

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

OT Survey Lesson 302—Eccl. 11:1-12:8

Introduction: This last section of Ecclesiastes in many ways constitutes an invitation to the life of faith the preacher has recommended. Through practical proverbs the preacher urges the reader in the direction of a productive and happy life with an awareness of his limitations. Since our ultimate happiness and sense of purpose is rooted in faith, he urges us to remember God in the days of youth while the enjoyment of life can be experienced.

Lesson aim: To show that the life of faith brings joy.

Encouragement to embrace the venture of faith—Eccl. 11:1-8

1. With what exhortation does the preacher begin this section? (v. 1) What do you think it means?
2. What else is the reader encouraged to do? (v. 2) Why?
3. What is the point of the statements in v. 3-4?
4. What does the preacher affirm we cannot know? (v. 5) Hence how should we approach life and its labors? (v. 6)
5. How does the preacher impress upon us the joy of living? (v. 7) What does he encourage all to do? (v. 8)

Reasons to embrace the life of faith—Eccl. 11:9-12:8

1. What advice does the preacher give to the young man? (v. 9) However what should he remember?
2. Consequently what does the preacher urge the young man to remove? (v. 10) Why?

3. What else is he to remember? (12:1) What are the “evil days” of which the preacher speaks? Why should God be remembered before these “evil days” come?
4. Make a list of the figures that the preacher uses in describing “the evil days” (v. 2-6). To what do you think each one refers?
5. What then is the ultimate destiny of man on earth? (v. 6-7) Consequently, how does the preacher end his discourse (v. 8)? How had he begun the book?
6. The preacher’s discussion of life under the sun leads to what conclusion? (12:13-14)