

Ecclesiastes Lesson 10 from 12.9-14 – Wednesday PM 06/10/20

The Conclusion of the Whole Matter

Introduction:

Life under the sun - The ***main focus*** of the book is the VANITY of material, earthly things — ***1:1-11:9***. The ***main point*** of the book is the importance of serving God throughout life — cf. ***11:9-12:1, 13-14***. The last 2 chapters emphasize the need to INVEST our resources, time, efforts, & abilities toward that which will LAST instead of towards things that will PERISH — ***Ecclesiastes 12:7*** Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

I) The Goal, Method, and Credentials of Solomon

A) ***Ecclesiastes 12:9*** *And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. 10 The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright-words of truth.*

1. The “wisdom of Solomon” is well know and we might say is beyond dispute.

1 Kings 4:29 *And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore.*

2. The term wisdom (chakham) implies that which is from above, taught by God. Book of James shows the contrast of worldly wisdom vs. Godly wisdom or wisdom from above.
 - a. ***James 3:14*** *But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not*

descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.

- b. As a preacher, Solomon wanted to teach the people “knowledge.” There are terms here referring to the word of God. Knowledge triumphs over ignorance.

B) He pondered – careful, meticulous evaluation.

- 1. Spent time and energy thinking about wisdom and knowledge, considering the best way to instruct and teach.
- 2. Reading through the Proverbs one sees Solomon’s advice to the young, warnings to stay away from certain things, encouragement to do what is right.

C) He set in order many proverbs

- 1. ***Kings 4.32*** says Solomon write 3,000 proverbs.
- 2. Words of wisdom, general rules for living one’s life.

D) Acceptable words

- 1. Diligence in study and research.
- 2. NIV “just the right words”. ***Colossians 4:6*** ***Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.***

E) Written was upright words of truth.

- 1. Upright implies the idea of honestly, integrity.
- 2. One might look at these words and think of the responsibilities of all preachers and teachers of God’s word. ***2 Timothy 2:15*** ***Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed,***

rightly dividing the word of truth.

II) **The Effect of God's Word**

A) ***Ecclesiastes 12:11*** *The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.*

1. Important to understand who the “one Shepherd” is.
 - a. ***Psalms 23:1 NKJV 1*** <<*A Psalm of David.*>> ***The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.***
 - b. N.T. ***John 10:11*** ***"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.***
2. The wisdom spoken by Solomon, the knowledge, and truth all came from God.

B) **As such the word of God is like a “goad”.**

1. A stick with a sharp point or blade intended to hurt the one or animal kicking against it.
2. ***Acts 9:5*** ***And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."*** Sometimes the word of God can hurt our feelings, it rebukes and reproves us.

C) **Words of scholars are like well-driven nails.**

1. They hit their mark and are secure.
2. Preaching the word of God is intended to affect people. Make us better, convict us of sin, teach us how to be saved, encourage the faint hearted, etc.

III) The Word of God is Above and Beyond All Others

A) ***Ecclesiastes 12:12*** *And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.*

1. Last year, 2019 there were 1.4 million self-published books on the market.
2. Each year there are numerous commentaries published, not to mention creeds and teachings by other religions besides those claiming to be Christ centered.
3. One can spend their entire life reading all of these books but if one wants to know God's word, they only have to read the Bible.
4. I used to ask various preachers what was the most important book in their library and everyone would say the obvious, the Bible.

B) **The Revealed Word of God is beyond all others.**

1. Beyond any creed book.
2. Beyond any preacher
3. Beyond any council
4. The word of God was not discovered but revealed. ***Ephesians 3:3*** *how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),*

IV) The Ultimate Answer

A) ***Ecclesiastes 12:13*** *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole*

matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

1. Key questions – How should we live? Why are we here? What is the meaning or purpose of life?
2. The conclusion – after all of Solomon's searching and study, this is the answer.
3. The teaching of the whole book of Ecclesiastes is now gathered up in two powerful sentences.

B) Fear God

1. Fear – healthy respect for, “it describes a terror, a frightened recognition that one is weak and helpless in the presence of the One who has limitless power.”
 - a. ***Hebrews 10:31*** *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*
 - b. Jesus says we need to fear God. ***Matthew 10:28*** *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*
2. Solomon in proverbs attributes a lot of fearing God, ***"the beginning of knowledge" Prov. 1.7; "the beginning of wisdom" Prov. 9.10.***

C) Keep His commandments

1. OBEDIENCE is the REAL test of our respect for God and how much we REALLY value Him.
2. ***John 14:15*** *"If you love Me, keep My commandments. 1*

John 5.3. How many times we make this more complicated than it is? How many times we rationalize our way around God's word? How many times we forget our purpose here on earth?

D) God will bring every act into judgement.

1. The inequities of life will be resolved & remedied in the final judgment under the eye of the omniscient and unerring God.
2. The good news is death is not the end. This is one of the few O.T. passages which directly points to our existence beyond the grave.
3. The bad news is we will be judged by God.
4. Every secret thing whether good or bad.
 - a. Every secret sin, when no one was watching, when we are out of town, when hidden by the cover of darkness.
 - b. Every secret work, every secret thought.
5. The standard of God's judgement has been revealed. **John 12:48** *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. 49 "For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. 50 "And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*
6. The timing of that judgement will be the "last day". **John**

5:28 *"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 "and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

7. The hope of that day is in Christ. **Romans 6:23** *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
8. In Christ – washed by the blood of Christ, when we are baptized for the remission of our sins we are cleansed by His blood (redemption through His blood, (**Col. 1.14**), added to His body (**Acts 2.47**). Are you ready to stand before God and give an account for your life? **2 Corinthians 5:10** *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*