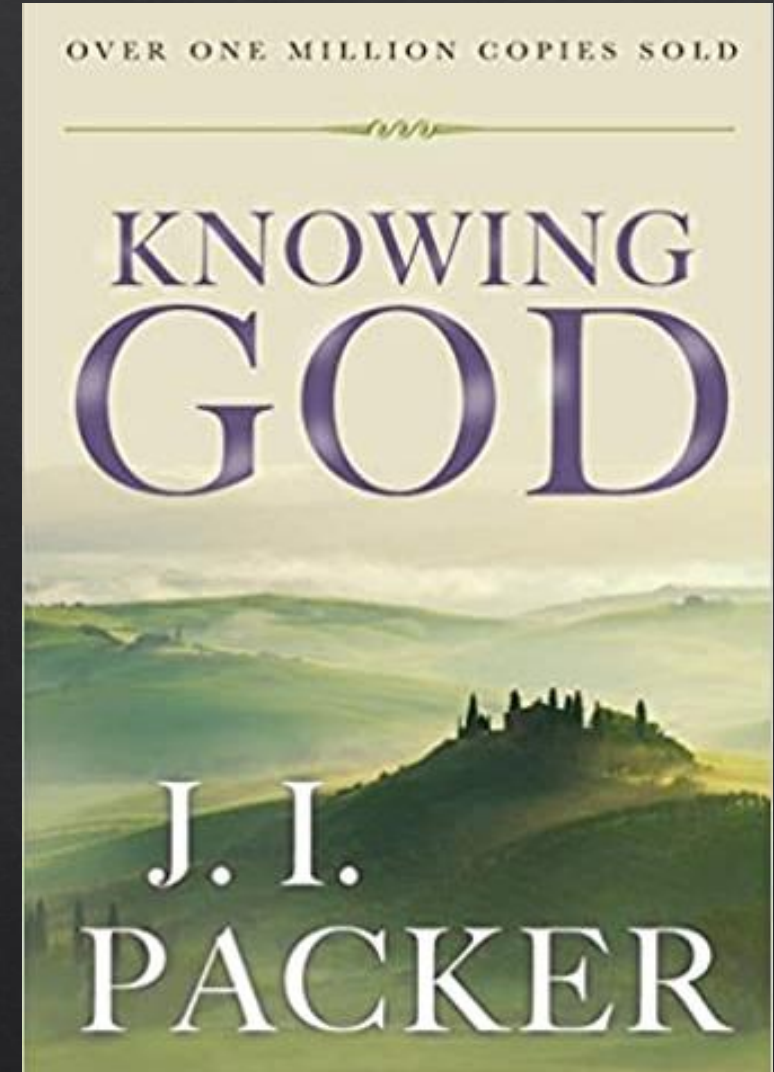


“A Good Thing”

Ecclesiastes 7:11-14

J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*

“Wisdom is the power to see, and the inclination to choose, the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it. Wisdom is, in fact, the practical side of moral goodness. As such, it is found in its fulness only in God. He alone is naturally and entirely and invariable wise.”



“wisdom *with* an inheritance..” or
“wisdom, *like* an inheritance...” ?

The preposition בְּ (*'im*) may denote either accompaniment, or comparison.

- Wisdom *with* an inheritance = true!
- (wisdom = good) + (inheritance = good) = true!

God preserves His word!

“Wisdom, like
an inheritance,
is a good
thing.”

Wisdom is for the
living. We must see
growing in wisdom as a
goal for our lives.

Wisdom, as great as it
is, has an expiration
date.



“Who drinks at your life?”

The picture of our lives should be a picture the kind of wisdom that encourages our peers, that inspires the next generation, and that crowns decades of Bible study and spiritual growth with glory befitting the Lord Jesus Christ.

◆ **1 Cor 13:8** “As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; *as for knowledge, it will pass away.* For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, *the partial will pass away.*”

◆ Wisdom and money are alike in that they have tremendous value, they allow us to accomplish great good, they provide needs, provide protection, provide comfort – **but for all their good they will one day pass away.**



Vs. 12: “Wisdom provides protection, just as money provides protection.”

- ◆ The word for protection is (צֶלַל) “tsel,” translated “shadow” or “protection,” but (interestingly) it’s used as “protection” only in the sense of being protected by a deity, or by a king.
- ◆ The Bible likens the “shadow” of a good king in the land to that feeling.
- ◆ Solomon also puts the comfort of money in this category.
- ◆ “But the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves the life of its owner.”

“Riches rather contract the mind than enlarge it; whereas wisdom expands the mind and dispels that conceit and insolence which characterize a purse-proud man. Money, too, when not combined with wisdom, leads a man into every species of dissipation and folly, and opens to him temptations to every kind of sensual indulgence. But *wisdom provides for his mind such occupations as place him at a distance from temptation*, and especially when his facilities for profuse expenditure are on a contracted scale. And thus the man of wisdom moves in a far safer and happier sphere; his pleasures being more refined, and his employments more innocent....

**18th century clergyman
Charles Simeon**



...Nor is it the least excellence of wisdom that *it induces thoughtful habits*, which are favorable to sobriety, to meditation, and to a candid investigation of conflicting interests: whilst money rather tends to dissipate thought, and to fix the mind only on present indulgences. In a word, money, without wisdom, tends to the destruction of life; whereas *wisdom, freed from the temptations of wealth, tends rather to the presentation of life.*”

**18th century clergyman
Charles Simeon**





THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD



Vs. 13: “Consider the work of God: For who can make straight what he has bent? In times of prosperity be joyful, but in times of adversity consider this: God has made one as well as the other, so that no one can discover what the future holds.”

- ◆ The sovereignty of God is hard.
- ◆ ...but it is also a comfort.
- ◆ The sovereignty of God reigns over both the prosperity and adversity of our lives.

“in the day of good, *be in good.*”



Our response to prosperity (good)
should be *joy*.

Our response to adversity (evil)
should be to *consider*

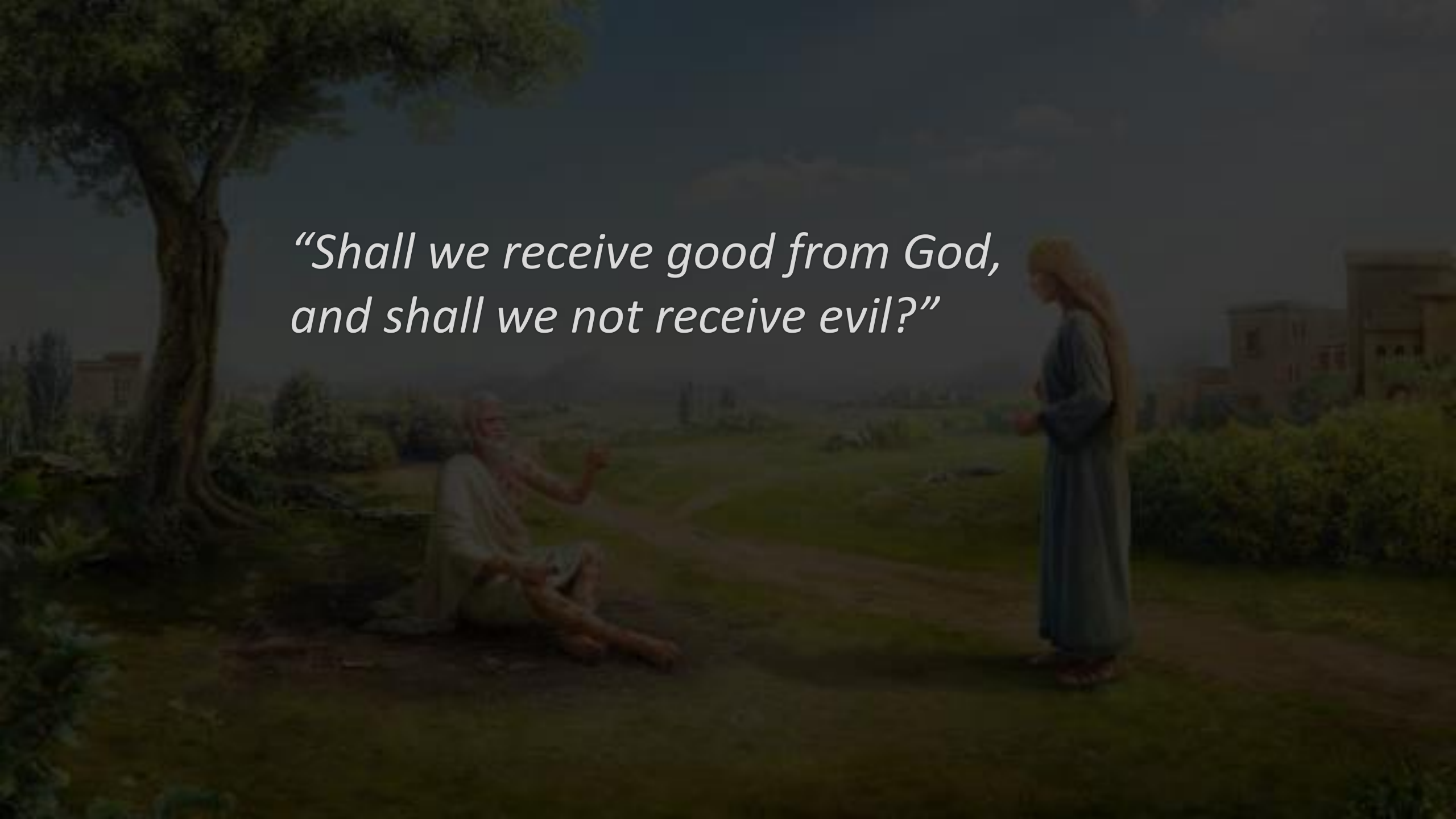


Solomon the Poet

- ◆ ra'ah (רָעָה) - “evil”
- ◆ ra-ah(רָאָה) - “to understand, consider.”

בַּיּוֹם טוֹבָה הָיָה בְּטוֹב וּבַיּוֹם רָעָה רָאָה

*“Shall we receive good from God,
and shall we not receive evil?”*



Puritan commentator Matthew Henry

“To silence our complaints concerning cross events, let us consider the hand of God in them and not open our mouths against that which is his doing; let us look upon the disposal of our condition and all the circumstances of it as the *work of God*, and consider it as the product of his eternal counsel, which is fulfilled in every thing that befalls us. Consider that every work of God is wise, just, and good, and there is an admirable beauty and harmony in his works, and all will appear at last to have been for the best.”

So why has God done these things?



- ◆ “So that man may not find out anything after him.”
- ◆ The purpose of His doing these things is to increase our dependence on Him.

Ecc 7:11-14 “Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing; it benefits those who see the light of day. ^{7:12} For wisdom provides protection, just as money provides protection. But the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves the life of its owner. ^{7:13} Consider the work of God: For who can make straight what he has bent? ^{7:14} In times of prosperity be joyful, but in times of adversity consider this: God has made one as well as the other, so that no one can discover what the future holds.”