Survey of God's Program with Israel

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & the Song of Solomon — Designed for the Remnant in the 5th Installment

A 9-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These are Lessons 20–28 of the 28-lesson tenth part of the Survey of God's Program with Israel. They complete the survey of the five poetical books with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon, and the role those books will have, especially with the remnant of Israel, in the 5th and final installment of the 5th course of punishment, the day of the Lord. Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon were written between the 1st and 2nd courses of punishment, but their major purpose is in the day of the Lord, as foundational doctrinal edification for the remnant. Solomon's three phases are traced: as David's faithful son he wrote Proverbs, as a type of the faithful remnant; as the wise preacher, Ecclesiastes; and after he apostatized near the end of his life, the Song, in which he is a type of the vain religious system. Proverbs gives the remnant four doctrinal benefits and the capacity to separate from the apostate system; Ecclesiastes, given to the sons of man, is the first part of God's message to the nations and sets the stage for the everlasting gospel. In the Song of Solomon the Shulamite woman, a type of the remnant, keeps her mind stayed on what her beloved said and remains loyal, faithful and chaste as she waits for his return.

www.enjoythebible.org

Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
L20	Wisdom Crying Without: The Time Setting of Proverbs — Proverbs 1–3, 8–9 and 30; Isaiah 8; Luke 11
L21	Solomon Set Forth as a Type — David, Man of War; Solomon, Man of Peace; Types of the Messiah and the Remnant
L22	The Four Doctrinal Categories of the Proverbs — Proverbs 1:1–6; Isaiah 29 and Matthew 15; the Strange Woman
L23	The Preacher's Message to the Sons of Man — Ecclesiastes 1:1–13; Jeremiah 46–51, Joel 3, Obadiah and Nahum; Revelation 14
L24	Ecclesiastes and the Foundation of the Everlasting Gospel — Three Aspects of the Message; Revelation 14; Ecclesiastes 11:9 – 12:14; the Pursuit of Pleasure

Lesson	Core Focus
L25	The World Outlook: Excess of Riot — Luke 17 and 21; I Thessalonians 5; I Peter 4; Ecclesiastes 1:12–13
L26	Outlining the Sore Travail: The Vanity of Hedonism — II Timothy 3; a Three-Point Outline; Ecclesiastes 1:16 through Chapter 7
L27	Three Songs of Songs and the Shulamite — Survey and Outline of the Song of Solomon; Psalm 45; Isaiah 5; Matthew 21
L28	Her Mind Stayed on Her Beloved One — The Song of Solomon's Six Sections; Isaiah 26; Loyalty, Faithfulness and Chastity

Lesson Summaries

L20

Wisdom Crying Without: The Time Setting of Proverbs *Proverbs 1–3, 8–9 and 30; Isaiah 8; Luke 11*

A Designed Time Setting

- Proverbs contains general matters about recognizing true wisdom that an Israelite could use from Solomon's day on, but there is a particular time in God's program with Israel when He designed it to be used to the hilt
- That time involves those cleaving to human wisdom fighting against a remnant cleaving to divine wisdom, which the book sets forth in detail

"Wisdom crieth without" (Proverbs 1:20–23)

- Wisdom's appeal is to the members of the nation Israel, especially in Jerusalem; those in the chief place of concourse and the openings of the gates are the rulers of the nation
- Wisdom calls the rulers simple ones who love simplicity, scorners who delight in scorning, and fools who hate knowledge; Isaiah picks up the same three terms against the rulers
- Wisdom came to Israel in the person of the Messiah, Adonai Jehovah, in the 4th installment, reproving the rulers and exhorting them to change their mind

Refusal and the Day of Destruction (Proverbs 1:24–33; Isaiah 8)

- The rulers refuse the wisdom of God in the Lord's earthly ministry; their calamity is what the day of the Lord's wrath is about in connection with them
- Their day of destruction is the last half of the 5th installment; they should have taken hold of wisdom in the 4th, when they were given a chance to change their mind
- Those who hearken to wisdom will be protected during that time; as they were taught to pray "deliver us from evil," they will get it
- The latter part of Isaiah 8 concerns the Lord's earthly ministry: He calls His remnant disciples, binds up the testimony (the gospel of the kingdom) with them and seals the law among them

Time Markers in Chapters 2, 3 and 30

- The upright dwelling in the land and remaining in it (2:21–22) is the day of the Lord

- Everything in chapter 3 is set forth in view of verse 33; the curse in the house of the wicked goes forth in the day of the Lord as part of the avengement of God's cause with Israel
- Chapter 30 settles when the book is to be fully utilized: Agur has a particular generation to come in view (30:11–14), one that did not exist in Solomon's day; the book is framed at beginning and end by the day of the Lord

"Therefore also said the wisdom of God" (Luke 11:49)

- In Luke 11, in the 4th installment, the Lord deals with the simple ones, the scornful and the fools among the nation's rulership
- "Said" is past tense: somewhere in the past the wisdom of God declared that prophets and apostles would be sent to the nation, and Proverbs can be called the wisdom of God

Wisdom's Progression (Chapters 1, 8 and 9)

- Wisdom is personified as a person acting at a particular time in Israel, from the 4th installment through the 5th: crying in the streets, then appealing again in chapter 8
- The Lord builds His house, goes and is not seen anymore, and sends out His apostles and prophets, who function like wisdom's maidens; responding means separating from the apostate element and cleaving to them

L21

Solomon Set Forth as a Type *David, Man of War; Solomon, Man of Peace; Types of the Messiah and the Remnant*

Types in the Poetical Books

- God set Job forth as a type of the remnant in the day of the Lord: the Lord turned Job's captivity and gave him double, as He will turn the remnant's captivity and give them the double blessing
- That type situation exists in all the poetical books; in the Psalms David is set forth as a type of the remnant in much he physically experienced
- Solomon is the primary author of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon; in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes he functions as a type of the remnant, and in his last years as a type of apostate Israel, when the Song was written

The 80-Year Span: David and Solomon as Types of the Messiah

- David and Solomon each reigned 40 years, an 80-year span between the 1st and 2nd courses of punishment, which God gave Israel as a glorious interlude of blessing and privilege
- The Messiah will be a man of war like David in the day of the Lord and a man of peace like Solomon in the kingdom; David's 40 years are like the day of the Lord and Solomon's like the kingdom, though not in perfection
- The title man of war is used one more time, applied to the Messiah in the day of the Lord (Isaiah 42:13)
- The Lord told Solomon there would be rest throughout his kingdom; his very name comes from the shalom concept, the Hebrew concept for peace

Three Anointings

- David is anointed king three times before he is invested as king of Israel, and the Messiah likewise is anointed three times as king of Israel
- The first is by God the Father through a priest-prophet: for the Lord Jesus Christ, John the Baptist. The second is by a remnant: for David the men of Judah, for the Lord in a sense the little flock

- The same type thing takes place at the end of the day of the Lord, when all Israel acknowledges the Messiah as their king

Types of the Remnant: David and Solomon

- David is like a type of the remnant in the persecutions he receives from the vain religious system headed by Saul; the remnant will need the same deliverance from the Deliverer
- Solomon sat at his father's feet and learned wisdom; in the beginning of his ministry he functions as a faithful type of the remnant
- Remnant members in the 4th and especially the 5th installment are to be like Solomon, living in the midst of the generation with the evil characteristics Agur spoke of in chapter 30

The Preacher and the Song

- In Ecclesiastes God had Solomon take the position of an unfaithful member of the remnant operating on his own wisdom, a great pitfall that Israel's vain religious system will cater to
- The Song of Songs is about the coronation of the king, but not Solomon; Solomon is a type of apostate Israel wooing the Shulamite woman, who is like the faithful remnant waiting for her beloved

L22

The Four Doctrinal Categories of the Proverbs *Proverbs 1:1–6; Isaiah 29 and Matthew 15; the Strange Woman*

Written Then, Framed for the Day of the Lord

- Proverbs was written between the 1st and 2nd courses, in the days of David and Solomon, but is framed by prophetic chapters and has a climactic role, a role of fullness, in the day of the Lord
- Then the remnant will be exhorted to separate themselves completely from the apostate system, and Proverbs gives them the capacity to do so
- Standing against the vain religious system is not only for a couple of hours on a Sabbath day, so Proverbs deals with domestic life: husband and wife, and children

Four Purpose Clauses (Proverbs 1:1–6)

- Verses 2–4 contain infinitive clauses, purpose clauses ninety-nine percent of the time; the second infinitive in verse 4 amplifies the first, and verses 5–6 summarize the profit and benefit
- Every proverb, from 10:1 to the end of chapter 29, must fall into one of the four categories, because the book says that is what they are all for
- From 1:7 to the end of chapter 9 David amplifies each issue, giving two examples for each, one a personal example to his son Solomon

1st Purpose: "To know wisdom and instruction"

- The most basic purpose; wisdom is the appropriate application of knowledge to a situation, and many of the proverbs have the day of distress in view
- The Lord identifies Himself as the wisdom of God and functions as the personifications of wisdom in chapters 1–9 function

2nd Purpose: "to perceive the words of understanding"

- Perception is seeing a difference between things that closely resemble each other but are not exactly alike
- A hallmark of Israel's vain religious system is contrary doctrine; what came

out of its teachers' mouths was really words of misunderstanding, a counterfeit resembling the truth

- In Matthew 15 the Lord quotes Isaiah 29 against the Pharisees: their fear toward God was "taught by the precept of men," and their tradition makes the commandment of God void

3rd Purpose: "every good path"

- Instruction falls into four categories, wisdom, justice, judgment and equity, under the general category of every good path, later called the paths of the Lord
- Israel had distorted His paths; in Isaiah 65 the rebellious nation is not on them

4th Purpose: "To give subtilty to the simple"

- In its good sense, subtlety is the capacity to discern a trap and not get caught; discretion is keen discernment about conduct, without which you end up in a shameful situation
- This category gives capacity to handle the policy of evil against the remnant, which comes in two ways: subtly delivered contrary doctrines through false prophets, and seduction in conduct and behavior
- David amplifies it most (3:1 to the end of chapter 7): the strange women, seducers to commit fornication, appear again only in the day of the Lord, described especially in the Revelation

L23

The Preacher's Message to the Sons of Man *Ecclesiastes 1:1–13; Jeremiah 46–51, Joel 3, Obadiah and Nahum; Revelation 14*

Still Pertaining to the Day of the Lord

- Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon were written between the 1st and 2nd courses, but their major purpose is in the day of the Lord, as part of the remnant's education then
- God set Solomon up in three manners to provide Scripture for the nation and the remnant in the day of the Lord; in the Song he is a type of the apostate religious system

Solomon the Preacher

- In Ecclesiastes 1 Solomon calls himself the Preacher, king over Israel in Jerusalem, something not found in the historical accounts
- God established him as a preacher with a message committed to him; that message, in written form, will be preached to the sons of man

"Vanity of vanities": A Sore Travail

- Verses 1–11 set forth the general tenor of the book, and the rest verifies it; Solomon's one-verse conclusion is "vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity"
- The book is designed to depress you: Solomon is not preaching good news, and the book is to be recognized as sore travail
- Verses 12–13 are the two most important verses in the book, Solomon didn't do this for no reason: God is the one who had him do it

Given to the Sons of Adam (1:13)

- "Man" in "the sons of man" is singular, the same Hebrew word as in Genesis 2 and 3, Adam; every member of the human race is a son of Adam, Israel included

- That tells when the book is designed to be used: in the day of the Lord God sends a message to all the nations through the instrumentality of Israel, even before the kingdom is set up

The Message to the Nations: Jeremiah, Joel, Obadiah

- God made Jeremiah a prophet to the nations; Jeremiah 46–51 is his message to the Gentiles, all within Israel's program, and the nations addressed make up a 10-nation confederacy in the day of the Lord
- The bulk of the message then is "prepare war": God is coming to fight them. It is not preached until the first three and a half years of the seven-year 5th installment have gone by
- Edom hears a rumor from the Lord and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, but Edom heard another message before the "prepare war" one

Three Parts to the Message

- The first thing the nations hear is Ecclesiastes; the second, the gospel of the kingdom; the third, "prepare war"
- From the midpoint an angel preaches the everlasting gospel to every nation, after Ecclesiastes has been given, based on what Solomon ends with: fear God, the creator
- Solomon sets forth a message that challenges the pride of human wisdom for the sons of Adam

L24

Ecclesiastes and the Foundation of the Everlasting Gospel

Three Aspects of the Message; Revelation 14; Ecclesiastes 11:9 – 12:14; the Pursuit of Pleasure

A Sore Travail Given to the Sons of Man

- Ecclesiastes is not full of good news; a sore travail is painful and laborious, and after each thing he sets forth Solomon says it was vexation of spirit
- Those who hear it ought to learn from it and no longer pursue the courses Solomon pursued
- The word for man in "sons of man" is the Hebrew adam: the sore travail is given to the whole human race in general, which tells when God plans to use the book
- The sons of man in general were not exercised by it in Solomon's day, nor in the days of Hezekiah, Isaiah or Daniel; in the day of the Lord a message goes to the nations, and Ecclesiastes is part of it

Three Aspects of the Message in the 5th Installment

- The 5th installment is seven years long with a midpoint issue in connection with the manifestation of the man of sin
- The first aspect comes right at the beginning, the second once the midpoint event takes place, and the third right at the end, just before the great and terrible day of the Lord: "proclaim war"

The Everlasting Gospel from the Midpoint (Revelation 14)

- One of the first things God does once the man of sin reveals himself is to have an angel proclaim the everlasting gospel among the nations
- "Fear God, and give glory to him" stands in contrast to the man of sin showing himself to be God; the true God, the Creator, is still resident in the heavens
- The everlasting gospel and the gospel of the kingdom work together from the

midpoint; those who respond get opportunity to survive, proselyte themselves to Israel's program and enter the kingdom

"Remember now thy Creator"

- Before any other message, a preliminary, introductory message goes to the nations, the one contained in Ecclesiastes; the everlasting gospel's message is the very one Ecclesiastes ends with
- In 12:1 Solomon has evil days or old age in view; he also has in view a time of judgment coming on this earth, when the Creator of this earth deals with the earth in judgment
- The name LORD does not occur in Ecclesiastes, which is wise, since the message goes to people who don't know Him by that name; it is simply Elohim, the Creator, and the angel says "Fear God," not "Fear the Lord"

The Pursuit of Pleasure; Solomon's Final Verdict

- In Luke 17 and 21 the Lord tells the twelve the general thinking when the day of the Lord arrives; eating and drinking means banqueting and pleasuring, a pursuit of pleasure
- That attitude characterizes the world viewpoint at the beginning of the day of the Lord, which explains why the first thing Solomon deals with is the vanity of the pursuit of pleasure
- God told Solomon no man after him would have as much wisdom; his message comes from someone who knows, and his verdict is to be recognized as the final verdict

L25

The World Outlook: Excess of Riot *Luke 17 and 21; I Thessalonians 5; I Peter 4; Ecclesiastes 1:12–13*

The Object of the Survey

- Because the sons of man in general are in view, that narrows down when God will use the book: once this dispensation of grace is over, God will have a message especially directed to the nations
- Usually the focus on the day of the Lord is the purging of Israel and the avenging of God's cause with Israel, and rightly so

Priming the Nations for the Everlasting Gospel

- The message to the Gentiles has three aspects: first the doctrinal content of Ecclesiastes, then from the midpoint the everlasting gospel, and right at the end the proclamation of war
- From the opening of the day of the Lord the nations hear a message designed to prime them to hear and respond to the everlasting gospel, and that, as understood here, is where Ecclesiastes comes in
- Every philosophical outlook in the nations is shown to be vanity; Solomon's appeal in the final two verses is to fear God and recognize you will give an account
- The everlasting gospel takes the same theme and says the time of His judgment has arrived; the nations' response determines whether they make war with Him or enjoy the kingdom with Israel

As in the Days of Noah and Lot (Luke 17)

- The Lord is talking about the 5th and final installment; His coming will be so obvious that they will easily recognize it
- The same issue as in Noah's and Lot's days will exist when the day of the

Lord is ready to arrive: a godless self-satisfaction, based on a blind extolling of man's own wisdom and capacity

- God had Solomon search out by wisdom all things done under the sun and declare them vanity, producing no real satisfaction, to set the stage for them to realize the judgment that is coming

The Beginning vs. the End (Luke 21)

- In Luke 21 the Lord outlines the entire 5th installment for the twelve, so they will not be deceived
- Men's hearts failing for fear comes at the end, matching the proclamation of war; the thinking in men's hearts when the day of the Lord begins is entirely different
- At the beginning a worldwide hedonistic party will be going on, produced mainly by the peace and safety of the holy covenant made by the later-known man of sin

"Excess of riot" (I Thessalonians 5; I Peter 4)

- Paul has the Gentiles in view in I Thessalonians 5, not just Israel
- Peter, writing to the members of the remnant, calls the Gentiles' conduct "excess of riot" and exhorts them not to be pulled back into it
- What Peter declares in verse 5, that they "shall give account," is the sum and substance of Solomon's message in Ecclesiastes

L26

Outlining the Sore Travail: The Vanity of Hedonism *II Timothy 3; a Three-Point Outline; Ecclesiastes 1:16 through Chapter 7*

"Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Timothy 3)

- The things Paul cites in II Timothy 3 won't abruptly stop when the dispensation of grace ends; man's attitudes, activities and general world outlook have not changed
- When Israel's program is ready to resume with the day of the Lord, the things Paul is talking about will be at their zenith
- Lovers of pleasures are singled out because pursuing pleasure is the first thing Solomon deals with in Ecclesiastes

A Three-Point Outline

- Introduction (1:1–15): the book's purpose, what it is about, and to whom it is given and why; verse 2 is the summary statement
- Body (1:16 – 11:8): the details of the sore travail. Conclusion (from 11:9): an exhortation to be honest with Solomon's evaluation; their only hope is to fear God and keep His commandments, which sets the stage for the everlasting gospel
- The truth is that men live in a world created by God whom they have not acknowledged, and the time has come for His judgment

How to Read Solomon's Analysis

- No attitude held by a son of man when the day of the Lord begins is left without Solomon saying something about it
- Just about every philosophical system has a built-in deception factor that keeps men from thinking it through
- Except for the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man, Solomon is the wisest man who ever existed on the earth; no one has ever had or ever will have as much

capacity to penetrate and discern what he gave his heart to seek out

An Example: "the estate of the sons of men" (3:18–22)

- Solomon exposes, through the issue of death, a philosophy in which everything a man does is for his estate, to leave a name and make his mark
- He says man has no preeminence over a beast not because it is true, but because that is where the philosophy leads; a justified Israelite knows otherwise, but Solomon is not talking to justified people
- If you do not recognize the viewpoint Solomon is dealing with, you will make him say things he is not really saying

Hedonism and Other Outlooks (1:16 through Chapter 7)

- The first aspect of the sore travail is the vanity of hedonism, in which the chief good of man is to eat, drink and be merry; it comes first because it is a hallmark of the world when the day of the Lord starts
- Solomon pursued it all: education (1:16–18), entertainment (2:1–3), total comfort, wealth and prosperity, professional entertainment
- From 3:1 to the end of chapter 5: changing the world by what you do, government, the estate of the sons of man, the man all by himself, religion, and materialism
- Chapter 6 deals with the vanity of a life without meaning, chapter 7 with thinking life is what you make it; an honest evaluation ends in a dead end before the judge of the world

L27

Three Songs of Songs and the Shulamite *Survey and Outline of the Song of Solomon; Psalm 45; Isaiah 5; Matthew 21*

A Typical Presentation of the Remnant

- The Song gives a typical presentation of the remnant's situation in the day of the Lord: betrothed to the Lord Jesus Christ and waiting for His return, as the woman waits for her beloved
- As Solomon woos and seduces the Shulamite, so Israel's vain religious system will try to woo the remnant away from staying faithful and loyal to their beloved one

Solomon's Three Phases

- As David's faithful son Solomon wrote Proverbs; as the wise preacher, about the middle of his reign, he wrote Ecclesiastes
- Near the end of his life he apostatized; strange women drew his heart away, he became the means by which the vain religious system was reestablished, and he put the nation in the position of being worthy of the 2nd course
- As an apostate he functioned as a type of everything in the vain religious system, especially in the day of the Lord; what the woman experiences at his hand is much like what the remnant will experience

Three Songs of Songs

- Three songs in Israel's Scriptures are set apart by a title like "song of songs", a superlative, very special song, and the beloved one sung about in all three is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ
- Psalm 45 is the only psalm called "a song of loves": plural, a super majestic love with a king in view; it will be sung at the Lord's coronation as Israel's king

The Well-Beloved and His Vineyard (Isaiah 5; Matthew 21)

- In Isaiah 5 God has a vineyard, the nation of Israel; He sent His well-beloved one into it, and he found corruption there. The singer is God the Father, singing about His Son
- In Matthew 21 the Lord gives Israel's vain religious leaders a parable that resonates with the Isaiah 5 song: the husbandmen are the rulers, the Father sends His son, and the nation bringing forth the fruits is the remnant

A Song for Each Phase of the Days of the Messiah

- There is a superlative song for each phase: the 4th installment, Isaiah 5; the 5th installment, the Song of Solomon; the kingdom, Psalm 45
- Solomon writes the Song but the Shulamite sings it, a type of the remnant, sung when the beloved has left his vineyard for the garden of God at the Father's right hand and promised to return
- Psalm 45 is the song of loves the redeemed nation sings to him at the establishment of the kingdom

The Players and the Outline

- Among the five players are the Shulamite; her beloved one, the main character, gone away but coming back; Solomon's court women, the Daughters of Jerusalem; and her brothers
- In chapter 1 she is in Solomon's chambers, her beloved already gone; in 2:1–3:11 she repels his first advances; 6:4–7:9 is his second attempt; in 8:5–14 her beloved returns and delivers her

L28

Her Mind Stayed on Her Beloved One *The Song of Solomon's Six Sections; Isaiah 26; Loyalty, Faithfulness and Chastity*

Three Songs and the Days of the Messiah

- The 4th and 5th installments are the days of the Messiah: the 4th, His meek and lowly coming, covered primarily by the Isaiah 5 song; the 5th, His power and great glory coming, typified by the Song of Solomon
- The song of loves, Psalm 45, is where the marriage takes place

"Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace" (Isaiah 26)

- Isaiah 26 refers to another song, not a song of songs, to be sung by the nation as a whole when the Lord returns at the end of the day of the Lord
- The remnant is exhorted to trust the mechanics of God's Jehovahness being put into effect for them; redemption accomplished at the cross, they look for the Deliverer, the Avenger, the King, and the Blesser
- Occupying their minds with that doctrine keeps their souls in a state of stability; throughout all the 5th-course prophets, the remnant's capacity to endure the day of the Lord is the issue of having their minds stayed on Him

The Shulamite Dwells on What He Said

- From 1:2 to the last verse of chapter 8 she keeps her mind stayed on what her beloved said
- The daughters of Jerusalem tell her she might as well cave in, but she looks right through Solomon; she dwells on what her beloved said, and that is the key for the remnant

In Solomon's Chambers; the First Seduction (1:1 – 3:11)

- The king who has brought her into his chambers is Solomon, yet the first thing she talks about is her love for her beloved one

- She anticipates his return with great anxiety, and Solomon takes advantage of it by pretending to be her beloved
- Before He leaves, the Lord warns the remnant of those in the 5th installment who will try to make them think He has come back; Solomon, representing the vain religious system, does that, and she refuses to go out

The Key to the Whole Thing (4:1 – 6:3)

- The third section is an account of her total occupation with her beloved one's words
- She remembers their espousal and their marriage being at hand, as the kingdom and the marriage supper of the Lamb were declared at hand, and that he was taken from her just as He was taken from them
- In 6:1–3 she declares where he has gone, and that he has not forsaken her but is preparing for her

The Second Seduction and Her Beloved's Return (6:4 – 8:14)

- The remnant faces extreme seduction twice in the day of the Lord, first through Israel's vain religious system, second through the policy of evil; in 6:4–7:9 Solomon tries again, and she remains faithful
- In 8:5–14, as the Lord gathers the remnant out of the wilderness, her beloved returns; the song ends with her faithfulness, loyalty and chastity, an appeal for him to come, and its application: the remnant is to wait as she did

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

The Dispensation of Grace: An Interruption Between the 4th and 5th Installments

The dispensation of grace in which we live today has interrupted God's program with Israel between the 4th and 5th installments; when it ends and we are taken out, it is like removing parentheses, and the program resumes. Had no dispensation of Gentile grace come into effect, the 5th installment, the day of the Lord, would have transpired; the twelve had no knowledge of it and were being prepared to go through the day of the Lord. The 5th and final installment still needs to be resumed and fulfilled after this present dispensation of Gentile grace.

Ecclesiastes: Israel's Program, Not the Dispensation of Grace

Ecclesiastes is written in Israel's program, though its message is not directed solely to Israel; it is not designed to be used by God in this dispensation of grace, and applied to it, Solomon makes no sense. Some use Ecclesiastes 1:13 to argue that the dispensation of grace was not a mystery; that is not a proper use of the verse. In this dispensation of grace God deals with all men alike; in the day of the Lord He deals with the nations, but not the way He deals with them now. Solomon is not addressing "you and I" to teach Bible truths, and he is not talking to justified people.

Tolerating vs. Separating

Under the earlier courses the remnant was more or less told to sit and tolerate the wickedness of the vain religious system; in the day of the Lord they will be exhorted to separate themselves completely from it.

The Main Focus, Not the Only Use

This is not to say these books have no use outside the remnant's use in the day of the Lord; that is the focus at this stage of the study. Granted, all of Genesis through Malachi is the wisdom of God, with Proverbs pointed to in particular.

Subtlety: Bad Sense vs. Good Sense

In the bad sense, subtlety is someone trying to take you in by cleverness; in the good sense, it is the capacity to discern the trap and not get caught by it.

A Distinction: Common Ground with the Body of Christ

The lesson of Ecclesiastes applies to us today as well as to Israel's program: what God says, and doing it, is the only source of happiness, satisfaction and contentment. In closing the Song of Solomon, the study notes that it all applies to the nation Israel, especially the remnant in the day of the Lord, yet there is common ground in this dispensation of grace: seductions from the satanic policy of evil are not unique to Israel's program. As the remnant is exhorted to be loyal, faithful and chaste, with minds stayed on the Messiah and His Jehovahness, so members of the body of Christ are exhorted to be loyal, faithful and chaste, and our mind is to be stayed on who God has made us to be in Christ.

Key Scripture References

Psalm 45	A song of loves, sung at the Lord's coronation as Israel's king; the song of the kingdom
Proverbs 1:1–6	Four doctrinal purpose clauses; every proverb falls into one category
Proverbs 1:20–33	Wisdom crying to the rulers; their calamity is the day of the Lord's wrath
Proverbs 2:21–22	The upright dwelling in the land: the day of the Lord
Proverbs 3:33	The curse in the house of the wicked goes forth in the day of the Lord
Proverbs 8:1–5; 9:1–5	Wisdom's second appeal; her house and her maidens
Proverbs 30:11–14	Agur's generation to come, which did not exist in Solomon's day
Ecclesiastes 1:1–11	Solomon the Preacher; the general tenor of the book
Ecclesiastes 1:12–13	The sore travail given to the sons of man tells when the book is to be used
Ecclesiastes 1:16 – 2:26	The vanity of hedonism, the pursuit of pleasure

Ecclesiastes 3:18–22	The estate of the sons of man exposed through the issue of death
Ecclesiastes 12:1, 13–14	Remember the Creator; fear God, the foundation of the everlasting gospel
Song of Solomon 1:1	One of three songs of songs
Song of Solomon 4:1 – 6:3	The key section: her total occupation with her beloved's words
Song of Solomon 8:5–14	Her beloved returns and delivers her; her appeal for him to come
Isaiah 5:1–7	The Father's song of His well-beloved and His vineyard; the song of the 4th installment
Isaiah 8:12–21	The Lord's earthly ministry; the testimony bound up with the remnant
Isaiah 26:1–5	A song sung by the nation when the Lord returns; minds stayed on Him
Isaiah 29:13–14	Fear taught by the precept of men; verse 14 done in the day of the Lord
Isaiah 42:13	The title man of war applied to the Messiah in the day of the Lord
Jeremiah 46–51	Jeremiah's message to the Gentiles; the 10-nation confederacy
Joel 3	Prepare war: right at the end, before the great and terrible day of the Lord
Obadiah 1	Edom hears a rumor from the Lord; an ambassador sent among the heathen
Matthew 15	The Lord quotes Isaiah 29 against the Pharisees
Matthew 21	The householder's vineyard parable resonates with the Isaiah 5 song
Luke 11:49	The wisdom of God said it would send prophets and apostles
Luke 17:26–30	The days of Noah and Lot: godless self-satisfaction
Luke 21:34–35	The world's festive attitude at the beginning of the day of the Lord
I Peter 4:3–5	Excess of riot; giving account, the sum and substance of Solomon's message
Revelation 14:6–7	The everlasting gospel from the midpoint: fear God and give glory to Him