

A BIBLE STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

Theme: Solomon and Jesus,
Both Sons of David, say:

**“Fear God and keep his commandments,
For this is the whole duty of man!”**

Trinity Lutheran Church- Norman, Oklahoma
Pastor David Nehrenz Date: 11-29-15
Lesson: 11b



A. TEXT (Chapter 11)

(1) Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. (2) Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth.

(3) If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth, and if a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie. (4) He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

(5) As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know **the work of God who makes everything.**

(6) In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.

(7) Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun. (8) So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

(9) Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes.



But know that for all these things **God will bring you into judgment.** (10)

Remove vexation from your heart, and put away pain from your body, for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

STUDY NOTES:

1. *This life is meant to be an adventure, where we take godly risks and sometimes throw caution to wind by being generous in our giving and courageous in charity - helping others in acts of mercy. Later on, the very people you helped in their time of need will come back to help you in your time of need!* (**Prov 11:24; Mt 5:5,42; 10:42; Lk 6:30; 14:14; 16:19; 2 Cor 9:8; Gal 6:9,10; Eph 5:16; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 6:10**)
2. *When it comes to the clouds and the trees and the wind and seed, you cannot play around with “maybes” and “what might have been.” Wherever you are, start things going and take initiative, don’t wait for things to come to you or for things to be just right before you attempt a project. Go for it!*
3. *Live life to the fullest by working hard and enjoying the simple fruits of your labor.*
4. There will indeed be many days of darkness, so enjoy the light from God when you have it. (**Job 20:26; John 1:9; 3:21; 12:35,36; Eph 5:8; Col 1:12; 1 John 1:5-7**)
5. “As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know **the work of God who makes everything.**” (**Ps 139:14-16; John 3:8-10; 6:27-35; Acts 14:26,27; Rom 14:20-23; 2 Thess 1:11,12**)
6. God will bring everything and everyone under **his judgment**, so do not live as if He is not there. There will be a final day of divine praise or blame, and this puts every part of life in its proper context and significance. (**John 3:19-21; 5:24-29; 1 Pet 4:17-19; Rev 14:7**)

Luther’s Works on ch. 11

“This again is a Hebraism, as Solomon abounds in figures of speech. He wants to say: “Be generous to everyone while you can, use your riches wherever you can possibly do any good.” And he adds a promise: “For if you live long enough, you will receive back a hundredfold.” So we read in Proverbs (19:17): “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord”; so also Christ says (Luke 6:38): “Give, and it will be given to you”; and Paul says (2 Cor. 9:7): “God loves a cheerful giver.” Whoever wants to be poor, let him not give anything to others. Therefore he says *Cast your bread*, that is, “share your food, which the Lord has given to you.” *Upon the waters*, that is, “give it simply and generously, even though your kindness seems to you to perish and your bread seems to sink into the water.”

Solomon is using a metaphor, with which he merely wants to say: “Being mortal yourself, feed those who are mortal.” *For you will find it after many days*, that is, “if you live long, you will find that bread which you have cast upon the waters.” It is as though he were saying: “The fact that you have been generous to others will not perish, even though it may seem to perish. Indeed, after a long time the Lord will grant bread.” Ps. 37:26 says: “He is ever giving liberally and lending”; and again (Ps. 37:19): “In the days of famine they have abundance.” For God does not let Himself be surpassed in generosity, but surpasses our generosity in endless ways.”

LIFE APPLICATION:

1. “*Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days*” Describe the ways we do this.
2. “You do not know the work of God who makes everything” How does this put our lives in true perspective?
3. “So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many” Why is it required that we must take both the good days along with the bad days?
4. “Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment” Who will enable us to live circumspectively so that we can stand on the Last Day?