

ECCLESIASTES

Lesson 10

Ecclesiastes 12:1-14

This lesson concludes our study of Ecclesiastes.

Over the course of our studies, we have observed Solomon's disdain for the folly of man's thinking, and man's belief that, through work, or pleasure, or even philosophy, man can find lasting meaning and fulfillment. How are we to act? How are we to think? And where will we find fulfillment? Solomon's conclusion is that these are all answered by studying, meditating and following God and His instruction, His commandments.

Let's read Chapter 12 and reflect on what we have learned in light of all that we have studied.

1. In Eccl. 12:1, Solomon acknowledges that God is our creator. Then he admonishes us to acknowledge this "before the days of trouble come..." What days or time period is he referring to?
2. In verses two through five, Solomon appears to be talking about the days when old age begins to set in and its effect on the person and the home. Let's see if we can determine what some of these effects might be, beginning in verse 3.
 - a. The keepers of the house tremble?
 - b. The strong men stoop?
 - c. The grinders cease because they are few?
 - d. Those looking through the windows grow dim?
 - e. The doors to the street are closed?
 - f. When men rise up at the sound of birds?
 - g. All their songs grow faint?
 - h. Afraid of heights and dangers in the streets?
 - i. The almond tree blossoms?
 - j. The grasshopper drags himself along?
 - k. Desire no longer is stirred?
 - l. Man goes to his eternal home?
 - m. Mourners go about in the streets?
3. Solomon then tells his readers what happens after the body dies, that it returns to the dust from which it came and the spirit returns to God from which it came. He then summarizes all of his study in verses eight through fourteen. In verse eight Solomon reflects back on life from youth to old age and on man's efforts to find fulfillment and meaning. What his conclusion?

4. Solomon then speaks to the time, thought and prayer he put into developing, outlining and writing this book. He tells us that he wanted it to be pleasing to read and he wanted it to be correct and truthful and presented in an orderly manner. In verses eleven and twelve he says the words of the wise are "like goads" and "firmly embedded nails." What does he mean by these references to wisdom?

5. Solomon concludes his writings with verses thirteen and fourteen. How does Solomon very concisely sum up all that he has learned in verse thirteen?

6. In reading verse 14, and knowing that Solomon wrote these words while living "on the other side of the cross," that is, before Christ and the knowledge of Christ was known to him; how does Solomon's view of life after death differ from the Christian view today?

May God bless you as you study with us and we apply Solomon's findings to our lives.

In Christ,

Wes