

## Remember Now Thy Creator

*"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them"—Eccl. 12*

THE WORDS of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 12 contain much food for thought and meditation. The writer reminds us that we should remember our Creator—not when life has become used up and become a burden—but in the days of youth. God does not want the tailend of our lives. In a similar connection, He says—

"Offer it now to thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of Hosts?"

God wants, and should have, the BEST of all that we have to offer, and *with nothing less will He be satisfied*. We read in James 1:25—

"Whosoever looketh into the PERFECT LAW of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Thus we look into the words of the wise man as he appeals to us to remember our Creator before age becomes a burden:

"While the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

The time for seeking those things from above is in the Springtime of life—

"While the sun (suggesting joy, glory and life), or the light of the moon or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after rain."

Man's footsteps become feeble, though once fearless and bold, as the infirmities of age arise one after the other, as the clouds return after rain, in that period which is called "dull and discouraging, with no pleasure in it," the declining years of life.

Let us remember our Creator NOW, when youth is on our side, before these days come upon us—

"Lay up for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come."  
For there is a day coming—

"When the keepers of the house shall tremble, as the strong man bows himself."

And we are reminded that our lives are but "a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away."

We see about us the strong step and iron nerve, give place to the trembling hand and stooping way, as "man goes to his long home."

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"The grinders cease because they are few and those that look out of the windows be darkened."

—all pertaining to man who has entered the Autumn of life: teeth long since gone or very few left, eyesight dim, and the natural forces become abated.

"And the doors are shut in the streets, when the sound of grinding is low."

Here Solomon draws a word picture of the human frame, as age takes the place of youth, the grinding is low, or not at all, as the grinders are gone. The door of the street is the mouth (see Micah

7:5—"keep the doors of thy mouth"). The mouth can be likened to the door of the street of life or our bodies, through which we take nourishment.

To "*rise at the voice of a bird*" suggests something not formerly done, perhaps a sleepless couch.

"And all the daughters of music shall be brought low."

This intimates the time when age has dulled the ear for song or music (see 2 Samuel 19:25). How few there are today among the aged to whom these words do not apply—

"Afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way."

The power is gone, that in youth dared that which is "high," and cleared the obstacles from the "way."

"And the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goes to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

It is said that the almond tree flourishes in the winter time, which is significant of the Winter and its snowy blossoms as the hoary head of old age.

Compare the steady, firm and even tread of youth, with the infirmities, and uncertain walk of the aged, as they seek the aid of a cane in the added burdens of life that have come upon them. Desire fails. Why? Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength, they be fourscore, yet is their strength labor and sorrow."

*Vanity of vanities saith the preacher.*

"Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or golden bowl be broken or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern."

This silver cord, the pith or marrow of the backbone, the central nerve-chord which maintains life and awareness and activity, is here so aptly compared to the cord which helps to move the parts of the body. When it is "loosed" it is like the cord of life being interrupted (see Isa. 38:12).

"*The golden bowl*" suggests a vessel for holding or containing, which can also be said of us; for we hold life so dear, especially in its golden youth, when it is precious and valuable. But for the bowl to be broken, the Spring and Summer of youth gives place to the bending stage of Autumn, and that broken state "when youth and health have fled." It is then, as seen by the writer, Solomon, that the "golden bowl is broken."

"*Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain.*" The pitcher also is a container or vessel. And such is the human body, containing the vital organs and its several parts. It lies broken "at the fountain" when age has supplanted youth during the course of life. Hence the words of Solomon, "broken at the fountain," when it has become useless and insufficient for the performance of the several functions for which it was designed. In Lamentations 4:2 we read—

"The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed, as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter."

The apostle Paul also in 2 Cor. 4:7 compares ourselves to "earthen vessels." So it is, before we come to the state of being "broken at the fountain," the Spirit says—

"Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

"*The wheel broken at the cistern*" speaks also of the forward gait of youth coming to a stop. A cistern in Bible times was used as a receptacle for holding water, which was drawn out with the wheel and bucket. These being broken suggests the inability to obtain that water for sustenance, for which the cistern, wheel and bucket were used.

Yet before this stage is reached, before life is being retarded by the calamities of age, "*Remember NOW thy Creator in the days of thy youth.*" The days of our opportunities are still with us, and in the pen picture of man, that Solomon has drawn, there is every reason for us to stop and consider what the lesson means to us. Let us, then, hear the conclusion of the whole matter; for when the condition of things that he outlines in this chapter—the broken wheel at the cistern—bring us to the last stage of our lives: the wheel the figure of going forward, or a figure of life, which when broken at the cistern (the source of life), death has then come upon us, and we lie broken and still—

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God Who gave it."

Is this not the same thought Job expresses—

"If He withdraw His spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust."

Youth in its natural state, as with all mankind, is "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," except there is heed given to the wise man's words, "*Remember now thy Creator.*"

Let us then hear the conclusion of the whole matter, so strikingly set forth in the words before us—

*"Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."* —W.J.P.

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