



# THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

CHASING THE WIND

Week 6

# WEEK 5 REVIEW

- Chapter 8 explores our relationship to authority and why we should submit to it (within reason). We discussed 3 functions of government (protection, punishment and promotion). Chapter 8 also brings up injustice and the perplexity of God's plan.
- Chapter 9 compares life and death ("a living dog is better than a dead lion") and concludes that in the face of "time and chance" happening to everyone, our best recourse is to enjoy what we have been given.

# WISDOM AND FOLLY

- Read Ecclesiastes 10:1-15. What damage can a little folly do? How does the Teacher illustrate this?
- What is the significance of the right and the left in verse 2? (see Matthew 25:31-33)
- What can we do to pacify someone who is angry with us? (v. 4)

# WISDOM AND FOLLY

- In verses 5-7, what do you think the Teacher is describing by these role reversals? Why is the ruler at fault?
- What principle can we learn from verses 8-11?
- How is a wise person compared to a fool in verses 12-15? Can you think of any examples which illustrate these differences?

# WISDOM AND FOLLY

- Read Ecclesiastes 10:16-20. What kind of rulers can bring woe to a nation, and what kind are a blessing? Do you agree?
- What problems does laziness cause? (v.18)
- What is the point of verse 19? Do you think that "money is the answer for everything?"



# WISDOM AND FOLLY

- According to verse 20, why should we be respectful and upright with our words? How would you describe your attitude toward others? Is it respectful, or critical? How would others describe you?
- Would you stand by your words if every single one were plastered on a billboard? What about your thoughts?

# LESSONS FROM NATURE

- Read Ecclesiastes 11:1-6. What does the Teacher seem to be saying in verses 1&2? What applications can be made regarding the use of our time and other resources?
- What lessons can we learn from the illustrations in verses 3&4? What principle does this teach us about good stewardship?

# LESSONS FROM NATURE

- What two natural events are described in verse 5? What spiritual application is made? How does understanding our limitations benefit us?
- Compare verse 5 with Ecclesiastes 1:6. How do you think Solomon had knowledge of weather patterns without modern instruments?



# LESSONS FROM NATURE

- Read Hosea 10:12, Matthew 13:1-9, John 4:34-38 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-10. How do these passages and others relate to Ecclesiastes 11:6? What application can we draw from them in regards to teaching the Gospel?

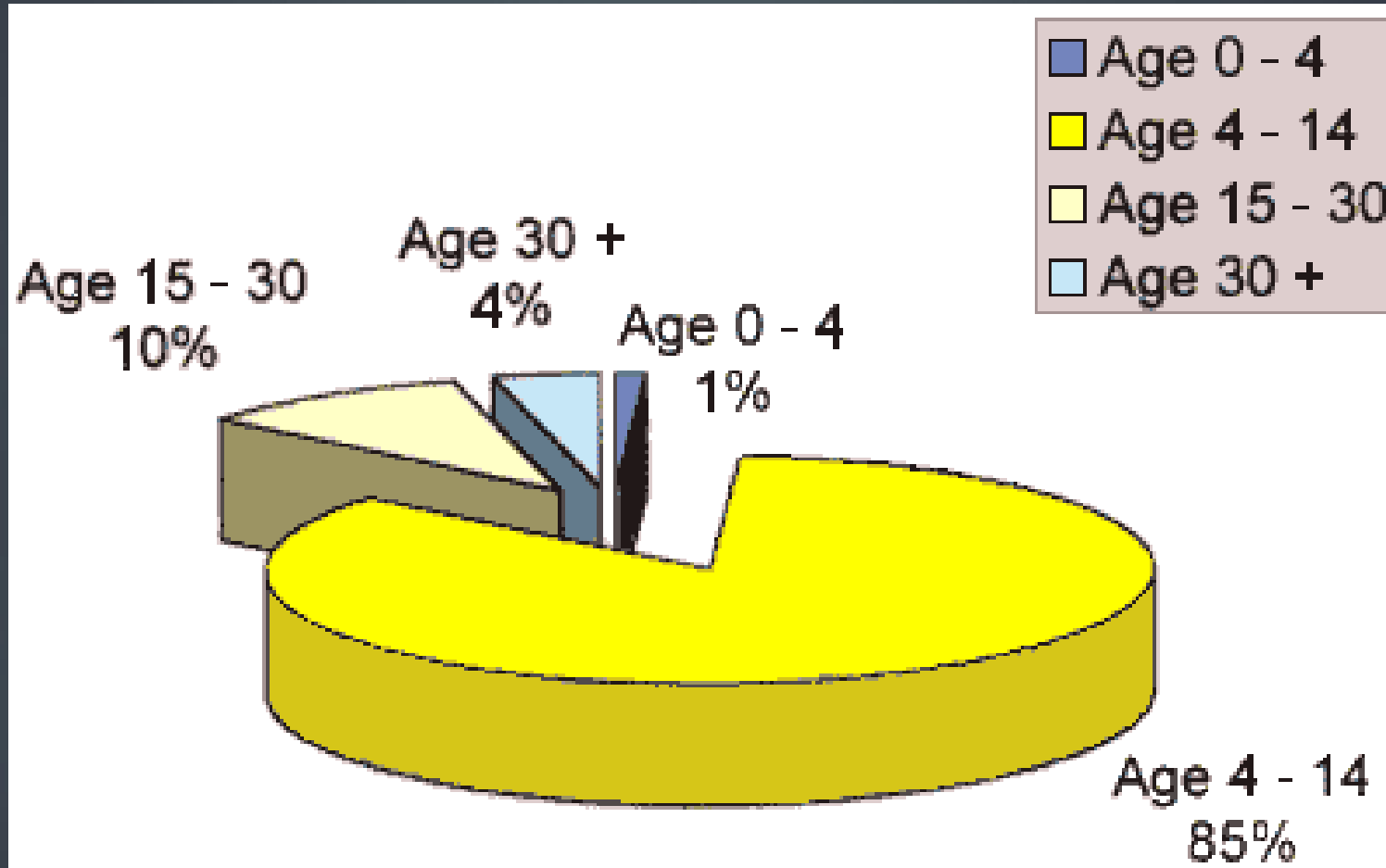
# WISDOM FOR EVERY AGE

- Read Ecclesiastes 11:7-10. What do you think the Teacher is saying in verses 7 & 8? What dark days are to come?
- Who is the Teacher addressing in verse 9? What warning does he give them? Did Solomon heed his own warning?
- How are youth and vigor meaningless? (Think *hebel*).

# SEEK GOD WHILE YOU ARE YOUNG

- Read Ecclesiastes 12:1-8. What instruction does this passage have especially for young people? Why do you think it is important to begin serving God while you are young?
- "Give me a child until he is 7 and I will show you the man." - Aristotle

# SEEK GOD WHILE YOU ARE YOUNG



- Graph courtesy of Howard Culbertson, [home.snu.edu/~hculbert/ages.htm](http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/ages.htm)

# AGING LIKE A FINE PICKLE

- Verses 2-8 present a poetic, yet bleak description of aging.
- v.2: Failing eyesight makes it appear that the sun, moon and stars are getting dimmer.
- v.3: "keepers of the house" refers to trembling legs, "strong men stooping" are hunched shoulders, "the few grinders" are missing teeth, and "those looking through the windows" are failing eyes.

# AGING LIKE A FINE PICKLE

- v.4: "doors to the street being closed" refers to hearing loss, the "sound of grinding fading" and "songs growing faint" refers to weak vocal chords, and "rising up at the sound of birds" refers to disturbance of sleep patterns.
- v.5: being "afraid of heights and dangers in the streets" means that things that were once easy are now difficult, the "blossoming almond tree" is graying hair, the "grasshopper dragging itself along" means little things are cumbersome, "desire no longer being stirred" means that romance is gone, and the "eternal home" refers to death.



# AGING LIKE A FINE PICKLE

- v.6: the "silver chord" is the spinal column, the "golden bowl" is the skull, the "pitcher" is the lungs, and the "wheel" is the heart.
- v.7: the "dust" which returns to the ground is our body. This echoes God's words to Adam in Genesis 3:9. Man was created out of the dust of the earth and his body will one day return to it. The spirit returns to God (see Job 34:14-15).

# CONCLUSION

- Read Ecclesiastes 12:9-14. Notice the shift in speakers. Now that we have heard from Qoheleth, it is time for Solomon to wrap things up. What can we learn about the work of the Teacher in verses 9 & 10?
- Despite their bleak outlook, Solomon still calls the Teacher's words "upright and true." Should we then conclude that Qoheleth was confused about life, or making a point?

# CONCLUSION

- What is a goad? How are wise words like goads? Where do the words of Qoheleth intend to lead us?
- What does verse 12 say about books? Is this true of the inspired books of the Bible?

# CONCLUSION

- What is the "conclusion of the matter" which Solomon points to?
- What does it mean to "fear God"? Where else is this repeated in Scripture?
- The Hebrew word יָרָא, (yi'rah) means "fear" but it emphasizes reverence, honor and respect. It encapsulates shrinking back in fear, but also drawing close in awe and worship.

# CONCLUSION

- "Fear can give us a healthy dose of reality. Fire can be used to light up a dark room, but it also has a fearsome power and can destroy an entire forest or neighborhood. We have a healthy fear of fire, respecting its power. Volcanoes can create islands, but we must have a healthy fear of their power and not be cavalier when approaching them. When we don't show proper respect, or fear, for nature, disaster can result."

# CONCLUSION

- Many people claim that obedience to the Law of Moses (i.e. the 10 Commandments) is unnecessary under the Gospel. Do you agree or disagree? What would Solomon say?
- What does Scripture say will happen on Judgment Day? Who will be judged? On what will they be judged? Why is it important for people to realize that they will give an account to God for their lives?



# CONCLUSION

- To "keep His commandments" means to meet God's conditions for Salvation, in any age, grounded on faith.
  - For Cain, it meant bringing a lamb
  - For Abraham, it meant trusting God's promise
  - For the people of Israel, it meant approaching God through temple sacrifice
  - For us, it is to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." (Acts 16:31)
- God will judge everyone, because all have sinned (Romans 3:23). Christ bore judgment on our behalf. Our sins are either on Him by faith, or on us, still accruing debt.

# CONCLUSION

- "The appropriate response to a world that overwhelms us intellectually and scandalizes us morally is not despair but incremental, daily, faithfulness. Just as Jesus teaches us to pray for our daily bread, Ecclesiastes admonishes us to get on with our daily work." - Kenneth Morefield

# CONCLUSION

- Are you satisfied with the way that Ecclesiastes ends?
- Are there any big questions that this book has helped you to deal with?
- What are your final thoughts on the book of Ecclesiastes?