

FEAST OF TABERNACLES – DAY 6 – 2005

Fred Coulter – October 23, 2005

And greetings brethren. Welcome to Day 6 of the Feast of Tabernacles – 2005. Hope you've been having a good feast and been having a good time and learning a lot. And of course you know the feasts of God are primarily for our spiritual edification so that we can understand the plan of God, we can understand what God is doing, and as He lays it out in His Word. And as we know, as we started out at the beginning of the feast, that God reveals these things in His Word. And what we have to do, we have to search it out according to the way that God shows us that we need to, and He will open our minds to wondrous things in His law, and reveal to us great things concerning what His is doing and His plan and how He's carrying it out. And so the Feast of Tabernacles is a great time to be able to get together, to hear God's Word, to study God's Word, to fellowship together, to understand and talk about God's plan and the things that He has for us, for the world, and for all eternity. And so it's quite a time for us and you know as I pointed out the most important thing for us to do is always keep our minds on the goal.

Now, I want to go back and review where we ended up yesterday (just a couple of things), because we need to look at the cycle of human nature, because the cycle of human nature is still going to be applicable for all people who live in the Millennium. Because one thing God is not going to do – He is not going to take away choice. So therefore we can learn a lot of things on how human nature works, and the use of choice and how a person chooses, and then how a person lives his or her life. So let's go back and let's review these five steps to apostasy and let's see how this will apply. And let's see also what happened to Solomon, because this is very instructive, because from the time of Adam and Eve clear on down to our time there has never been a time in the history of the world like Solomon's. And we'll see what happened because that is a lesson for us. And we'll see the pattern even in our lives. So what I want you to do is view this as the cycle of human nature, or the cycle of our thinking and then how Solomon applied it, and let's learn some lessons on how then we can apply it to the Millennium and the people who live at that time.

Now first of all every movement (whether it is religious movement, political movement, whether it is a church, whether it is an individual) has what is called a revival. That's the first step – revival. So what we also have with human life is: birth, and growth. And then we have the next step: number two, which is education. Now education is a protracted period of time in individuals lives, and also a protracted period of time in the life of institutions and in the life of churches, and so forth. Then after there is the education... Because this could apply to the Millennium very well, because when we first start out in the Millennium what's going to happen it's going to be a revival. A rebuilding, a time of teaching and education. And then there's going to come a time when everything will have been physically restored. People are going to be healed and have overcome all the problems of the return of Christ and the upheavals that took place then. And then we're going to have a culture that's going to develop. And of course this is going to be the best and the most wonderful culture that has ever been. And when there is culture then you have a situation that takes place: you build institutions, you build

buildings, you have colleges, you have education, you have all of those things – all which we are going to bring to the world in the Millennium, right? Yes, indeed.

Now at that time there are going to be a lot of people who are going to be born into the society, and as it talks about in the book of Judges, when a generation passes away then there's a new generation that follows. And so when people are born into this new generation (and we're going to have many generations in a thousand years, of course), when they're born into a society and the society is set and the culture is set, those who are born into it will feel that this is the way that things have always been.

Now when a society gets to that point of culture then number four sets in, which then is apostasy, or we can say, lethargy, or we can also entitle it Laodiceanism, see. It sets in. And when that sets in people don't like to have their comfort zones disturbed. Or they don't like to have their choices restricted, so they can do what they want to do. Now we can see that in everything. We can see that in life. We can see that in everything that is done. And we will see how God is going to minimize this during the Millennium, but He's still not going to take away free choice, you see.

So then what suffers in the end is spiritual conviction. So that's why we can label it, not only as apostasy because some people will apostatize from God, we can label it as lethargy because everyone is going to hit their point of being lethargic, aren't they? Yes, even us.

Well, let's come here to Matthew 25 and let's see the point of the point of lethargy that happens in the parable of the ten virgins. So everyone goes through it. Every one of us will go through this cycle. Now the key is going to be, for each one of us: How do we keep that from happening to us today? How are we, with the rule of God during the Millennium, going to minimize it with the people in the world? And what are the people going to do? So this sermon today will blend on over into the sermon tomorrow. But let's come here to Matthew 25 and let's see. Even those of us with the Spirit of God, what happens? We reach a point of lethargy, don't we? Or complacency. Or we could put it this way: satisfied with the status quo, meaning, we are happy with the way that things are.

So let's come to Matthew 25 and let's see what it says here concerning the ten virgins, and let's understand that as we're going through these things we need to apply them to our lives, don't we? And we need to use it as experience, don't we? Yes, because you see whenever there is a crisis, a sense of urgency sets in, doesn't it? So the question is: How can we maintain a sense of urgency that is sufficient to overcome complacency? So that's the question.

Now Matthew 25:1: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish." So this shows that there is a natural distribution of wisdom and foolishness. Now in the world they have what is called a normal bell shaped curve. You have the extreme on one side, the extreme on the other side, but most

everything fits into a normal bell shaped curve. And so the median ground is right in the middle. So this is exactly what we have here. We have in the church of God at any one time half of the people who are wise, and half of the people who are foolish. But let's notice, one thing happens to all of them.

Let's continue: "They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them..." In other words they didn't carry a spare amount of oil in a separate vessel to refill the little lamp. And as you know, as you can look in the *Harmony* I have a picture of one of these little reading lamps, which is no more than the size of a huge clamshell with a wick that goes in it and you put the oil in it. Well, obviously if you don't carry a supply with you you're going to run out.

So the complacency and sufficiency set in with the five foolish and they figured that what they were doing was just fine. They figured that what they were doing would carry them over and would be good enough. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. So the wise prepared for being able to overcome the lethargy, though it did fall upon them. In other words the extra oil, picturing the Holy Spirit, means that they took with them enough of the Spirit of God so that when they found themselves coming to a point of lethargy, or coming to a point of laziness, or coming to a point of really slacking off where it affected their spiritual lives, they were able then through prayer, through study, and whatever to be encouraged, to be inspired, to discipline themselves to make the choice to do what is right and to go forward and things like that.

Verse 5: "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." This is the point of lethargy. Now lethargy can also go into apostasy. You see, lethargy is the first step to apostasy. Then apostasy comes because you're so lethargic you're looking for ways out of this lethargy and rather than coming to God you come to your own devices, or in the case of today you come to the way of the world to overcome the lethargy. And therein is the trap. And that's the trap that Satan sets. Well, now we know that in the Millennium Satan isn't going to be around, but we're still going to have to deal with human nature, aren't we? We're still going to have to deal with the lethargy, aren't we? Yes.

Now let's also understand this: as spirit beings, to rule and reign with Christ in the world and help as many people come into the Kingdom of God as possible (And of course this is going to be the great harvest of God, isn't it? Yes, indeed.), we are not going to take away free moral agency. God never wants human beings to become robots and automatons. In other words even though we are born into a culture like we have today, and we have all of these modern conveniences. We have everything that we take for granted. Everything that we have in society is at our fingertips. And we become used to it, and we become satisfied with it, and we become lethargic. And when it doesn't go the way that we expect, guess what? We get upset, right? Yes. Well, we're still going to have to deal with this.

So here's a warning. They all slumbered and slept. They all had their point of lethargy, and in the case of five, they had the point of apostasy. Now verse 6: "And at

midnight there was a cry made...” Now in the middle of the night is when you least expect something to happen. And what happens when you’re awakened at midnight? You’re not happy. I know I’m not. You’re sound asleep and everything’s going fine. You have a good night’s sleep and at 1AM the phone rings – Ring-g-g, and you sit up in bed, “The phone!! Why is the phone ringing?” You find out it’s some kind of problem or disaster, or whatever. So at midnight, when least expected – and this is the thing concerning lethargy and apostasy. When you least expect it, when you are the most comfortable, it’s going to happen. So that’s what it is here – midnight.

“...Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps [now we’re going to get ready here]. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone [going] out.” So they wanted to present themselves to Christ, be ready, but they didn’t have enough oil and their lamps were going out because the little lamp was running out of oil and they didn’t take any. Now here is a great spiritual lesson. This is one of the first steps we need to understand to help us not get into a lethargic attitude.

“But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you...” The lesson is this: You cannot make the choices for anybody else. You cannot do the prayers for them, as evidenced by Job the first chapter because Job prayed for his sons every day, didn’t he? Yes. But that didn’t make any difference, did it, because you can’t make the choices for someone else. You can’t do the things for someone else. You cannot study for someone else. You cannot pray for someone else, that is to do their work. You can pray for people, that’s true, but you cannot do their prayer for them. And you cannot live anybody else’s life at all. So it’s going to be the same way in the Millennium. We’re not going to live people’s lives. We’re not going to make them robots. They are still going to have choices.

So here we have: “...but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves” (Matt. 25:1-9, *KJV*). Now this ties in with the Laodiceans. We won’t go there. We’ve beaten up on them enough, but maybe hopefully that they will come out of their lethargy and do as the apostle Paul said, stir up the Spirit that is within them, so that they can be zealous and recover themselves. So this is something that we need to analyze.

Now let’s come back to the book of Ecclesiastes and let’s see what happened to Solomon, because this is a very instructive thing. Not only did it happen to Solomon, but it also happened to all of the people. Because when they saw Solomon do all of these things what did they do? They did the same thing. So let’s come here to Ecclesiastes 2 and let’s read it. Let’s see some of the things that are here and let’s see how we go through this whole cycle from revival or beginning, all the way through education and culture, then all the way through to lethargy, and then we know Solomon apostatized.

Now this is also instructive for us in many, many ways so let’s see it. Ecclesiastes 2:1: “I said in mine heart [choice], Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure...” How much pleasure can a person have? How much pleasure can a person use? How happy can they be just doing pleasurable things all the time? Well you

see, what we're going to find out is the truth is in all of these things there is a great spiritual lesson to be learned, as Jesus said, "The flesh profits nothing. It is the spirit that gives life." So all of the experiments that he's going through – did they bring him closer to God? Now he did learn some things. That is true. But did he have to go through this to learn it? Let's see.

"...I will prove thee [myself] with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also *is* vanity." So he found out when it was all done it was empty, it was hollow, it didn't satisfy. Because you see, there is a part in every human being that God has put there which is a spiritual part for Him to fill, which is this: No physical thing in life is going to satisfy that true deep inner desire to live forever, except to fulfill it according to the way of God. So he said, Ok: "I said of laughter..." You can only watch comedy so long. You can only watch sit-coms so long, and after a while what happens? It becomes boring and repetitive and stupid, or mad, as he has said here. "...And of mirth, What doeth it?" After you have laughed and you're not in right standing with God, what good has it done?

So: "I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine..." Hey, that feels pretty good. Drink a little wine, you feel good – "I'm going to give myself to wine. Let's see what I can do with that." "...Yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom..." So here we have as we have said before, here we have a full fledged experimental hippie going on here. "...And to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life." And that's going to be something we're going to need to consider for all the people in the Millennium, correct? Yes. That's something we need to understand in our own lives, because you see we also have in connection with what I read there in Matthew 25, what do we have? He who endures to the end, the same shall be saved, right? So that's not only going to apply to us, today, but that's going to continually apply to everyone that we're going to rule over in the Millennium, right? Yes, indeed.

Ok, now here's what he did, verse 4: "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards..." Now not only did he make a house for himself, but he doesn't tell you here that he made temples for all the gods of his 700 heathen wives. "...I planted me vineyards..." Probably had the best wine that could ever be. And you know what happens, when you taste the best wine, hey, you aren't going to buy any more cheap wine, right? And after you drink the best wine for a long time, guess what happens? You get so used to it that itself becomes flat and boring. See, because the flesh profits nothing. That's what we're going to learn here. And this is not only a great lesson for us, but it's going to be the greatest lesson that we're going to have to not only learn in our lives but teach all the people during the Millennium. Because not only that, they're going to have the best of the flesh, aren't they? They're going to have the best of the physical things, aren't they? And to counter-balance that there's going to be the knowledge of God. So this is going to be a time where there will be absolutely no excuse to make the wrong choice.

Well let's go on: "...I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits [every wonderful and great thing you could ever imagine]: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees..." So here he had these magnificent terraces. He had these great gardens. He had Jerusalem so beautiful, and the Temple of God, and the way that people would come up to the Temple of God and be there for the feast, and I am sure that it was breath-taking. I am sure that when the people came up there this was just surreal to them how beautiful and fantastic it was.

So then he said: "...I got *me* servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house..." Well, today we have all electrical appliances. Today you probably have more mechanical servants than people who had enough wealth to hire some servants. You probably have more things that can be done for you with mechanical and electrical servants than people had physical servants when there wasn't electricity and the mechanisms we have today. So he had also servants born in his house. "...Also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me [so he had everything that he wanted]: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces..." Yes, and they had such an economy going that the taxes that he brought upon them, they could all bear. There was so much gold that was coming in, as you read the account about Solomon, that silver was counted as just gravel in the streets. Very much like we read earlier what's going to be in during the Millennium. So the same process is going to affect these people. So he had all of that.

"...I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men..." See, he had everything he wanted to do, everything he could possibly want. "...As musical instruments, and that of all sorts." Well today you can have music 24 hours a day. You can download, you can have ipods, you can play the music from the greatest choirs and the greatest orchestras and the greatest voices, and all of those pleasurable things. Yes, and you can have it, you can plug in and you can have your little carry along CD, and you can just have it blasting into your brain day and night. A lot of people have it that way. So let me ask the question here: If people have to listen to music all the time and can't stand to have it quiet, when are you ever able to think? And who is using your mind? What is going into your mind? "Oh, I don't hear it, it's just background music." Wrong, it goes into your mind. They have proved it. But, that's what he did.

Verse 9: "So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem..." And we can add through the history we know, "and all that came after him in Jerusalem." None were like King Solomon. None had the opportunity. So during the time that Solomon reigned for those 40 years you have a time on the earth that was the closest thing to a millennial setting that we could come to until the end-time.

"...Also my wisdom remained with me." Well, at the time he wrote it that is true, but did it remain with him when he apostatized when he was still in this experimental lethargic kind of attitude here? Obviously it didn't stay with him to the end because when God condemned him for what he did we find no repentance on his part. Now whether he's going to be in the Kingdom of God or not, that's God's judgment, but we find no repentance. I mean take the worst king of all, King Manasseh, and he did everything

wrong. Even dealt with familiar spirits and witchcraft and divination, caused the children to pass through the fire to Moloch. Build idols and statues right in the Temple of God to the false gods. So bad it was that God sent the Assyrians there and they took him off the throne, made Jerusalem a vassal state, and sent him off in fetters to Babylon. And guess what? He repented. He repented, so much so and humbled himself that God put it in the minds of the kings of Assyria who controlled Babylon at that time, and brought him back to Jerusalem and put him on the throne. And what did he do? He cleaned up the house of God, he got rid of all the idols that he put in there, and he ended up doing what was right in God's sight. So the moral of the story is this: that if Solomon had repented it would have been recorded, right? No question about it. Without a doubt.

Now back here to Ecclesiastes 2:10: "And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy..." Now what does that mean? I have no idea how far you could take that, but still it didn't satisfy him. "...For my heart rejoiced in all my labour..." All right, so you look out and you see everything that you have done. You see the temple that you have build. You see the great house that you have build for yourself. You see the gardens, you see the vineyards, you see the orchard, you see all the animals. You see all of these people coming to you – the kings of the earth coming to you saying, "Oh Solomon. Solomon – Solomon, tell us about your wisdom. Here's all this gold." You read it and you understand that Solomon was perhaps the wisest, and the richest, and the most powerful king in all the world. So when it says here that he looked at everything that he did, he: "...rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour." Now does that satisfy? See, because as we saw earlier the eye is never satisfied with seeing, and the ear is never satisfied with hearing. So when you reach a point where you have everything that you want, anything you can do you can do, what happens?

Well, let's read it: "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit...", because it didn't scratch the deep inner itch, if I could put it that way. He was not using God's Spirit, if we could put it another way. "...Vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun." So now he began to see some things. Now he began to understand some profound things. But the question is: in the end did he really learn it? And the reason we're going through this is to show that there will be people during the Millennium who will choose to reject God's way. Now as astounding as that may seem and almost just incomprehensible as it would appear, it's going to happen.

So, verse 12: "And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly [and what ever experiment he could do to do that]: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king?" ["Now who's going to be able to do more than me? I have the money, I have the time, I have the servants, I have the peace. I have all of these things right at my fingertip – anything I want. So who could do more that comes after me?"]

He says: "...*Even* that which hath been already done. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness." True. Yes it does, that's true, but what do you do with it, you see? That's the question. "The wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but

the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.” So you see these two trails of wise and the foolish. You know, like today the great and the small die, don’t they? And the great get their names listed in an obituary in the local newspaper. The small maybe get a couple of lines, but the truth is they are both dead. So he saw this and he said, “Look at all of this. What on earth is going to happen, because everyone’s going to be staring death in the face sooner or later.”

So then he says, verse 15: “Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me...”, and he didn’t learn the lesson, because in all of his wisdom he became foolish. Even though he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes, and even though we have hundreds of proverbs which he has written, even though he wrote about it and had some tremendous points of understanding and analysis he didn’t do it himself in the final part of his life. And that is astounding. And we can see the parallels in church, see the parallels in our lives and so forth, so I think it’s a good thing we all don’t have lots of money. I think it’s a good thing we don’t have everything at our fingertips in the way and abundance that he did here.

Ok, let’s go on here, verse 16: “For *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever...” You can see that. Drive past any cemetery. The rich, the wise, the great of the world they have big sepulchers, don’t they? They even build them little houses to put their bodies in. They have their names engraved there, don’t they? And the fool has just a little place where his name is, maybe born, maybe died. And if it’s a homeless person who has no identification and he dies they’re just buried. They’re forgotten. But as you drive past a cemetery do you remember any of the great? No. Do you remember any of the foolish? No, never heard of them. So he was saying the same thing there. And this became a point of frustration to him. And became a point of despair to him. “...Seeing that which now *is* in the days to come shall all be forgotten.” Question: How much do we know of the world that was destroyed by the flood? Virtually nothing. How much do we know of Solomon’s kingdom? Very little. The archeologists have found a few things which prove that Solomon existed and that Jerusalem indeed was the city where he lived. But where is the gold? Where is the silver? Where are all the buildings? Where are all the things that he made? Gone.

So then he says: “And how dieth the wise *man?* as the fool.” They both quit breathing and that’s it. So he looked at that and he said: “Therefore I hated life...” Well, that’s quite a statement, isn’t it? He didn’t hate it enough to repent. That was his problem. And he didn’t hate it enough to really fully understand God’s way, otherwise he would have repented. “Therefore I hated life...” There are some people that way today. Nothing’s right, nothing turns out good, everything is bad, everything is evil, everything is wrong. And for those in the church who think that’s the way, it’s because you don’t have your mind focused on the Kingdom of God, and you don’t have your life oriented to continually be doing the things of God the way God wants you to do, with a zeal and a desire that must be used every day to overcome the complacency of things as they exist in what is called in the world “the status quo.”

“Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me [Did all these great things but it’s a grievous thing. What’s going to happen to it? Where’s it going to go? What is it going to come to?]: for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.” You see, without the knowledge of God and the Spirit of God, because he had the knowledge of God, didn’t he? So the knowledge of God is not enough. It also takes the Spirit of God. And then it takes the choices of the individuals involved to desire the things of God. And always remember, the flesh profits nothing, it is the Spirit that gives life.

(Turn Tape)

All right, let’s continue on with the plight of human nature and the plight of Solomon and see how much we can learn from this to apply to ourselves, but also so we can help others today, and to realize that we are in training to be the kings and priests to rule in the Kingdom of God during the Millennium. And so this is going to be a great instruction for us on how we can help people minimize going through this cycle and coming to apostasy. But when they come to the point of lethargy that they can see what they need to do to stir themselves up and to change course and to come back to the things that they need to do. Now I think this. It just came to mind just now, which is this: This is why God has His holy days and His feasts. And this is why the covenant is renewed every year at the Passover time. Because you see, in order to combat this lethargy, and in order to combat being overwhelmed with things, and like Solomon here, he hated life, hated everything that he did because he could see that all of these physical things were leading to nowhere. Because he wouldn’t be around to enjoy it. So this is why God gives us renewal every year with the Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, and now the Feast of Tabernacles. Because this gives us the strength and the encouragement and the incentive to overcome these things. And also then gives us a greater desire for the Spirit of God, the way of God, the Kingdom of God. So it’s very important that we learn these lessons.

So let’s come back here to Ecclesiastes 2 and let’s pick it up here in verse 18 and continue on because there’s an awful lot for us to learn. We’re obviously not going to go through all the book of Ecclesiastes, but I encourage you to read through it and to learn the lessons of it and to apply some of the things that we have here as you go through it.

Verse 18: “Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.” And who was that? Rehoboam. And Rehoboam, as we saw, did not have very much wisdom at all though he was the son of Solomon, and he didn’t listen to the wise counsel, did he? No, he listened to the contemporary fellows. “Going to leave it to the man after me.” And probably looking at Rehoboam growing up and all the things that he was doing and how his life was, see. Now we don’t know how old Rehoboam was when Solomon wrote this, but he says: “And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? [See, because there’s still that choice] yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun.” So here he’s getting conceited in his own wisdom, isn’t he. He says: “This *is* also vanity.” So it’s also here a selfishness on the

part of Solomon because he thought he was wise in his own eyes, which he was very wise. But when you come to the point that you're wise in your own eyes and you don't prepare for that which is coming after you then you're foolish indeed. So he said, this is also vanity.

"Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun. ["Well, just chuck it all."] For there is a man whose labour *is* in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it *for* his portion." So he's talking about himself, "Look, I did all of these things and I did them in wisdom, but who am I going to leave it to?" It was probably all in the back of his mind about Rehoboam, his son, because it was by inheritance and succession of the firstborn, right? Yes.

So he thought about that and he said: "This also *is* vanity and a great evil. For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?" What is the final result of all of it? "For all his days *are* sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity." So what he's doing, he's saying that he lost sleep over this. He worried about it at night. And it still didn't solve it, did it? It still didn't resolve it, did it? No. So then he said, "This is also vanity." So what good does it do to worry? What good does it do to stay up at night and think about these things? Are you going to change it? No, the best he could do was prepare. But he didn't prepare. He got so busy doing these extra-curricular activities and all the things that he was doing here that he lost sight of the overall goal and purpose of life.

So then he said: "*There is* nothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour [positive thinking – look on the good side]. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God." So that's the good part of it. "For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I?" In other words, "I've tasted every food, I've tasted wine, I've had all of these things. And who can do it more than me?" So he said, "Ok, I have that, but it still doesn't satisfy."

Verse 26: "For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail [And he did suffer the travail too, didn't he? Yes.], to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit" (Eccl. 2:1-26, *KJV*). So he stepped back and got an overall big picture. Now this is good. We need to step back in our lives and get an overall big picture. When we get the overall big picture... But you will see that he was focusing just on the things on the earth. You find very little if anything in Ecclesiastes, and maybe somewhat in the Proverbs, but you find very little if anything pertaining to eternal spiritual values pertaining to the eternal spiritual Kingdom of God. Very little. All on the physical plane. So we're going to see that part of the solution to this is that God is going to run things differently. However, as we will see, it doesn't change choice, because God will never take away choice from any human being because He has decreed that we all choose.

So Solomon stepped back and he said, “Well, let’s take a broad view. Let’s look at the big picture – Chapter 3, verse 1: “To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...” Likewise with God, there’s a time for every purpose. So he says, and he gives the whole cycle of life here, which is very interesting, isn’t it? “...A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is planted*; a time to kill [that’s not murder, but to kill], and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up...” So you have all these things. So he’s looking at the whole cycle of life here.

“...A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing...” And you can think when you read these, just picture in your mind how this cycle of life is, and see the cycle of life in yourself and in your children, and other people around you. So that’s what he’s looking at – the big picture here.

“...A time to get, and a time to lose...” Every gambler knows that, see, but all the gambling never satisfies, does it? A lot of people think when they go to these great casinos and what a wonderful fantastic time it is. And you even have the ads, you know, about Las Vegas – “What you do here stays here”, you know so people can go over and sin and no one will know. You see, but God knows. So they get there and there are all of these lights and all of the glamour and all of the entertainment. You might say everything that Solomon raved about in Chapter 2 you have in Las Vegas. And a chance to lose everything or to make millions, if you could put it that way.

Verse 7: “...A time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?” So here’s the cycle of life. We all have a life to live. We all have things that we need to do. And what is the profit to it all? See, nothing about the Kingdom of God – just this life.

He says here, verse 10: “I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.” And we all are. And life is a struggle, and life is difficult and so forth. Now, for those that we are going to be teaching and ruling over in the Kingdom of God it’s not going to be quite that difficult, it’s not going to be quite that way as we will see here in just a little bit. So some of these things can be short-circuited somewhat. But God is going to provide, as we have seen, the greatest, the most, the best, and everything that there is, and so human nature cannot be unaffected by this. Just like living in the world that we are living in today, we’re not unaffected by it. We have to live in the world. We’re not to be of the world as Jesus said, but we still have to live in it. When we see these things and it exercises in our lives the same way, doesn’t it? Yes.

“He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart...” In other words people want to go out and do things, and accomplish, and build, and make, and God set it in our hearts to do that. That’s good and right. “...So that no

man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. I know that *there is no good in them...*” That is, the end result of all of these physical things are not going to result in good: “...but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life.” And then realize that all of that comes from God. Now isn’t it interesting here that through all of this how little God is mentioned. We are going to see he mentions God somewhat, but how in all of this how little God is mentioned, which also tells us that Solomon did not understand the plan of God. And probably his sins cut him off from understanding more of God’s plan than he would have known otherwise.

So let’s go on, verse 13: “And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it *is* the gift of God.” Sounds a lot like what President Bush has said, “We want to bring freedom to everyone in the world. This is the best thing in the world. It’s a gift from God.” True, but not the way he’s trying to do it. See, only God can make that work. And this is what we’re going to do in the Millennium.

Now he says: “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever [so there he brings in a little bit about God]: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before Him.” So even though he mentions God notice he doesn’t have a detailed understanding of the plan of God. Now because of that I want us to really think and understand and believe how great it is that God has given the knowledge to us that He has, and how we need to act upon it, and how we need to constantly come to God so that when we reach that point where then lethargy begins to set in that we don’t let it happen to us. That’s what’s important, see.

Now he also says here: “That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been...” In other words in the whole cycle of human life and the experience of human life cut off from God, there is nothing new under the sun, as he said. And that gives us a lot to think about doesn’t it? Yes. “...And God requireth that which is past.” In other words, whatever we have done God is going to require it of us.

“And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there...” Now all you have to do is pick up your paper. I picked up the paper today and it says the mayor of San Jose made a secret deal with the waste management company to take care of future increases in salary to them not stated on the plan submitted to be approved by the city council. But this was done secretly on the side. So there we have it right there. The place of judgment, wickedness was there. How about our Supreme Court? Isn’t that true? Wickedness is there.

Now let me tell you a little secret about the Supreme Court that no one ever talks about. They think, “Oh well, we’re going to get righteous judges in there. Oh what a wonderful thing it is that George Bush has appointed this man who’s only 50. Just think if he lives 35 years, we’re going to have this country straightened out for at least 35 years.” Wrong ! Let me tell you the secret about the Supreme Court and why there is wickedness in places of judgment. The secret is this: every judge has clerks and aids. And they now know that many of the judgments written by the Supreme Court justices were not written by them, but by their clerks. So it’s not who and what the judge is, it is who

and what is the political philosophy of their aids. Now years ago they used to only have one aide for every justice. Now they have four. And they make fewer decisions, which means whatever the aides do is what the judgment is going to be, because they do the research, they do the writing, and that's how wickedness comes to our Supreme Court.

So here's another lesson: even though you appoint people in there who are not overt sinners, such as they may say that one of the women Supreme Court, former ACLU lawyer who's currently on the Supreme Court today, even though you appoint people who appear to be right and upstanding, who are the aides? And in particular, when the Supreme Court Justice becomes older the aides do more work and thinking for the justice. Very interesting, isn't it? A great lesson for us. That's why we have to learn the right judgment of God. That's why we are not going to allow these things in the Millennium. That's why God is not going to leave the Kingdom to other people.

Now continuing on: "...And the place of righteousness, *that* iniquity *was* there." True isn't it? Where righteousness should be, what happens? Iniquity is there. Why? Because everyone (him or her) has the law of sin and death within, and we'll talk a little bit more about that tomorrow about the law of sin and death and how we're going to deal with it with the people during the Millennium. Quite a thing, isn't it?

Now have we experienced that in our lives? Yes. Have we seen that within the churches? Yes. Have we seen that men of great repute have been filled with iniquity and sin and never told the people until it becomes so corrupt and rotten that it can't be hidden anymore? Yes, you find that in churches, you find that in business, you find that in society in general, you find it in the courts, you find it in the politicians, you find it among the homeless, you find it among the ner-do-well's. All there. So these are great lessons for us.

"I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked..." Yes, He will. See, so he came to the point of understanding, "There are certain things that I have no control over, that only God can take care of." And that's what we need to do in a lot of these things – realize only God can take care of it. But what God is also saying is, "I need you to help Me take care of it." And that's why the Kingdom of God.

Now continuing: "...For *there is* a time there for every purpose and for every work", we can say of God's way, of our lives and so forth. "I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts." So the greatest thing he learned from all of his experiences was this: human nature, uncut and raw and uncontrolled makes them like beasts. So now you know why in the book of Daniel and in the book of Revelation the great world systems are depicted as beasts.

All right let's go on. Then he says (he got another point of wisdom here): "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath [We're all breathing the same air, true? Yes]; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast [as far as

extending his life]: for all *is* vanity. All go unto one place [dust you are to dust you return]; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward [which it does – it goes back to God who gave it], and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Eccl. 3:1-21, *KJV*). In other words whatever spirit that God gives to animals to give them a functional brain is different than what He gives to human beings. The spirit of man is special. And that goes back to God. And when it’s united with the Holy Spirit of God then that brings us to eternal life. But whatever intelligence there is in the beasts, it is governed by whatever spirit of the beast is. So therefore I think you’re going to find this: injecting human brain cells into monkeys is not going to make them smarter, because you can inject the brain cells in there – you may get a little different rearrangement of some things, but essentially they have discovered that all brain matter is very similar in all mammals, etc. And it is the spirit of man which distinguishes between the beast and man. So it’s not going to change the animal any because God retains the spirit of man in man and men can not take of the spirit of man and inject it into animals. Now they can inject the cells in there but it has nothing to do with the spirit of man.

So, then you can read the rest of it. You can see how then he gives us some good insight and more philosophical things to learn, and so forth. Let’s come over here to Chapter 11 and let’s understand a great lesson. And this is for all, especially young people. Let’s come here to Ecclesiastes 11:9. All young people, young men and women: “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth...” In other words use your life properly in the realm of the physical life that you are living in. Don’t go out and sin. Don’t go out and destroy your life and everything like that, even though Solomon experimented up close to the point of destroying his life.

“...And let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth...”, because you’re going to get old. That’s what he’s leading up to. “...And walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment.” So he’s saying, “All right, everyone who’s young, consider: you go do what you want to do because you have freedom of choice, but understand one thing: God will bring you into judgment.”

“Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart...” Don’t get involved in things that are going to bring heartbreak. “...And put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth *are* vanity” (Eccl. 11:9-10, *KJV*). Now you don’t see that during the time that you’re growing up. And children don’t see that in themselves. And young adults don’t see that in themselves. Only when you come to a time in life and experience that you can look back and you can see that that is true. And so that’s why God says to the young people, “Honor your Father and your Mother, and honor the one who is older because they have lived life, and they have experience. And don’t look upon them as if that they are perfect. And don’t look upon them to criticize them because older people made mistakes in their lives growing up because you yourself are going to make mistakes in your life as you grow up and as you live your life and get married and have family and children like this, you’re going to make mistakes in your life. So one of the big problems of youth is they look at older people and they see the difficulties and problems that they have and see the

hypocrisy that they view, which is really not truly hypocrisy but just experience in living, and they discount what their parents have done and older people have done because you see, being good is ok for them, but we want to do what we want to do and Solomon says, "Hey, wait a minute, God is going to bring it all into judgment. And the judgment doesn't necessarily come at once.

Let me give you an example. Today they found out this: one of the drugs which is in use more than any thing else today is methamphetamine. And meth is highly addictive, and highly connected to sexual activity as well. And that's the thing that grabs hold of them and addicts them, because it magnifies and accelerates the sexual experience. Well after a period of time the meth no longer works as it should so they have to take more and more and more and it begins to affect the liver, it begins to affect the whole thing. And now they have what is called meth-mouth. The dentists can identify methamphetamine takers because their teeth all turn grey and then they rot and then they fall out. And they lose their natural sex drive because they have accelerated it with methamphetamine. Now you see when they're taking the drug that's the beginning of God's judgment, but it's not finished until they have destroyed much of their lives. That's what he's talking about.

So he says here: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth..." That's when to remember God. Remember God when the times are good, not when you're in trouble. Don't be like the prodigal son who got all vain and said, "Father, give me all that's due me because I want to go live my life the way that I want to." And he made the choice, and the father gave him the money, and then he went off and ruined his life, didn't he? He was able to repent. He was able to come back, that is true. But why do it in the first place? And then those who don't do it, don't be like the other son who looked down and condemned the other one who repented, because you've had all those blessings all along and you didn't have to go through this horrible downward, absolutely terrible vortex of experience that the brother went through. So: "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..." And every older person will tell you this: growing old is not the problem – it's the rust and the breakdown because of age that becomes the problem. And so this is what Solomon is saying, so he did learn something in the end, hopefully, at least written here.

"...I have no pleasure in them; while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened..." And they didn't have glasses like we have today that you can put on glasses and you can still see pretty good. And they didn't have the kind of operations that they can have now that when you're 80 years old they can operate on your eyes and you have 20/20 vision. But that still doesn't stop the people from dying when it comes to the time of the end of their lives, right? Now it's important that we're going through this so tomorrow we can see what are we going to do to help as many people as possible avoid this.

"...Nor the clouds return after the rain: in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves..." In other words they're giving honor to you as an old person. "...And the grinders cease because they are few..." The

grinders are the teeth. They wear down. Today we have false teeth, but you still get old and die, right? Yes. So we have the day of the false grinders. So when you take them out and there's nothing there that's the real you. But when you put them in it's a convenient thing and you can eat, you can chew food, so forth and so on. "...And the grinders cease because they are few..." And I imagine that they were trying to figure out how they could solve that problem. Even George Washington had some carved false teeth. So I don't imagine he was the first one to have those.

"...And those that look out of the windows be darkened..." In other words, you go look out the window, you can't see very far. "...And the doors shall be shut in the streets [you can't go out and do the things you used to do when you were young], when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is high*, and fears *shall be* in the way..." And when you get older you have more fears. You just do, because you realize how fragile that you are. So what he's saying in this whole thing: Don't forget God, because that is the first point of lethargy then, which will lead to what? Apostasy.

And then he goes on, bringing it on down here to verse 7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was [you're going to die and be put in the grave]: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." So it's a good time, during the Feast of Tabernacles for every one of us to take a real look at our lives and understand that without the Spirit of God, the laws of God, the commandments of God, that it's going to be just like Solomon said here in verse 8: "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all *is* vanity." So where he began, he ended up. "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs." Yes, he did. So this was at a time just before he started his apostasy.

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth. The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened [in other words the strong things in lives which make it proper and so forth]... *which* are given from one shepherd [that is from God]. And further, by these, my son [so he wrote this to his son], be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much study *is* a weariness of the flesh." And that is true. Just think of all the books in the world today. An amazing thing, isn't it? See, all of this is so if you don't keep in mind the purpose of God.

Verse 13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God [all your life long], and keep His commandments [all your life long]: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man..." It says "*duty* of man" but it means "the whole of man." And let's add one more thing: And you cannot be whole without the Spirit of God. The one final admonition he gives: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil" (Eccl. 12:1-5, 7-14, *KJV*). And so tomorrow we're going to then see how that during the Millennium we can, in teaching all the people in the world, minimize this and yet not take away their choice.

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Christian Biblical Church of God © 2005
P.O. Box 1442
Hollister, California 95024-1442
USA
Phone: (831) 637-1875
Fax: (831) 637-9616

Contact Us via e-mail: <http://www.cbcg.org/contactus.htm>

Feast of Tabernacles – Day 6 – 2005

Scriptural References

- 1) Matthew 25:1-9
- 2) Ecclesiastes 2:1-26
- 3) Ecclesiastes 3:1-21
- 4) Ecclesiastes 11:9-10
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