

Daily Bible Study

“Time’s a Wastin”

Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

October 13 – October 19, 2013

MONDAY –As we continue in our study of **Ecclesiastes** we are actually going to step back into **Chapter 11** and then move forward into **Chapter 12** as we draw near the close of this wonderful book. We have entitled this week’s study, *Time’s a Wastin*. It was necessary to review some of what was said in the previous chapter to capture the entire thought being expressed here by Solomon to his readers and listeners. Solomon is imploring young people in particular but the message he is giving needs to be heeded and is applicable to all of us regardless of age. The message is to not waste any time as we live out our days under the sun. We are to be aware that the moment in which we are now living is temporary and soon the years come and go and we die and all the opportunities; the would have, should have, and could have’s that we may have done for the glory of God and advancement of His Kingdom died with us. Time waits for no man; get busy living. **Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8**: ⁷*Truly the light is sweet, And it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun;* ⁸*But if a man lives many years And rejoices in them all, Yet let him remember the days of darkness, For they will be many. All that is coming is vanity.* ⁹*Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.* ¹⁰*Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.* ¹*Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”:* ²*While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain;* ³*In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim;* ⁴*When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low.* ⁵*Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.* ⁶*Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well.* ⁷*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.* ⁸*“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “All is vanity.”*

Suggestion for Prayer: *Lord, help me learn the time is now to know, obey, and walk with You.*

TUESDAY – Ecclesiastes 11:7-10: ⁷*Truly the light is sweet, And it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun;* ⁸*But if a man lives many years And rejoices in them all, Yet let him remember the days of darkness, For they will be many. All that is coming is vanity.* ⁹*Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.* ¹⁰*Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.”* For a bit of review, as we saw last week **Verses 7-8** teach us to cherish each day of life and anticipate it as a gift from God. Solomon is using the term *light* to speak about what it is to truly be alive (**Job 3:20, Psalm 49:19**). He tells us to *behold the sun* and enjoy its benefits and the moments we experience in this life on earth. But we quickly see that amidst our enjoyment of life we need to be aware of *the days of darkness*. Death reminds us to have the proper perspective. We see the exhortation is here directed at young people in particular as youthful years are marked with health, vitality and opportunity. He says don’t waste precious years and remember that for all the moments of “enjoyment” you have on earth *for all these God will bring you into judgment*. Walk in God’s ways and remove what would produce evil and sorrow in your heart. Remember that although your fallen heart and mind will tell you different you must believe that true joy comes from a heart that is right with God (**Matthew 5:8**) The bottom line for us all whether young or old is to enjoy life, trust God and live each day to the full as we spend ourselves for God’s glory and the good of those He has placed us with while we remember that judgment for all we do is coming.

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, thank You for life’s blessings and joys as well as for creating life in my soul and giving me The Holy Spirit. Help my life and years be lived for Your glory.*

WEDNESDAY – Ecclesiastes 12:1 ¹*Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”:*” As we start **chapter 12** Solomon again reiterates the teaching of **chapter 11** that we saw yesterday. This verse is Solomon’s version if you will of **Matthew 6:33**, *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”*. This verse means more than merely think about God. Just don’t bring Him to mind. He is telling us that in the midst of the confusion and despair of the dark days that often come upon us in life we are to keep our focus heavenward and an eternal perspective. Remember your Creator God, pay attention to Him and intend to obey. Solomon knows and therefore warns us of how easy it is to neglect the Lord when you are caught up in the enjoyments and opportunities of youth. The warning here as well as the positive instruction is to lay a good spiritual foundation as early in life as possible. It matters that we bring our young children to the Scripture in both home study and corporate worship. We see here the principle that God honors and uses the implanted Word even later in life. **Proverbs 22:6** tells us, *“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.”* Solomon is telling us not to wait and hope the Lord works in us later in life, because if that is our attitude we will find it may be too late but to NOW seek God and

grow your relationship to Him so that you have prepared to weather the storms of life as they come later on. This is something that is better done while you're young before you waste time and energy with meaningless pursuits, or before the inevitable decline of old age sets in. An interesting point to notice in this verse can be found in the original Hebrew. The word *Creator*, is in the original plural *Creators*. This is important in that underscores the truth of Scripture that the one glorious and eternal God, has His existence and self-being totally distinct from all his creatures, existing in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This truth is seen several places in Scripture with a similar plurality in the name of God. All three persons of the God-Head were involved in creation; *Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness (Genesis 1:26)*. We also find this glorious doctrine taught in **Job 35:10**, where the plural is used for God's name; "*Where is GOD my maker (literally-makers in plural form), who gives songs in the night?*"

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help us all whether young or older to remember and pursue You and to obey You. May we teach our children and the children of this local church family the importance of this and may we teach them by example not merely our words.

THURSDAY – Ecclesiastes 12:2-5: ²*While the sun and the light, The moon and the stars, Are not darkened, And the clouds do not return after the rain;* ³*In the day when the keepers of the house tremble, And the strong men bow down; When the grinders cease because they are few, And those that look through the windows grow dim;* ⁴*When the doors are shut in the streets, And the sound of grinding is low; When one rises up at the sound of a bird, And all the daughters of music are brought low.* ⁵*Also they are afraid of height, And of terrors in the way; When the almond tree blossoms, The grasshopper is a burden, And desire fails. For man goes to his eternal home, And the mourners go about the streets.*" As we have seen, the joys associated with our youth soon fade and the dark sorrows and anxieties of life take them from our sight like clouds and storms that obscure the sun, moon, and stars. This is what **verse 2** teaches us as well as it being the introductory verse of a long list of examples speaking about the decline of our health and bodies due to aging. These are very interesting descriptions. These descriptions are unique in all of literature and although they are not agreed upon in every detail by students we can obviously and easily see Solomon's point that the house eventually falls apart and finally turns to dust (**verse 7**). A house or tent is one biblical metaphor for the human body (**Job 4:19, 2 Corinthians 5:1–2, 2 Peter 1:13**), and taking down the tent is a picture of death. The *keepers of the house*—Your arms and hands *tremble*. The *strong men*—Your legs, knees, and shoulders weaken and you walk bent over, *bowed down*. The *grinders cease* and you start to lose your teeth. The *windows grow dim* and your vision begins to deteriorate. The *doors are shut* and your hearing starts to fail. You can't chew your food due to a problem with *grinding*. You can't sleep soundly as you *rise up* with the sound of a bird. Your voice begins to weaken and the *daughters of music are brought low*. You are easily *afraid of heights* and afraid of falling while you walk down the street. Your hair

or what remains of it turns white like *almond tree blossoms*. Your strength is diminished and *the grasshopper is a burden*. Your sexual *desire* and or appetite *fails*. All this ends on the road to your *eternal home* as people mourn your death. All these remind us that the journey of life is drawing to its close. **Times a Wastin** beloved, so the question for us all is, what are you doing about it? Are you "*Remembering Your Creator*"?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, I see that time moves along and the joys of life are often balanced with sobering and real difficulties. I also see that my body under the curse will continue to decline and therefore instead of despairing I need to remember and look to You.

FRIDAY – Ecclesiastes 12:6-8: ⁶*Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well.* ⁷*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.* ⁸*"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "All is vanity."*" Our *eternal home* calls and two images are used to describe the suddenness of the moment of our death and departure from this world. We see the decay of the house as it breaks down before our eyes yet Solomon says the moment of death still takes us by surprise. The *silver cord* that holds the golden bowl *is loosed*, and the *golden bowl is broken*, damaged beyond repair. The picture is of a basin which has the holding mechanism fail and the basin crashes to the earth busted in a moment. Death is as sudden as that and it is now too late to *remember our Creator*. We must do it before these things happen. All of life has this warning of a sudden end; "*Therefore you are to be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect*" (**Matthew 24:42**). The body ends up going back to *dust* in death. Back to its original state and Solomon cries out for the last time in his book, "*vanity of vanities*". The book closes where it began emphasizing the emptiness of life without God. We return to the dust from which we were created (**Genesis 3:19**). The spirit of man, which was breathed into him by God, returns to its Creator (**James 2:26, Luke 23:46, Acts 7:59**) and the body is dead. This sobering fact of death is never far from us but as believers in Jesus we have the glorious hope of resurrection. Jesus said, "*Because I live you will live also*" (**John 14:19**). Many other places in Scripture point us to this hope as well (**John 3:36, 11:25-26**). Solomon emphasized the corruptible nature of our earthly body but Paul provides us with the complete picture. Through Jesus death and resurrection, the process is powerfully reversed for the believer: "*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*" (**1 Corinthians 15:53**). Death may bring a temporary sting but God says, "*O Death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?*" The victory is "*through our Lord Jesus Christ*" and the vanity of Solomon's conclusion is nullified, "*knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*" (**1 Corinthians 15:55–58**). ***Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord! (Revelation 14:13)***.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me face the decay and the death of my physical body with grace. Thank You for resurrection and the promise of eternal life in a new body through Jesus.