

# Ecclesiastes 12 - The Whole Duty of Man

V. Conclusion regarding Solomon's search for the ultimate meaning in various sources (Eccl 8:16—12:7)

(2) Where ultimate meaning is found (Eccl 11:1—12:7)

(D) Remember your creator in the days of your youth (12:1-7)

VI. Epilogue (12:8-14)

(1) Repetition of thesis: "Vanities of vanities, all is vanity" (12:8)

(2) Solomon's reflection of his literary composition (12:9-12)

(A) Composition described (12:9-10)

(B) Proper and improper uses of his composition (12:11-12)

(3) Conclusion of the book (12:13-14)

(A) Fear God and keep His commandments (12:13)

(B) Live mindfully of God's future judgment (12:14)

## Ecclesiastes 12

(D) Remember your creator in the days of your youth (12:1-7)

**1** Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years approach when you will say, "I have no pleasure in them";

**1** Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them";

**1** So remember your Creator during your youth! Otherwise, troublesome days will come and years will creep up on you when you'll say, "I find no pleasure in them,"

**1** 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;

**2** before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are darkened, and clouds return after the rain;

**2** before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are darkened, and clouds return after the rain;

**2** Otherwise, when the sun, daylight, moon, or stars turn dark, or when clouds fail to return after the rain—

**2** While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 on the day that the watchmen of the house tremble, and strong men are bent over, the grinders stop working because they are few, and those who look through windows grow dim;

3 in the day that the watchmen of the house tremble, and mighty men stoop, the grinding ones stand idle because they are few, and those who look through windows grow dim;

3 when that day comes, the palace guards will tremble, strong men will stoop down, women grinders will cease because they are few, and the sight of those who peer through the lattice will grow dim.

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,

4 and the doors on the street are shut as the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one will arise at the sound of the bird, and all the daughters of song will sing softly.

4 and the doors on the street are shut as the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one will arise at the sound of the bird, and all the daughters of song will sing softly.

4 The doors to the street will be shut when the sound of grinding decreases, when one wakes up at the song of a bird, and all of the singing women are silenced.

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 music shall be brought low;

5 Furthermore, *people* are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caper berry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home while the mourners move around in the street.

5 Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street.

5 At that time they will fear climbing heights and dangers along the road while the almond tree will blossom, and the grasshopper is weighed down. Desire will cease, because the person goes to his eternal home, and mourners will gather in the marketplace.

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:

6 *Remember your Creator* before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the spring is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed;

6 *Remember Him* before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed;

6 When the silver cord is severed, the golden vessel is broken, the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, and the wheel is broken at the cistern,

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.

7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

7 then man's dust will go back to the earth, returning to what it was, and the spirit will return to the God who gave it.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

#### VI. Epilogue (12:8-14)

(1) Repetition of thesis: "Vanities of vanities, all is vanity" (12:8)

8 "Futility of futilities," says the Preacher, "all is futility!"

8 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "all is vanity!"

8 "Utterly pointless," says the Teacher. "Everything is pointless."

8 Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

(2) Solomon's reflection of his literary composition (12:9-12)

(A) Composition described (12:9-10)

9 In addition to being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out, and arranged many proverbs.

9 In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs.

9 Moreover, besides being wise himself, the Teacher taught people what he had learned by listening, making inquiries, and composing many proverbs.

9 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.

10 The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly.

10 The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly.

10 The Teacher searched to find appropriate expressions, and what is written here is right and truthful.

10 The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

(B) Proper and improper uses of his composition (12:11-12)

**11** The words of the wise are like goads, and masters of *these* collections are like driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd.

**11** The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of *these* collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd.

**11** Sayings from the wise are like cattle prods and well fastened nails; this masterful collection was given by one shepherd.

**11** The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

**12** But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive study is wearying to the body.

**12** But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion *to books* is wearying to the body.

**12** So learn from them, my son. There is no end to the crafting of many books, and too much study wearies the body.

**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.

(3) Conclusion of the book (12:13-14)

(A) Fear God and keep His commandments (12:13)

**13** The conclusion, when everything has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.

**13** The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.

**13** Let the conclusion of all of these thoughts be heard: Fear God and obey his commandments, for this is what it means to be human.

**13** Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

(B) Live mindfully of God's future judgment (12:14)

**14** For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

**14** For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

**14** For God will judge every deed, along with every secret, whether good or evil.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.