**THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES**

**LESSON 2 - EVERYTHING HAS ITS TIME; THE GOD-GIVEN TASK; INJUSTICE SEEMS TO PREVAIL; THE VALUE OF A FRIEND; POPULARITY PASSES AWAY**

**(ECCLESIASTES 3-4)**

**EXTRA INFO:** This poem is one of the finest pieces of literature ever written. Solomon sets forth 14 opposite events, each of which may occur at appointed times in our lives. These 7 verses represent completion, and the parallel verses double that number.

**DAY ONE** - Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (Everything Has Its Time)

1. What truth is stated in verse 1, as we consider the providential care of God?

*Answer here*

2. a. What do verse 2-3 tell us, as each line is followed by an opposite truth?

*Answer here*

b. List some examples that would make it a *time* *to kill*?

*Answer here*

3. What do verses 4-5 say, and can you relate to any of these times?

*Answer here*

4. What do verses 6-7 say, and what do they mean to you?

*Answer here*

5. What does verse 8 say, and list some things we should *hate.*

*Answer here*

**DAY TWO** - Read Ecclesiastes 3:9-15 (The God-Given Task)

1. How are all these earthly pursuits, from verses 2-8, good in their proper place and time, but unprofitable when pursued as our chief goal according to verses 9-10?

*Answer here*

2. Compare verse 11 to Genesis 1:31 telling us what God has done for mankind.

*Answer here*

3. What should we all be doing, according to verses 12-13, because it is *the gift of God*?

*Answer here*

4. What did Solomon know about God, and what should be the result in verse 14?

*Answer here*

5. What does God require of men, according to verse 15, as He knows the past and the future?

*Answer here*

**DAY THREE** - Read Ecclesiastes 3:16-22 (Injustice Seems to Prevail)

1. How does injustice seem to prevail according to verse 16?

*Answer here*

2. What did this cause Solomon to say, in his heart, in verse 17?

*Answer here*

3. How does God test men, in verses 18-20, making them seem the same as animals?

*Answer here*

4. What does verse 21 tell us about the difference between *the spirit of sons of men and the spirit of the animal*?

*Answer here*

5. Why should a man *rejoice in his own works, as his heritage,* according to verse 22?

*Answer here*

**DAY FOUR & FIVE** - Read Ecclesiastes 4:1-16 (The Vanity of Toil: The Value of a Friend)

1. What did the Preacher see, in verses 1-3, when he *considered all the oppression done under the sun*?

*Answer here*

2. Describe the lack of satisfaction, in verses 4-5, by both those who do skillful work and those who sit and do nothing?

*Answer here*

3. What does Isaiah 9:20 say about this kind of man who *sits doing nothing*, living on what he can take from others, and is still tormented and never satisfied?

*Answer here*

4. What other kind of *vanity, under the sun,* does our Preacher see back in Ecclesiastes 4:8?

*Answer here*

5. What should this solitary rich man have done with his riches, according to Jesus, in Matthew 19:21, to keep them from being *vanity*?

*Answer here*

6. What stands out to you about the value of having a friend, as described in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12?

*Answer here*

7. What two positions are compared in verses 13-14, and which would be better?

*Answer here*

8. Would it be better to have a *poor youth* rise to power on the basis of his ability to reign, or to have the unfit legitimate successor to the *old and foolish king* take over?

*Answer here*

9. What does verse 15 say about which youth became the next king?

*Answer here*

10. Knowing that both of Solomon’s sons were not good and ended up dividing his kingdom, how does verse 16 describe this similar end?

*Answer here*

**DISCUSSION:**  As we live our lives today, seeing everything going on around the globe as it happens, do you think it might have been easier to live in the time of Solomon or now? While we can’t do anything about the evil we see, what do the following verses say about something that we can be doing?

Ephesians 6:18

*Answer here*

Philippians 4:6-7

*Answer here*