

## **Leaves Of Hope #7**

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

Before thee, God, who knowest all,  
With grief and shame I prostrate fall.  
I see my sins against Thee, Lord,  
The sins of thought, of deed, and word.  
They press me sore; I cry to Thee:  
O God, be merciful to me! L.H. 318:1

L.H. 318; verse 1

### **Ecclesiastes 4:13**

**Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king  
who no longer knows how to take warning.**

In our text for today's meditation two people are placed before us, a youth and an old king. The youth is called wise and the old king is called foolish. The future of the youth is bright and firm while that of the king is dark and shaky. The king will lose his kingdom and another will take its place. (Verses 14-16) What has made the difference? The old king has closed his ears to admonition and is deaf to words of guidance and advice.

We are reminded of a certain king who refused guidance and would not be admonished. The king was Saul. In order to advance himself, he disregarded the Word of God which called

upon him to smite Amalek, to destroy all and spare nothing. The instructions were clear and there was no room for misunderstanding. But what did Saul do? He spared Agag, the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings and all that was good in his eyes. When he was faced with his sin of disobedience, Saul lied and when exposed he sought to justify himself. As a consequence, Saul lost his kingdom and a youth, David, was selected to take his place. Saul did not want to lose face, but he lost his kingdom. He did not want to lose his stature, but lost his soul. Saul may have been a large man in physical stature, but he was not a big man at all in God's eyes. His head which he proudly raised above his fellows was finally severed by the enemy when he was found impaled upon his own sword.

What a foolish King Saul was! But how many have followed in his footsteps. Isn't it considered soft to make confession of sin and to bow the head in repentance? Isn't it rather considered smart to stand up against authority, to join protesters, to tell a lie or two if necessary and then to brag about it? Sad to say, such scenes as these are all too common. Rather than to accept admonition and counseling, such people refuse to be corrected and choose rather to be arrested and imprisoned. But more common are the instances where people refuse to be

admonished because of their sins and misdeeds. Rather than to accept admonition they walk away from it. As our text says they “will be admonished no more.”

From this example may we learn to accept admonition when it is given. When correction is made, let us be willing to welcome it. When we have fallen into sin, let us stand ready to confess it with grief and thankfully receive forgiveness at the hands of the Lord Jesus. This we know – a broken and contrite heart he will not despise. “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ . . .” Ephesians 1:7-9 If you think that your sins are too great or too many, here is the good news: “Where sin increased, grace increased all the more.” Romans 5:20 “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1 There is no shame in praying:

With broken heart and contrite sigh,  
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry.  
Thy pardoning grace is rich and free-  
O God, be merciful to me! L.H. 323:1