during the short life given by God
is to eat, drink, and feel satisfied with one's work,
and this is the destiny of man
(Ecclesiastes 5:18).

He reveals his foolishness.

A foolish person has no wisdom,
so he reveals his foolishness to everyone as he walks down the street.
He starts off talking foolishly and then talks like a madman.
A fool is a man of many words
(Ecclesiastes 10:3, 13-14).

A little foolishness

A little foolishness overshadows wisdom and honor
(Ecclesiastes 10:1).

To live alone without any children or siblings to inherit your wealth ...

To live alone without any children or siblings to inherit your wealth,
tirelessly working without enjoying life, not knowing for whom you work so hard,
and yet not finding satisfaction in your riches—
all of this is meaningless and unfortunate
(Ecclesiastes 4:8).

We should not curse.

Do not curse leaders even in your heart, and do not curse rich people even in your bedroom.
The birds of the air will carry the sound, and the birds will spread the news
(Ecclesiastes 10:20).

Since Almighty God has decided, who can thwart His plan?

Since Almighty God has decided, who can thwart His plan?

There is no one!

If God opens His hand to punish, who can stop it?

There is no one!

(Ref.: Isaiah 14:27)

What Almighty God has planned ...

What Almighty God has planned will surely come true,
and what God has decided to do will surely be carried out
(Isaiah 14:24).

Since youth is fleeting ...

Since youth is fleeting, young people should rejoice in the fact
that they are still young and enjoy their youth to the fullest
by doing whatever they want to do.

But we must remember that there is also God's judgment
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 11:9-10).

We must serve the Lord's church with justice and sincerity.

Our church leaders must support the poor and powerless.
And we must serve the Lord's church with justice and sincerity
(Ref.: Isaiah 11:4, 5).

May the Lord put us in a furnace ...

May the Lord put us in a furnace to remove impurities and purify us
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:25).

The Lord will give us peace.

The Lord will accomplish all things for us and give us peace
(Isaiah 26:12).

May the Lord will expand the scope of our service and mission ...

We pray that the Lord will expand the scope of our service and mission
and gain glory by expanding the kingdom of God
(Ref.: Isaiah 26:15).

I pray that the Lord will build His Church ...

I pray that the Lord will build His Church
so that His suffering people can find refuge there
(Ref.: Isaiah 14:32).

I pray that the Lord will show the wicked ...

I pray that the Lord will show the wicked
how much He loves His children and put them to shame
(Ref.: Isaiah 26:11).

After planting the best vines, the Lord waits for them to produce good grapes ...

After planting the best vines, the Lord waits for them to produce good grapes.
The Lord wants and expects us to be fair, to do what is right, and what is good.
But isn't it only the cries of those who are suffering now?
The Lord is saying to us, "What more can I do for my vineyard?"
(Ref.: Isaiah 5:2, 4, 7).

Aren't we harassing the Lord?

Isn't our church now harassing the Lord,
who is the head of the church?
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:24)

Let us cherish the words of the Lord.

The disciples of Jesus cherish the words given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ
(Ref.: Isaiah 8:16).

We must always remember and cherish in our hearts
the twofold commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your mind"
and "Love your neighbor as yourself"

(Ref.: Deuteronomy 11:18; Matthew 22:37, 39).

We must allow whoever the Lord loves to come into His church.

We must open the doors of our hearts and the doors of the Lord's church
and allow whoever the Lord loves to come in
(Ref.: Isaiah 26:2).

Because the Lord Himself protects His church ...

Our church is strong
because the Lord Himself protects His church
(Ref.: Isaiah 26:1).

What is worse than death ...

What is worse than death is a woman
whose heart is like a trap or a net and whose hands are like chains.
A man who pleases God avoids such a woman, but a sinner falls into her trap
(Ecclesiastes 7:26).

A wise person thinks a lot about death.

A wise person thinks a lot about death.
He knows that the day of death is better than the day of birth,
and going to a funeral is better than going to a wedding.
He also knows that sorrow is better than laughter
because one can learn something new from sorrow.
A wise person understands that it is good to keep in mind
the fact that everyone will eventually die.
Listening to the rebuke of such a wise person
is better than hearing the praise of a foolish person
who only thinks about the immediate pleasures before them
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:1-5).

Aren't the current church leaders and members like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah?

Aren't the current church leaders and members like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah?
Then we must listen to what the Lord says and listen to His teachings
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:10).

With its words and actions ...

Isn't our church now opposing the Lord
with its words and actions and insulting the God of glory?
(Ref.: Isaiah 3:8)

Could the Lord be saying this to our church right now?

Could the Lord be saying this to our church right now?

'What use are your numerous offerings to me?

I am tired of your offerings.

I do not take pleasure in your offerings.

Who asked you to bring them?

You are merely trampling my courts.

Stop bringing meaningless offerings.

I have grown weary of your ceremonies.

I cannot bear your evil actions while you celebrate
church festivals and hold religious gatherings.

I hate your church festivals

because they have become a burden to me;

I am weary of bearing them.

Even if you lift up your hands in prayer,

I will not look; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen.

The reason is that you continue to sin against me.

Repent and rid yourselves of your evil behavior before me;

cease your sinful ways'

(Ref.: Isaiah 1:11-16).

Is it possible that our church leaders are ...

Is it possible that our church leaders are currently misguiding their members
and leading them down a path of destruction?

(Ref.: Isaiah 3:12)

A leader must stand upright with love ...

A leader must stand upright with love, lead followers faithfully,
quickly carry out the right thing, and implement justice
(Ref.: Isaiah 16:5).

The denizens of Hell are making a fuss as they prepare to face their evil rulers.

The denizens of Hell are making a fuss as they prepare to face their evil rulers.
When the inhabitants see the evil rulers, they will say with one voice,
“You, too, have become as weak as we are!”
(Reference: Isaiah 14:9-10)

Wisdom is better than strength and better than weapons.

Wisdom is better than strength and better than weapons.
The quiet words of a wise man are better than the shouts of a foolish president
(Ecclesiastes 9:16, 17, 18).

Wisdom changes the expression on a person's face.

Wisdom brightens a person's face
and changes a fierce (hard) facial expression
(Ecclesiastes 8:1).

A wise Christian sharpens his own mind by the Word of God, the sword of his Spirit.

If the blade is dull
because we haven't sharpened the axe, it takes more force.
Therefore, sharpening an ax blade is a wise method.
(Ecclesiastes 10:10).

A wise Christian sharpens his own mind
by the Word of God, the sword of his Spirit.
(Ephesians 6:17).

However, foolish Christians neglect this task
and their spiritual sensitivity becomes dull.
He cannot distinguish between good and evil,
so he tends to lean to the left or right
(Ref.: Hebrews 5:14).

A wise man vs. A foolish man

A wise man's heart is inclined to do what is right, and his words are gracious,
but a foolish man's heart is inclined to do evil, and his words are his ruin
(Ecclesiastes 10:2, 12).

A wise person knows that sadness is better than laughter.

Everything in this world has a set time and deadline.
There is a time for us to cry and a time to be sad,
and a time for us to laugh and a time to dance
(Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4).
A wise person knows that sadness is better than laughter.
And he realizes something new through that sadness (7:3).

Proverb of a wise person

A wise person continually teaches others what he knows
and, while deeply thinking and researching,
he gathers and organizes many truthful proverbs without much falsehood.
These proverbs are like goads used to drive cattle, and like firmly embedded nails.
All of them are given by God, our Shepherd
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 12:9-11).

What a wise man must be very wary of ...

What a wise man must be very wary of is greed,
which makes him foolish,
and bribery, which corrupts his heart
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:7).

May the Lord raise wise leaders ...

I pray that the Lord will raise up wise leaders in His church
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:26).

Wisdom and money

Wisdom is more beneficial than money
because it preserves the life of the person who possesses it
(Ecclesiastes 7:12).

Weighed down

The world is weighed down by sin
(Ref.: Isaiah 24:20).

It is truly terrifying ...

It is truly terrifying that God's anger does not cease
and His hand remains stretched out
(Ref.: Isaiah 10:4).

It is truly a grievous vanity ...

It is truly a grievous vanity that,
although God gives wealth, honor, and everything we desire
so that nothing is lacking, He does not allow us to enjoy them,
and instead, someone else enjoys them
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 6:2).

We must remember our Creator God.

We must remember our Creator God.
Especially, we must remember our Creator God
while we are still young,
before the days of trouble come
and the years approach when we will say,
'I find no pleasure in them.'
Before we become too old,
when our strong legs become weak,
our teeth fall out and we can no longer chew food well,
our eyes grow dim and we cannot see,
our ears grow dull and we cannot hear,
we can no longer sleep deeply, our voice trembles,
our hair turns completely white,
we have difficulty moving and can barely carry ourselves,
all our desires and passions disappear,
and the day when mourners come to our house is not far off.
If we try to remember our Creator God at that time, it will be too late.
Before the dust returns to the ground it came from
and the spirit returns to God who gave it,
we must remember our Creator God
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 12:1-7).

People of the Kingdom of Heaven, let us all shout and sing with joy!

People of the Kingdom of Heaven, let us all shout and sing with joy!
The Holy God who is among us is great!
(Ref.: Isaiah 12:6)

The evil rulers who shook the world and made the nations tremble ...

The evil rulers who shook the world
and made the nations tremble will not be buried like other rulers.
Their bodies will be thrown away without a grave,
like worthless branches, covered by the corpses of soldiers killed in battle,
and they will be trampled underfoot on the streets.
The descendants of those who commit evil like them
will disappear from memory forever
(Ref.: Isaiah 14:16-20).

We must do our best.

We must do our best in whatever we do.
That's because there won't be anything like that
in the tomb we're about to enter.
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 9:10).

It will turn into sighing, lamentation, and sorrow.

The boasting and arrogance of proud and haughty people
will turn into sighing, lamentation, and sorrow
because of the suffering they will endure
(Ref.: Isaiah 16:7).

The wise person who has become foolish due to greed ...

The wise person who has become foolish due to greed focuses more on beginnings than on endings, lacks patience, behaves arrogantly, and acts rashly like fools who quickly become angry. Furthermore, he laments, 'Why is the present worse than the past?' and longs for his former glory days
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:7-10).

Abundance overflows

The abundance of understanding the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ gives us overflowing gratitude (1 Corinthians 1:5; Colossians 2:7).

No matter how much we boast as creatures ...

No matter how much we boast as creatures, our Creator God says this:
'Can the axe boast over the one who wields it?
Or the saw magnify itself against the one who saws with it?
As if a rod could wield the person who lifts it up,
or a club could lift up someone who is not wood'
(Ref.: Isaiah 10:13-15).

God will punish such a person.

Woe to those who create evil laws, pass unjust judgments,
deprive the poor of their rights, denying them fair justice,
and robbing widows and orphans.

God will punish such a person

(Isaiah 10:1-3).

God has done an amazing thing ...

God has done an amazing thing,
and we must praise Him and let the whole world hear about it
(Ref.: Isaiah 12:5).

All those whom God will destroy in his anger ...

All those whom God will destroy in his anger will be so frightened
that their faces will turn pale, their hands will be weak
and their courage will be lost
(Ref.: Isaiah 13:1-8).

I pray that God will break the power of evil rulers.

I pray that God will break the power of evil rulers.

As a result, I hope that the citizens of that country will regain peace and sing with joy

(Ref.: Isaiah 14:5-7).

God will break our pride ...

Almighty God will break our pride

and humble the nobles of the world

(Ref.: Isaiah 23:9).

God will punish the enemies of the church ...

God will punish the enemies of the church

and cause them to fear the church

(Ref.: Isaiah 19:17).

God frustrates the plans of the wicked.

Through the prophet Isaiah,
God spoke to King Ahaz of Judah, who was trembling with fear:
The kings of Syria and Israel are plotting to harm King Ahaz.
They intend to invade Judah, frighten its people, and lure them onto their side.
Their plan includes installing the son of Tabeel as king.
But God assured, 'But it will not take place, it will not happen'
(Isaiah 7:5-7).
God frustrates the plans of the wicked
(Psalms 146:9).

God uses things that we rely on more than Him ...

The Almighty God, the Holy God who is the light of Israel, spoke like a fire.
He said that within just one day, He would send a plague upon the arrogant Assyrian army,
likened to thorns and thistles, to punish them.
They and all their glory would be consumed by fire.
No matter how mighty and numerous the Assyrian army may be,
they will all be destroyed like sick people dying off.
Even if there are survivors, their number will be so small that it could be counted, as God said.
Then, only the remnant of Israel that survives will no longer rely on the Assyrian army
but will truly trust in the Holy God of Israel, Yahweh.
When I meditate on these words,
I think that God uses things that we rely on more than Him,
and disciplines us with love for our arrogance,
so that in the end, we no longer rely on that or that person,
but rely only on God (Ref.: Isaiah 10:16-20).

Only God will be exalted.

The day is coming when the proud will be humbled,
the arrogant will be broken, and only God will be exalted.
On that day, all the proud and arrogant will be humbled,
all idols will disappear, and only God will be exalted
(Isaiah 2:11, 17).

We must focus all our attention on God.

We must focus all our attention on God,
who planned all of this in our lives long ago and made it happen
(Ref.: Isaiah 22:11).

God made man honest ...

God made man honest, but man came up with various schemes
(Ecclesiastes 7:29).

God is our strength, our song, and our salvation.

God is our strength, our song, and our salvation.
So let us draw with joy from the well of salvation
(Ref.: Isaiah 12:2-3).

Because God is righteous ...

Because God is righteous,
He will save all who repent and return to the Lord
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:27).

We must trust in the Almighty Lord God, who executes His plans as already determined.

The Almighty Lord God, who declares rightful destruction upon the people of Israel and surely executes it as already planned, says to His people who dwell in Zion:
'Even if the Assyrians strike you with a rod and raise their staff against you, do not fear them. For soon My anger against you will end, and My wrath will be directed against them. ... On that day I will break the yoke off their necks and tear off their bonds; the yoke they have imposed on you will be broken, and the bonds will be lifted'
(Isaiah 10:21-27).

When contemplating these words,
I receive the lesson that we must trust in the Almighty Lord God,
who executes His plans as already determined,
and believe that God will break the yoke that has been imposed on us,
so that it will no longer be a burden to us.

God gives those who please him ...

God gives wisdom, knowledge, and happiness to those who please Him,
but He gives sinners the trouble of gathering and accumulating wealth
and handing it over to those who please Him
(Ecclesiastes 2:26).

The church of God vs. The church of men (1)

In the church of God there is grace and peace,
but in the church of men there is merit, strife, strife, and division.

The church of God vs. The church of men (2)

God's church is full of gratitude,
but man's church is full of complaints.

The church of God vs. The church of men (3)

There is humility in God's church,
but there is pride in man's church.

The church of God vs. The church of men (4)

In God's church, people rely only on the merits of the cross of Jesus Christ,
but in people's churches, they record in their hearts the merits they have done
for the Lord and the church, and are recognized by church members and praised by others.

The church of God vs. The church of men (5)

In God's church, the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed,
but in man's church, man's 'gospel' (good news) that scratches people's itching ears
is making a sound like a cymbal.

The church of God vs. The church of men (6)

In God's church, the saints stand firm in the testimony of Christ
by hearing and understanding the truth of the gospel,
but in the church of men, there is no such solidity.

The church of God vs. The church of men (7)

In God's church, each saint graciously uses the spiritual gifts given by God
with wisdom and self-control to build His church.

In human-made churches, saints often selfishly and unrestrainedly
use the gifts and talents given by God to boast about themselves.

The church of God vs. The church of men (8)

In God's church, the Lord, who is the head of the church, is glorified,
but in man's church, people are glorified.

The kingdom of God is a kingdom of love.

The commandments of the kingdom of God are:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind, and with all your strength”

and “Love your neighbor as yourself”

(Mark 12:30-31).

Those who believe in Jesus Christ by God's grace

and possess "eternal life" (Romans 6:23) as a gift of grace (1 John 3:14)

must devote their heart, life, will, and strength

according to Jesus' twofold commandment.

We obey the commandment to love the Lord God

with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Therefore, he purifies his soul to love his brother unfeignedly

(1 Peter 1:22).

This is how we practice righteousness, just as Jesus practiced righteousness

(1 John 2:6).

Therefore, the life of “seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness”

(Matthew 6:33) means that we, as citizens of God's kingdom of love,

love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength as Jesus did.

Just as Jesus loved his neighbors as himself,

we also follow Jesus' example and live in obedience to Jesus' twofold commandment.

The kingdom of God will always be peaceful.

The kingdom of God, ruled and governed by the Almighty God

who is the King of Peace, will always be peaceful.

The zeal of the Almighty God will accomplish this!

(Ref.: Isaiah 9:6-7).

God was using even arrogant people like me, who do not know God's will and have different thoughts and plans ...

God used Assyria as a rod of God's anger and used its military power to punish the Israelites who sinned and did not repent.

However, the Assyrian emperor did not know God's will and had a different idea and planned to conquer the world.

In this way, God used the arrogant Assyrian emperor, who boasted and showed off his power, strength, and wisdom, and punished him after he had fulfilled God's will (Ref.: Isaiah 10:5-13).

As I meditated on these words,

I thought that God was using even arrogant people like me, who do not know God's will and have different thoughts and plans, to accomplish His will.

Nevertheless, rather than punishing me after accomplishing God's will through my arrogant self, it seems that God disciplines me with love and makes me humble, allowing me to understand God's will and obey it.

I pray that the Holy Spirit of God will grant our church leaders ...

I pray that the Holy Spirit of God will grant our church leaders wisdom, knowledge, and abilities to serve the flocks entrusted by the Lord and His church.

May they understand God's will, serve Him with reverent hearts, and find joy in obedience to the Lord

(Ref.: Isaiah 11:2-3).

When we go up to the temple of God to worship Him ...

When we go up to the temple of God to worship Him,
we must be careful not to open our mouths
and make rash promises to God without realizing our own sins.
We must not sin with our mouths.
God is not pleased with these foolish people
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 5:1-2, 6).

We must live the truth.

We must go up to the temple of God.
God will teach us the truth and we must live that truth
(Ref.: Isaiah 2:3).

The fate given to humans by God ...

The fate given to humans by God is painful and distressing
(Ecclesiastes 1:13).

Everything God does will remain forever.

What we do is temporary and will not be remembered later (Ref.: Ecclesiastes 1:11, 2:16),
but everything God does will remain forever (Ref.: 3:14).

When those in power oppress, the oppressed weep, but there is no one to comfort them.

When those in power oppress, the oppressed weep,
but there is no one to comfort them.
So, King Solomon declared that
those who have already died are happier than the living.
However, happier still are those who have not yet been born
and have not seen the evil in this world
(Ecclesiastes 4:1-3).

One sinner ...

One sinner harms much good
(Ecclesiastes 9:18).

He who sets a trap ...

He who sets a trap will fall into it himself
(Ecclesiastes 10:8).

We must always live life joyfully in the Lord.

No matter how long a person lives,
there will be a day of death someday,
and we must always live life joyfully in the Lord
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 11:8).

God will liberate and give them rest.

God will liberate his children from sorrow, pain, and hardship
and give them rest (Ref.: Isaiah 14:3).

When the current adversity is overwhelming ...

When the current adversity is overwhelming,
do not long for the times when there was no hardship
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 7:10).

Instead, remember and celebrate with faith God's saving love and grace
that delivered us from (greater) adversities in the past.

Could it be that we are rejecting the warm protection of our Heavenly Father ...?

Could it be that we are rejecting
the warm protection of our Heavenly Father and are eager for others to help us?
(Reference: Isaiah 8:6)

Isn't it possible that all of our church leaders ...

Isn't it possible that all of our church leaders
like to receive bribes and gifts?
(Ref.: Isaiah 1:23)

Is it possible that the sins of us Christians are ...

Is it possible that the sins of us Christians are
like a fire that burns thorns and thistles,
with the smoke of those sins rising like a raging wildfire?
(Ref.: Isaiah 9:18)

Woe to those ... (1)

Woe to those who drag sin with cords of lies and evil like a chariot
(Isaiah 5:18).

Woe to those ... (2)

Woe to those who think they are wise and clever
(Isaiah 5:21).

If we give generously to as many people as possible ...

If we give generously to as many people as possible,
it will eventually come back to us
(Ref.: Ecclesiastes 11:1-2).