



Ecclesiastes

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Lesson 22 Study Notes – Ecclesiastes 12: 1-8

Pray

Review – As we start today, let's review what Solomon is doing in the last 2 chapters of this book. He presents 4 pictures of life and then attaches to each picture a practical admonition for his listeners (and for us his readers) to heed. We will see that the 4 pictures parallel the 4 arguments Solomon wrestled with in the first 10 chapters. Those were: the monotony of life, the vanity of wisdom, the futility of wealth, and the certainty of death.

In the last lesson, **chapter 11: 1-6**, we studied the first picture Solomon put before us: life is not monotonous; rather, it is an adventure that is anything but predictable or tedious. We must live by faith.

Then in **11: 7-10** he gave us the picture that life is a gift; and admonished us to enjoy it. This picture continues in today's verses. He is in the process of giving us instructions as to how we can accept life as a gift and enjoy what God gives us.

Reflect

1. What is the instruction in **11: 9**?
2. What is the instruction in **11:10**?
3. Read the verses for today: **12: 1-8**. What is the first instruction found in **verse 1**? What does the word *remember* mean? How does this instruction parallel what Jesus said in **Matt. 6: 33**?
4. How easy it is to neglect the Lord when we are caught up in the enjoyments and opportunities of youth. Dark days (**11: 8**) and difficult (evil) days (**12: 1**) are coming, so we had better lay a good spiritual foundation as early in life as possible. Review verse **11: 8**. Then read slowly and ponder verses **12: 1-7** describing old age.
5. In verses 6 & 7 we have a final plea. What is it?

6. In verse 8, what does the preacher say for the last time in his discourse? The book closes where it began (**1: 2**). This is from what perspective, that everything seems “vanity”. But when you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, what do we know to be true according to **1 Cor. 15: 58**?

Respond

1. From what perspective do you usually look at the daily rounds of life?
2. Take some time to read through today’s verses and consider the poetic, very imaginative description of old age and death. Consider the very likely or possible meanings for the figures used:
 - **V3** The keepers of the house... your arms and hands tremble
 - And the strong men... your legs, knees, and shoulders weaken and you walk bent-over
 - When the grinders cease because they are few... you start to lose your teeth
 - Windows grow dim... your vision begins to deteriorate.
 - **V4** when the doors are shut... either your hearing starts to fail, or you close your mouth because you’ve lost your teeth.
 - When the sound of grinding is low... you can’t chew your food, or your ears can’t pick up the sounds outdoors
 - Rise up at the sound of the birds... you wake up with the birds early each morning,
 - Daughters of music are brought low... your voice starts to quaver and weaken.
 - **V5** Are afraid of height, and of terrors in the way... you are terrified of heights and afraid of falling while you walk down the street.
 - When the almond tree blossoms... if you have any hair left, it turns white, like almond blossoms.
 - Grasshopper is a burden... you just drag yourself along, like a grasshopper at the close of the summer season.
 - And desire fails... your lose your appetite, and/or perhaps your sexual desire.
 - You go to your eternal home and people mourn your death.

How does meditating on these verses make you feel?

At the end of man’s advancing age is his eternal home, not the unknown grave and darkness. The Preacher has come to the correct conclusion. Eternity and the eternal God make everything matter. How should this affect our lives?