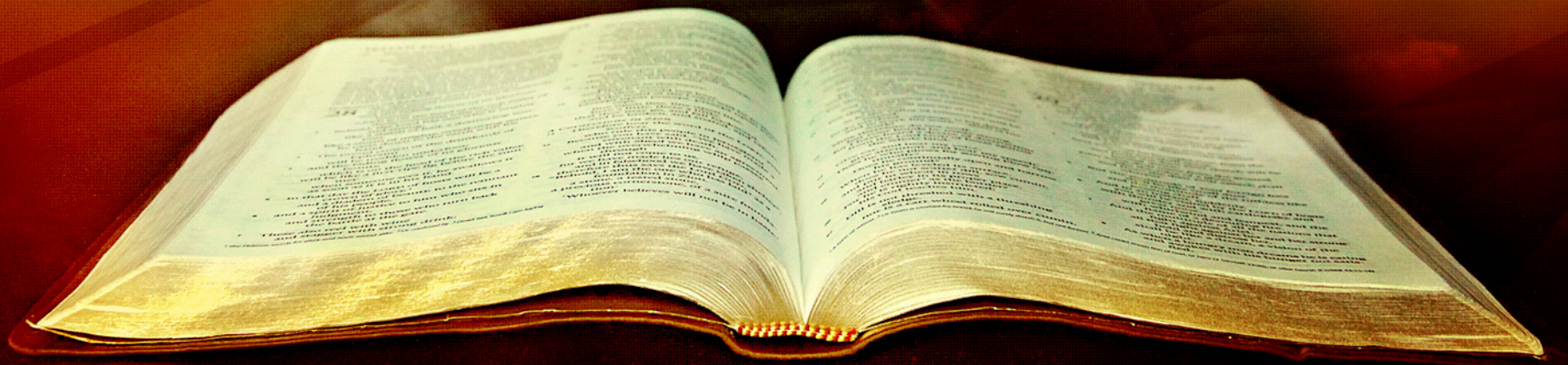


ECCLESIASTES

Ecccl. 7:15-19



Eccl. 7:15 All *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just *man* that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked *man* that longeth *his life* in his wickedness.

16 Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?

17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?

18 *It is* good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city.

This evening, we continue on a wonderful, spiritual journey through the Book of Ecclesiastes, known also as “The Preacher.”

I. THE PREACHER’S SUBJECT, 1:1-11

- A. The Preacher, 1:1
- B. The Problem, 1:2-3
- C. The Process, 1:4-11

II. THE PREACHER’S SERMON, 1:12-10:20

- A. Things He Had Sought, 1:12—2:26
- B. Things He Had Seen, 3:1—6:12
- C. Things He Had Studied, 7:1-10:20

1. Life’s Frustrations, 7:1-29

a. Cynicism About the Better Things of Life, 7:1-14

(1) Character Values, 7:1a

(2) Conventional Values, 7:1b-6

(a) Life’s Sum, 7:1b

(b) Life’s Sorrows, 7:2-4

i. The House of Mourning, 7:2

ii. The Heart of Man, 7:3-4

- Things We Laugh About, 7:3
- Things We Learn About, 7:4

(c) Life's Seriousness, 7:5-6

i. The Rebuking Comment of the Farsighted Man, 7:5

ii. The Ribald Cackling of the Foolish Man, 7:6

(3) Contemptible Values, 7:7

(4) Conclusive Values, 7:8a

(5) Crucial Values, 7:8b-9

(a) The Principle Expressed, 7:8b

(b) The Principle Expanded, 7:9

(6) Comparative Values, 7:10

(7) Concrete Values, 7:11-12

(a) Wisdom in the Daily Things of Life, 7:11

(b) Wisdom in the Deeper Things of Life, 7:12

(8) Considered Values, 7:13-14

(a) The Works of God, 7:13

(b) The Ways of God, 7:14

- Enjoy “the day of prosperity.”
- Embrace “the day of adversity.”

b. Cynicism About the Bitter Things of Life, 7:15-29

(1) Cynicism About the Well Doing, 7:15-19

(a) What Solomon Saw, 7:15

i. Good Behavior Does Not Guarantee a Prolonged Life, 7:15a “All *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just *man* that perisheth in his righteousness...”

- Remember Uzzah:

2 Sam. 6:6 And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, **Uzzah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.**

7 And **the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for *his error*; and there he died by the ark of God.**

1 Chron. 15:2 Then David said, **None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God,** and to minister unto him for ever.

11 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

12 And said unto them, Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: **sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto *the place that* I have prepared for it.**

13 For because ye *did it* not at the first, **the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.**

ii. Bad Behavior Does Not Guarantee a Premature Death, 7:15b “...and there is a wicked *man* that prolongeth *his life* in his wickedness.”

- Remember Saul:

1 Sam. 15:26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: **for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.**

35 And **Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death:** nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Acts 13:21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, **by the space of forty years.**

Eccl. 8:11 Because **sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily,** therefore the **heart** of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

(b) What Solomon Suggested, 7:16-17

i. Be Moderately Religious, 7:16

Eccl. 7:16 Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?

- Do not act like a sanctimonious, self-righteous hypocrite.

Mt. 6:1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, **to be seen of them**: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, **as the hypocrites do** in the synagogues and in the streets, **that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.**

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, **that they may be seen of men.** Verily I say unto you, **They have their reward.**

16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, **that they may appear unto men to fast.** Verily I say unto you, **They have their reward.**

Mt. 23:2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:
5 But **all their works they do for to be seen of men**: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

ii. Be Moderately Rebellious, 7:17

Eccl. 7:17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?

- Solomon's worldliness is implied in the last two verses, 7:16-17 = don't be too spiritual and don't be too carnal.
- "Don't kill yourself" is often a caution not to "overdo it" in being so zealous in your focus – the last words of 7:16-17:

7:16b "...why shouldst thou destroy thyself?"

7:17b "...why shouldst thou die before thy time?"

- Solomon is implying... "don't kill yourself in overdoing anything."

(c) What Solomon Sensed, 7:18-19

i. The Support of Wisdom Recommended, 7:18

Eccl. 7:18 *It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for **he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.***

- Solomon waxes eloquently and spiritually appealing in giving his advice:

“It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this...”

“yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand...”

*“...for **he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.**”*

- Solomon sounds as spiritual as Hananiah during the days of Jeremiah:

Jer. 28:1 And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, **in the fourth year, and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD**, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying,

2 **Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel**, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

3 Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon:

4 And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, **saith the LORD**: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

- Solomon tosses in phrases like – “this is good stuff” – “don’t miss this” – “fear God”

2 Tim. 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

5 **Having a form of godliness**, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Jer. 28:5 Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD,

6 Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.

7 Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people;

8 The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.

9 The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie.

16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD.

17 **So Hananiah the prophet died the same year** in the seventh month.

Swami Satchidananda – “Blessed are the pure in heart, Jesus said, for they shall see God...Yes, blessed are those who purify their consciousness, for they shall see themselves as God.”

James Sire, *Scripture Twisting: 20 Ways the Cults Misread the Bible*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1980), 7.

- The heretic quoted Jesus, sounded very spiritual, and deceived many into hell.

ii. The Superiority of Wisdom Recorded,
7:19

Eccl. 7:19 Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city.

- What kind of wisdom? Solomon's wisdom fluctuated between the earthly, "under the sun," and that which was truly spiritual, from God above:

Jas. 3:13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his **works with meekness of wisdom.**

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 **This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.**

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

17 But **the wisdom that is from above** is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

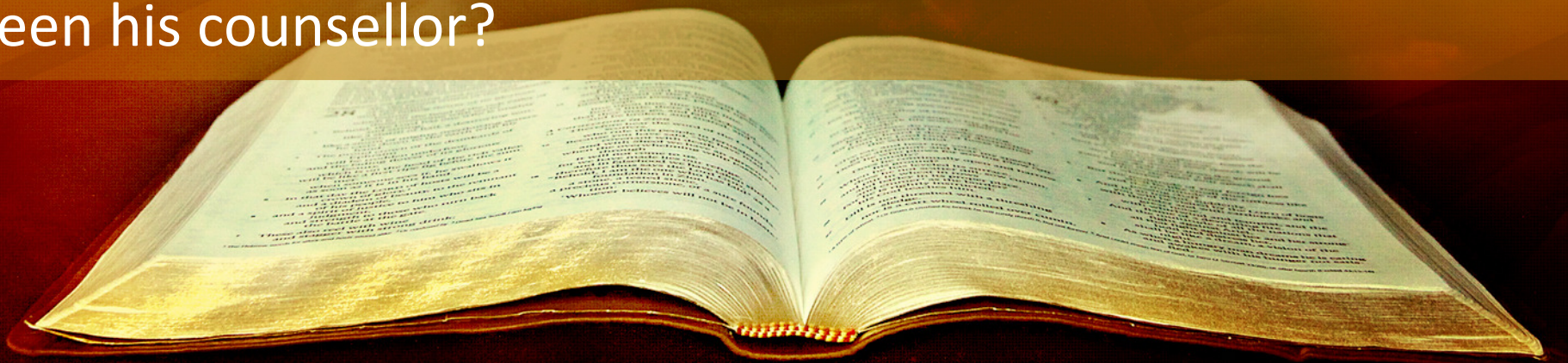
18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Conclusion

Solomon's frustration is compounded by his focus "under the sun" and not considering the spiritual illumination that only God can give.

Rom. 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?



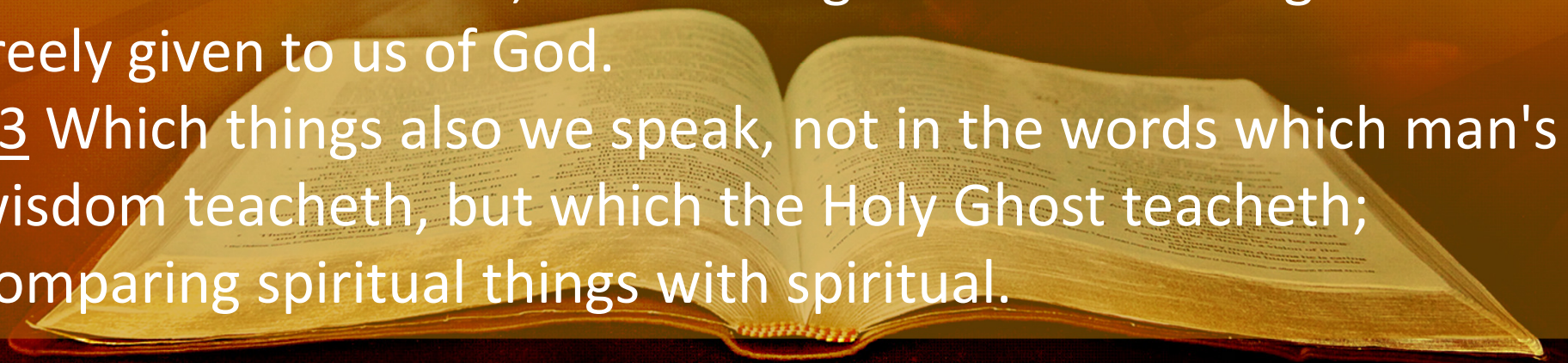
1 Cor. 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.



14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

