

ECCLESIASTES 12 THE CONCLUSION

Review: Solomon's message started out with everything is vain and meaningless under the sun. He then shares his various explorations of things like wealth, wine, women, possessions, projects, power, worldly wisdom and folly. He then shares observations that he has made on things that vex him – everyone dies like beasts, sometimes the righteous suffer hardships that the wicked should yet don't, sometimes fools are exalted while wise men are cast aside and forgotten, all that a person can build or accumulate in life will be turned over to the next generation that may not appreciate it or completely ruin it. This is the natural world viewed without God or an eternal perspective...the findings? Nothing lasts, nothing satisfies long term, nothing gives meaning or purpose in a way that the flesh won't want something else. Solomon gives some wise instruction as to living the natural life skillfully before making his final summation which we will look at tonight.

The Final Point – Since life without God is empty and meaningless, start making God the focal point early in your life. Solomon is now an old man with many regrets so the one thing he can do is pass on what he has learned from his failures.

Ecclesiastes 12:1-2 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: *Children should be taught from an early age to view themselves and the world around them through the lens of God's word. They should be taught at an early age that God is our source not a resource. He is able to guide them through life and set it in order. If they build a life that's out of God's order, it will fall like the house that the foolish man built upon the sand. If you don't remember your Creator in the days of your youth, you'll be like Solomon and have regrets and bad memories.*

Solomon now describes the breaking down of the body's aging process through many colorful metaphors.

Ecclesiastes 12:3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

- **Keepers of the house** – This is a reference to the arms and hands. The hands do all the productive work and the arms the muscle work. The word keepers means that they maintain the house. Your arms and hands wash your body, comb your hair, brush your teeth and clothe yourself. Someday your strength will decrease as well as your motor skills
- **Strong men that bow themselves** – This refers to the legs and knees. The strongest part of a person is their legs and the knees are the joint that bends them. The old saying is that the legs are the first thing to go. Joints ache and stamina decreases to walk and work

as the body gets older

- **The grinders cease because they are few** – This refers to the teeth. When people reach great age, their teeth fall out or rot. That's why elderly people have their teeth pulled and get false teeth but there was no such thing in Solomon's time.
- **Those that look out of the windows be darkened** – This is a reference to failing vision. The older the person the more their eyesight diminishes.

Ecclesiastes 12:4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

- **The doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low** – This refers to keeping your lips closed to hide the rotting or missing teeth.
- **He shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low** – Elderly people tend to sleep less at night the older they get. Many of them rise early in the morning when the birds start singing but their hearing is diminished by old age and they can't enjoy hearing the pleasant things of life as much.

Ecclesiastes 12:5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

- **When they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way** – The elderly are prone to give into their fears as they get older and let fear guide all their decision making.
- **The almond tree shall flourish** – This is a reference to the hair turning white. An almond tree produces pretty pink blossoms in its season, but as the season comes to an end they turn a faded white. The white hair shows the age of the aged like an almond tree shows the age of a season.
- **The grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail** – This refers to the loss of drive and strength. A grasshopper is little and weighs next to nothing, yet it might as well be as heavy as a boulder to a person that lacks the drive to lift it. People of a great age that have lost much of their abilities often lose their desire to continue living. When people lose the will to live, death is not far off.
- **Man goeth to his long home** – This refers to laying the dead body in the grave. The mourners going about the streets is the funeral for the dead.

Ecclesiastes 12:6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

- **The silver cord be loosed** – The spine breaking down due to the aging process.
- **The golden bowl be broken** – The head and mind failing with age.
- **The pitcher be broken at the fountain** – The blood which is the life of all flesh.
- **The wheel broken at the cistern** – The heart failing to pump the blood.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return

unto God who gave it. *The body breaks down, decays and returns to its source. The spirit returns to its source as well.*

Ecclesiastes 12:8-10 Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all *is* vanity. And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: *and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. These statements and this whole book can be taken as proof that Solomon repented before he died. That he regretted much and tried to keep others from going in the same paths he trod. The greatest warnings are from those that have gone the way of the transgressor and survived to tell their story.*

Ecclesiastes 12:11 The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd. *Goads were sharp pointed sticks used to drive herds. The words of the wise are meant to prod or turn us out of the paths of danger and despair. When the words are believed and obeyed they become fastened nails that can be relied upon. The one shepherd maybe a reference that this timeless message was inspired by God.*

Ecclesiastes 12:12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much study *is* a weariness of the flesh. *Finally at the close of this sermon we see the intended hearer. Solomon was writing this as a warning to his son Rehoboam. The first 9 chapters of Proverbs is written as instructions to Solomon's son, nevertheless Rehoboam was a fool and lost 90% of the kingdom. There is enough wisdom in the writings of Solomon to be solid instruction to live life skillfully so that his son need not study endlessly other books. Even though Rehoboam did not heed the wisdom of his father, this book was Holy Ghost inspired and serves as a warning to both sinners and saints alike that there is no need to look for lasting satisfaction in anything under the sun.*

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. *Of all that Solomon has written, this is the sum – Fear God(the fear of the LORD is culminated in three things – reverence, love, and obedience) and keep his commandments(because they are light and right): for this is the whole duty of man(the purpose of life for the human race). Solomon's father David was not perfect but he lived life well because he lived to love God and serve Him. Acts 13:22* And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil. *Remember the Creator while you're young and all the days of your life because your life will be reviewed by God in judgment after it's over. The good , the bad and the ugly! God will not only judge works but reveal the motives behind the works. Solomon is telling us to live in time with eternity in mind.*