



## *The Vanity of Political Popularity – Ecclesiastes 4:16*

The winds of political popularity are often fickle. Today's rising star is likely to be tomorrow's old news. Solomon saw much of the same and expresses this vanity in a brief story. "Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice. For he went from prison to the throne, though in his own kingdom, he had been born poor. I saw all the living who move about under the sun, along with that youth who was to stand in the king's place. There was no end of all the people, all of whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind."

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We love a good rags-to-riches story, but our fascination can lead us to neglect to examine those stories in which the narrative continues back to rags from riches. Like other attempts at personal kingdom-building, a meteoric political rise is no guarantee of lasting power. Whole nations rise and fall making it unsurprising that the fortunes of individual political leaders would face the same fate. The prophet Isaiah issues a series of prophetic warnings against a fairly lengthy list of nations in the heart of his book (Isaiah 13-23). These nations each had their days in the sun and are warned to watch for a reversal of their fortunes. Every major empire that the world has ever seen has gone through its periods of ascension and decline. Political leaders and even political families likewise face both increase and decrease in their strength and power.

The only kingdom that is truly lasting is the Lords. Christ is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:16). While political movements come and go, our God remains. Voters as well as politicians are fickle. We blow about with the wind, chasing after the next new shiny leader or movement. Yet, our God remains faithful even in the midst of our unfaithfulness.

## *Thoughts for Reflection*

How is God's faithfulness a source of real comfort in a world that is always changing?