

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 06 June 2021..... Job 01-02..... Faith Tested
- 2) 13 June..... Job 03-14..... Hope Defined
- 3) 20 June..... Job 15-21..... Redemption Found
- 4) 27 June..... Job 22-28..... Wisdom Gained
- 5) 04 July..... Job 29-31..... Justice Sought
- 6) 11 July..... Job 32-37..... Power Displayed
- 7) 18 July..... Job 38-42..... Dependence Declared
- 8) 25 July..... Ecclesiastes 01-02..... What's the Use?
- 9) 01 Aug..... Ecclesiastes 03-05..... What Time Is It?
- 10) 08 Aug..... Ecclesiastes 05-06..... Why Listen?
- 11) 15 Aug..... Ecclesiastes 07-08..... Where is the Balance?**
- 12) 22 Aug..... Ecclesiastes 09-10..... Facing Death?
- 13) 29 Aug..... Ecclesiastes 11-12..... What is Life About?

INTRODUCTION

- Twice in chapters 7 and 8 Solomon highlights the disparity of life – the wicked are blessed and the righteous are cursed at times
- YET, the righteous can still rejoice because God will work things out for the benefit of the righteous

Passage	Comments
Ecc 7:1-14	<p>Exposure to More Words of Wisdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1a. How important is our reputation? How long does it take to repair a bad reputation? • v1b. From an earthly perspective the day of one's death may not be better than the day of one's birth, BUT discerning this passage with the previous phrase regarding one's reputation, the Message Bible nails it: "Your death date tells more than your birth date" • v2. What can be learned from attending a funeral? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Life is fleeting, so act accordingly 2. If you want to be spoken well of, act accordingly 3. _____ • vv3-4. What do the wise learn from times of sorrow? • v9. "Anger resides in the heart of fools" – But isn't anger a God-given emotion? When is it bad? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Proverbs 19:19 "...if you rescue [an angry person], you will only have to do it again" (fools don't learn) • v10. What are we missing when we wish for the return of the "good 'ol days"? Theoretically, from an earthly perspective, we should build on the success of the previous generation, and make life better for the next, BUT spiritually, we often slip into moral decline • v14. "In the day of prosperity be happy, BUT in the day of adversity consider — God has made the one as well as the other so that man will not discover anything that will be after him." – How should we take this passage? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Sunshine doesn't last, so prepare for rainy days
7:15-29	<p>Dealing with Extremes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v15. Solomon shows life's disparity where the wicked prosper while the righteous suffer. We have to acknowledge from the rest of scripture that God allows the righteous to suffer for "therapeutic" reasons and the wicked to prosper for judgmental reasons • vv16-17. We are not to be "excessively righteous" or "overly wicked" – Does this mean we can be a little wicked? Again, from Solomon's earthly perspective, we should avoid extreme legalistic behavior, BUT from a godly perspective we should always avoid known sin • v18. "It is good that you should take hold of the one, without letting go of the other; The one who fears God comes forth with both of them" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Realize v18 seems to be referencing vv16-17

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIV says "the man who fears God will avoid extremes" • The Message Bible seems to capture the passage well: "It's best to stay in touch with both sides of an issue. A person who fears God deals responsibly with all of reality, not just a piece of it." • v20. Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.....Rom 3:23
8:1-17	<p>Facing Inequities in Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v5. "He who keeps a royal command experiences no trouble, for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Application: Those who obey the speed limit don't fear the police, but if a semi loses its brakes and is fast approaching, it may be wise to speed up to avoid a wreck – something worse than a ticket • v6. Again, the Message seems to render this well: "Yes, there's a right time and way for everything, even though, unfortunately, we miss it for the most part." • v9. Again, the Message rendering provides a decent perspective: "...As long as men and women have the power to hurt each other, this is the way it is." • v11. "Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil" – How true this is in our day as justice takes decades to deliver • v12. "Although a sinner does evil 100 times and may lengthen his life, still I know it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly." – Now that's FAITH • v14. "...there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked. On the other hand, there are evil men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous." – For the 2nd time, Solomon shows the disparity of living in a sinful world

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Since bad circumstances do not negate God's sovereignty, we can still trust Him as we trudge through this imperfect worldcf **Psalm 73**

NEXT WEEK: Ecclesiastes 9-10. Solomon hits us with more harsh realities of life: Time and chance rules; one fate for all; one sinner destroys much good; foolishness is weightier than wisdom; some get hurt and others die on the job; and money is the answer to everything.



Life isn't fair...good people suffer, cruel people get away with it – So that's the last time we volunteer for the nursery