

Ecclesiastes 12:3-5

I hope that you've discovered as we've been studying through the book of Ecclesiastes that several things are covered there. You look at life; you look at death and everything in-between – actually also before life and then after death. Everything is involved here in this book of Ecclesiastes.

Solomon does not leave anything to guesswork under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He speaks of eating; he speaks of working; he speaks of breathing; he speaks of everything that we can think of as a human being; he speaks of vanity, and that means that there is nothing, and vanity is nothing. We can work our fingers to the bone while we're on this Earth, but unless we are working for our Savior, our Lord, then all is vanity. It's all wasted. We may have something to eat while we're here as we work and labor.

Now, Solomon is not telling us not to work while we're here. He's telling us that, even when we do menial labor or we do something that brings sustenance to us, we need to give God the honor. And as we give God the honor, we're actually praising God for what He's enabling us to do. He gives us the air we breathe. Actually, He gives us the food we eat. He brings the rain, and everything that we have comes from God, and we need to acknowledge that in our daily lives.

Now, today, we want to pick up with our study in Ecclesiastes Chapter 12. Last time, we talked to the young people... advice to the young... and we're going to see how this goes over into the older folks, as well, today in Ecclesiastes Chapter 12. Remember in verses 1-2, it says: *¹Remember 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; ²While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain.

What these verses are saying here is remember God, young person. Even now, while you are young and while nothing bad or evil is happening to you, still you need to remember God. Why? Before the years come in which you find little pleasure. There's coming a time. And remember God while everything is bright and not gloomy.

And then as we go down in the rest of this chapter, and especially verses 3-7, we see that Solomon, once again through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is telling us to think about what is coming. The young person needs to be thinking about what is next in verses 3-7.

It says:

³In 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,

⁴And 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;

⁵Also 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:

⁶Or 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.

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

Well, once again, if you just casually read this, you would say what in the world is Solomon speaking of here? What in the world is God trying to tell us? Well, I'm glad you asked that question, because we're going to look back on these verses now, and prayerfully, we'll understand what God is trying to tell each one of us.

Remember, He was talking to the young people in verses 1-2, and if you'll remember, if you live long enough you're going to start getting older. And the day is coming, the Bible says here, that the person's body will shake uncontrollably. And that's what that word "tremble" means there. It's uncontrollable shaking.

It also goes on to say that the strong become weak. It says, *[A]nd the strong men shall bow themselves....* I don't know about you, but there are times that it seems to be hard for me to straighten up. I'll be sitting and I stand up and I have to remind myself sometimes to straighten up. Sometimes when I remind myself to straighten up, my back hurts just a little bit. That's what it's talking about here. When we start growing old, we just suddenly find ourselves in different positions, in a different shape, and that's what it's talking about there. The strong become weak.

And then, notice the term here that the Bible says here "grinders" in that verse 3. If I were to ask you what do you believe that's speaking of, some of you may not know and some of you would. It's speaking of teeth. The teeth become useless. Why? Because there's very few of them. It says *the grinders cease because they are few*. Now, I know that we're able to get implants and things like that, but still yet, the teeth become few.

And then, notice the rest of that verse. It says, *[A]nd those that look out of the windows be darkened*. Well, "the windows" here would be

eyes. The eyes lose their sight. They become dim. And we know as we grow older there's such a thing as cataracts and the eyes become dim because there's a problem there. It's like a shade pulled over our eyes and, therefore, things grow darker.

Notice here also now as we look on in verse 4 it says "the doors." These would be the lips that open to the passageways. This would be the streets where food is to pass. That's the lips; it does not open properly. We suddenly find ourselves... I thank the Lord I'm not to this position yet in this way of my life, that I don't have much of a problem with opening my mouth and eating. I certainly need to slow down sometimes, but the Bible says there's coming a time that this would possibly happen to me, that my lips would not open properly.

And in Psalm 141:3, it says, *Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips*. And this is also speaking of being able to speak. It's talking about being able, I believe, to give out the Word of God. We need to be able to give out the Word of God now. Do it now while we're able to do it. And there's coming a time when our lips just won't work properly and we'll have trouble speaking. So now is the time to give out the Word of God. Job 41:14 says, *Who can open the doors of his face... That's the mouth once again... his teeth are terrible round about*. That means that the person has worn down the teeth. They're just a little old, and once again, the teeth are few, and that's what Job is speaking of here.

But as we look on, it carries on with this same thought about the teeth here, because it says, *when the sound of the grinding is low*. Well, the mouth with few teeth makes very little crunching sound when eating, and this once again ties in with our thoughts here that we've been looking at about the teeth.

Notice something else here. *[A]nd he shall rise up at the voice of the bird...* Remember, the bird is the rooster. This means that one wakes up very early in the morning. This would be the rooster crowing. You can't sleep late, according to this, and I've discovered as I grow a little older that I get up a little sooner in the morning. I thank the Lord I can still sleep late. I mean I can go back to bed or whatever, but I have a tendency, the older I get, to wake up earlier, and that's the way it is with many older people.

Now, notice here, it says *all the daughters of music shall be brought low*. That's in verse 4. Well, the music produced by the voice, or the mouth and so forth, in daughters is unable to be heard as loud as it once was. And we know that the hearing also goes the older we get, and this is part of growing old. And if you read on, it says in verse 5, *Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way...* Once again, looking at this, people become afraid of falling and that's what the first part of that verse is teaching us there. One becomes afraid of what could happen. We become more careful in our older age.

And we look on in the rest of that verse, in verse 5, and it says there *the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden...* Well, notice the almond tree shall flourish and what that's speaking of here is one becomes afraid, once again, of what's going to happen, and then remembering the blossom of youth. The older person looks back on the youth. And we often wonder why do older people think of the younger days? Well, that's what Solomon is saying here. That's part of our life. We think back upon those good times when we were young.

And then we look on in verse 5 there, and it says *the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire*

shall fail... What is that talking about? Well, being old and bowed down like the grasshopper... bent over. That ties in with what we were speaking of earlier. It seems like that we just keep bending over and over and it's like the grasshopper... able to move slowly and sporadically. We just simply can't control everything going on with our bodies at that time.

And then the rest of that verse, part of that verse talks about fleshly cravings all but gone. In other words, things have happened, it says, *and desire shall fail...* But notice the rest of that verse in verse 5, people mourn openly when a person goes to their "long home." This is Heaven or Hell. It says *because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets*. No matter if a person is saved or lost, there is mourning, and that's part of life. That's what the Scriptures are teaching us here. If you're saved, there's mourning. People have grief, but thank God, that grief doesn't last long when the person who is left behind realizes that their loved one has gone on to be with the Lord.

But for those people who have never been saved, the mourning doesn't stop, because that person is not going to Heaven and, therefore, the person left behind mourns longer.

Let's pray.

Father, thank You for the privilege of presenting Your Word today, and I pray that it would go forth as You have intended. And I know, Lord, Your Word will not return void. I pray for that person who is unsaved today, listening, that that person would receive Jesus as Savior. May You help each saved person to live close to You and walk according as You would have them to walk. Thank You, Lord, for Christ's sake. Amen.

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