

Exhortation for 2nd May 2004

Old Testament Reading: Ecclesiastes 11 Bro. Geoff H.

讲道词 2004 5月2日 旧约阅读：传道书十一章 结弗弟兄

Dear Brothers and Sisters. Loving greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ.

亲爱的弟兄姐妹，送上在主耶稣基督里爱的问候。

Our second reading for today is the second to last chapter of Ecclesiastes. The writer of Ecclesiastes is Solomon, King David's son. In the Book, he is called "the Preacher". (Ecclesiastes 1:1). 今天的第二部分阅读是传道书的倒数第二章。传道书的作者是所罗门，大卫王的儿子。在本书中，他称自己为“传道者”。（传道书 1: 1）

So far, the Preacher has brought us through 10 chapters in which the meaning of life is examined. 到现在，这位传道者已经用十个章节给我们阐述了怎样衡量生命的意义。

Ecclesiastes probes the problem of life - what is it worth when God is not part of it. What is life worth when lived for itself without taking God's promises into account? The Preacher describes this as life "under the sun": a phrase which is used repeatedly in the first nine chapters (for example, the phrase is used in verses 3, 9 and 14 of chapter 1). 传道书探察了生命的问题——当神不在其中，什么事是有益处的。当不重视神的许诺，生活还有什么意义？传道者将此描述为“日光之下”的生活，“日光之下”这个字眼在前 9 章反复出现（例如，第一章的 3, 9, 14 节）

The general concept of the Book is: "Look, this is what life without God's promises is really like. Can you face such life in this world as it really is? Something more is required to make life fulfilling." The Preacher wishes us to make a realistic assessment of "life under the sun" - the life lived without God's promises, with its trusting in human wisdom, pleasure, wealth and human justice. He wishes to drive us to see that only the existence of God and His promises makes life fulfilling. 本书的总体意思是：“看哪，这就是没有神许诺的生活。你能以这样的生活来面对世界真实的样子吗？我们需要更多来完善我们的生命。”

We are exhorted to lift our sight and our lives to a higher role. We are to see life as a preparation for the coming Kingdom when all the frustrations and contradictions of our present life will be resolved. The phrase which the preacher uses to express this different attitude is "to behold the sun", which occurs in chapter 11 verse 7. 我们被劝告要将我们的视野和生活提到一个更高的高度。当我们此生所有的挫折和矛盾解决了以后，现在的生活只是将要来临的神国所做的准备。传道者在 11 章 7 节用“眼见日光”来表明了不同的态度。

We are lead by the Book to the conclusion that the final answers to life's dilemmas or puzzles are only found in Christ. 书中对生命的困惑给出了结论，那就是在基督里找答案。

Chapter 11

第 11 章

Turning to chapter 11, it starts with several verses that draw lessons from natural events of life. 翻到 11 章，开始用了几个经节通过生活中自然界给出了教训。 Verse 1 "Cast your bread upon the waters: for you shall find it after many days" 第一节 “当将你的粮食撒在水面，因为日久必能得着。”

Verse 1 refers to bread being cast upon the waters and then returning after many days bringing a good return. It is similar to a ship being sent out to sea and returning with a full load after many days. 第一节说到把粮食撒在水面上，日久能够得到丰盛的回报。这就像一艘船驶向大海，以后会载回满满的货物一样。

This idea can be applied in a number of ways: The farmer plants his grain and after many days receives it back in the harvest. That needs faith, for the farmer may not have much grain left and his family might be hungry. But he must take enough grain and plant it in the hope of good rains so that there will be more next year. 这个道理可以运用到许多方面：一个农民种植庄稼，日后在丰收的季节他会得着丰收。这需要信心，因为农民可能就不再有足够的粮食满足他家的需要而可能会忍受饥饿。但是他必须满怀润雨的希望，种植足够的庄稼，这样来年将会收获更多。

There is a good example in the life of King David. In the early part of his reign he showed kindness to the household of Machir (玛吉). Many years later, when he was being pursued by his son Absalom(押沙龙)and in great need, he received a very generous present of food from this same household. He had cast his bread upon the waters and after many days it had returned to him. 大卫王在这方面给了我们一个很好的榜样。在他早期统治时，他对玛吉家很良善。多年以后，当他被自己的儿子押沙龙追赶的时候，他从这个玛吉家得到了很多正需要的丰盛的食物。大卫王把粮食撒在水面上，日久得到了回报。

So the verse can apply to any act of faith which can bring results after a long while. 所以这个经节告诉我们，信心的行为可以在日后结出果子。 When we preach the Truth, we tell it to many, like a person sowing seed or casting his bread upon the waters. After many days, some people may respond to the message. 当我们传真理的时候，我们会向很多人来传，就像一个人撒种在水面上。多日之后，一些人会对福音有回应。 Likewise, if we are generous to all men now, we will be repaid over and over again in the Kingdom. Matt 10:42 "whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward". 同样，如果我们现在就对所以的人慷慨大方，我们一定会在神国里得到更多的回报。马太福

音 10: 42 说“无论何人，因为门徒的名，只把一杯凉水给这小子里的一个喝，我实在告诉你们，这人不能不得赏赐。”。

Verse 2 "Give a portion to seven and also to eight; for you know not what evil shall be upon the earth" 第二节 “你要分给七人，或分给八人，因为你不知道将来有什么灾祸临到地上。” In verse 2, the Preacher suggests doing something in many areas - "giving a portion to seven and also to eight" - because we do not know what evil will come. 这一节里，传道者建议我们要在多个方面和领域行事—“分给七个部分（人），或分给八个部分（人）”（合和本翻译的问题）—因为我们不知道将来有什么灾祸来临。 When the farmer plants his grain, he does not plant it all in the one place and at the one time. If he does that, he might lose it all, through for instance poor weather conditions. Rather, risks are spread by the farmer planting at different times and in different places. One crop may fail, but the other plantings may survive. 当农民种庄稼时，他不会只在一个地方只种一次。如果那样做的话，他可能会因为恶劣的天气情况而丢失所有。所以，当农民在不同的季节把庄稼种在不同的地方，所冒的风险就减小了。有的庄稼可能不能收割，但其他更多的却能够存活。 The businessman makes sure that he has a number of customers so that, if one customer fails, he can still carry on with the others. 商人做生意也会保证有很多客户。这样，如果和某个客户出现了问题，他还有其他的客户可以继续合作。 So with the preaching the Truth - we speak to a number of people, so all our resources are not focussed only upon one person who may never respond. 所以当我们传真理的时候—我们对很多人传，这样，我们就不会只关注那个阿可能永远也不会回应的人了。

Verse 3 "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falls, there shall it be" 第三节 “云若满了雨，就必倾倒在地球上。树若向南倒，或向北倒，树倒在何处，就存在何处。” In verse 3, the Preacher talks about the fact that disasters may happen and we cannot do much about them. A storm may come, causing flood. A strong wind may cause a tree to fall over, in one direction or another. We cannot alter the way the tree falls. 在第三节，传道者说到了可能发生而我们却对之无能为力的灾难。一场暴风雨，会引起洪灾。一阵飓风，可能会让树朝一个方向倒下，而我们却不能改变树倒下的方向。

There are sometimes disasters affecting our lives that we cannot control. 有时有些灾难会对我们产生一些我们不能控制的影响。 Some things in our lives we can change and we should try to change them for the better. 生活中会有一些事情我们能够改变，我们也应该试着去把它们变得更好。

But other things we cannot change and we just have to accept them and move on in life. That is of course much easier said than done. Take the disaster of losing a child - it must be very difficult to ever move on from that. Jacob never got over the supposed death of Joseph until he found out that Joseph was still alive and in Egypt. 但是其他的我们不能改变，我们只能去接收它们而继续生活

下去。当然说着总是必做着容易。当丢失了自己的孩子，这痛苦可能让人很难接收而继续生活。雅各因以为约瑟死了而一直不能解脱，直到他知道约瑟在埃及活着。 **Maybe we have a sickness that will never go away. Maybe we have lost a dear friend. In all such cases, we need in time to accept what we cannot change and to remain positive in the our work in the Truth.** 也许我们得了一种永远也不能治愈的疾病。也许我们失去了亲爱的朋友。在这样的情况下，我们需要及时的接受我们不能改变的事实而保持积极的状态为真理而做工。 **What we do know is that, whatever disaster may happen, God knows what is best and works for our long-term good in the Kingdom of God: "all things work together for good to them that love God" Rom. 8:28,** 我们所知道的就是，无论发生什么灾难，神都知道在神国里从长远来看怎样对我们最有益：“我们晓得万事都互相效力，叫爱神的人得益处，就是按他旨意被召的人。”罗马书 8：28

Verse 4 "He that observes the wind shall not sow; and he that regards the clouds shall not reap" 第 4 节 “看风的必不撒种。望云的必不收割。” The farmer who waits until the weather conditions are perfect for sowing or reaping, is unlikely to find those conditions and may end up never sowing or reaping. In the end, he may not do anything. 等待风调雨顺的时候才种庄稼的农民，不可能等到那么好的条件，也不可能去种庄稼或者收庄稼。最后，他可能什么也没有做。 **Likewise in our lives, if we are too cautious and worry about all eventualities, we won't do much at all.** 就像在我们的生活中，如果我们太谨慎，太担心不可预知的事情，我们将根本不能做多少工。 **If we wait until the perfect time to speak to a friend about the Truth, that time may never come.** 如果要等到向一个朋友传讲真理的最合适的时间，那个时间可能永远也不会来。 **We need to be positive and optimistic in the Truth and not get too worried about negatives. Don't wait for perfection to come, but cast our bread upon many waters, for who knows how it may return.** 我们需要在真理中保持积极乐观的态度，不要过分担心负面的事情。不要等待那个最合适的时间来临，而要把种撒在多处的水面上，因为谁知道以后会有什么回报呢。

Verse 5 "As you know not the way of the spirit, or how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child so you know not the works of God who makes all" 第五节 “风从何道来，骨头在怀孕妇人的胎中如何长成，你尚且不得知道，这样，行万事之神的作为，你更不得知道。” We do not know the way of the wind - "the way of the spirit" - or the mysteries of creation. Science may explain the way the embryo grows in the womb, but can not explain why it all happens like this. The mother does not consciously control it. 我们不知道风（或“灵”，希伯来文中，风和灵是同一词）从何道来，或者说不知道神秘的创造过程。科学可能解释胚胎怎样在子宫生长，但不能解释为什么总是那样生长。母亲并没有有意识的去控制啊。 **Equally, we cannot tell all the workings of God.** 同样的，我们也不能明白神所做的一切的工作。 **We need to accept that there are going to be many things in life that we cannot explain or understand. There is no point worrying about these to the extent of not doing anything. Rather, go out and do what you can and leave events in God's hands. This is what verse 6 is saying.**

我们需要接收这个事实，就是我们不能够解释和明白在我们生命中遇到的所以的事情。但我们却不需要为此而担心。相反，我们要仍要积极的力所能及的做工，而把一切都交在神的手中。这也正是第 6 节的意思。

Verse 6 "In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening withhold not your hand: for you know not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" 第 6 节 “早晨要撒你的种，晚上也不要歇你的手，因为你不知道哪一样发旺，或是早撒的，或是晚撒的，或是两样都好。” So be diligent in all that you do. You cannot work everything out, but go and make the most of what you have. 所以要勤劳的做工。你不能每件事都做好，但要去，尽可能的做好最多的事。 All these comments by the Preacher in verses 1 to 6 could be described as "wisdom for daily life". 传道者在第 1—6 节所讲的都可以描述为“日常生活中的智慧”

Life Beholding the Sun - Verses 7 to 10

眼见日光的生活—第 7—10 节

The Preacher now moves on and considers the benefit of enjoying the light of God's truth, which he describes in verse 7 as "beholding the sun". 传道者现在开始说到享受神的真理之光的益处，他在第 7 节用“眼见日光”来形容。"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun" “光本是佳美的，眼见日光也是可悦的。” Enjoying the light of God's truth is far more elevating than living life without taking God and his promises into account, which is described earlier in Ecclesiastes as life 'under the sun'. It gives us a hope for the future. Without this hope and our response, we would only have "days of darkness" after death (verse 8). So make the most of our opportunities in life now - "Life is the time to serve the Lord". 享受神的真理之光是远远胜过不重视神的许诺的生活，这种生活在传道书的前面描述为“日光之下”的生活。它给了我们一个将来的希望。没有这个希望和我们的回应，我们只能死后会在“黑暗的日子”（第 8 节）。所以要过好现在的生活—“活着就是去侍奉主”。

In verse 9, the Preacher gives sound advice and a warning to young brothers and sisters in Christ and unbaptised young people. 在第 9 节，传道者给了年轻的弟兄姐妹和未受洗的年轻人一个很好的建议和告诫。 "Rejoice, O young man in your youth; and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know you that for all these things God will bring you into judgement" “少年人哪，你在幼年时当快乐。在幼年的日子，使你的心欢畅，行你心所愿行的，看你眼所爱看的，却要知道，为这一切的事，神必审问你。”

Youth is the time for vitality and energy. It is a time for eagerness and gladness, a time for exploring new ventures, seizing on new experiences, making new friendships. Youth can be a very happy time, before all the daily cares of family life need to be faced. 年轻的时候是充满生命活力的。是充满热望和快乐的，正

是探险，追求经历，结交朋友的时候。在面对家庭生活中的种种问题前，青春可以是一段快乐的时光。 So we encourage our young people to put their energy into all that they do. 所以我们鼓励年轻人在他们所做的事情中注入他们的精力。 But all things must be controlled by a knowledge of God's judgments to come - "know you that for all these things God will bring you into judgment". 但是做这所以的事情都要明白神将审判一切—“为这一切的事，神必审问你。” In other words, the enjoyment of young people must be within the boundaries which God has set. In the Bible, God has set out the boundaries within which we must live. There are definite Scriptural passages which clearly say the things that are outside the boundaries of proper living. Some of the things that the apostle Paul lists as being outside the boundaries are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, etc (refer Paul's list of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21). 换句话说，年轻人的快乐必须在神所设定的范围之内。在圣经中，神给我们设了生活的范围。在那充满灵性的话语中明确的指出那些范围之外的事情。其中一些在使徒保罗曾列出来：奸淫，污秽，邪荡，等（参见保罗在加拉太书 5：19—21 所列出的情欲的事）。

Young people in the world mostly live outside the boundaries. Young brothers and sisters in the Truth (and all brothers and sisters) need to live within God's boundaries. 当今世上的年轻人大部分都活在范围之外。真理中年轻的弟兄姐妹（和所有的弟兄姐妹）们需要活在神所设的范围之内。 Some may think that making us live within boundaries is restraining our freedom. But God hasn't set the boundaries of behaviour to punish us, or to make us unhappy. He has set them because keeping within those boundaries brings true happiness and lasting contentment. 有人可能会认为活在范围之内会限制我们的自由。然而神并没有设定一个在行为上的准则范围来惩罚我们，或令我们生活不幸。他设置范围是因为生活在这范围之内才能获得真正的幸福和长久的满足。

Chapter 11 in Ecclesiastes therefore finishes with the advice to "put away evil from your flesh". That is the same advice as Paul gave in 2nd Timothy to "flee youthful lusts". 传道书第 11 章用“从肉体克去邪恶”的告诫来结束。这和保罗在提摩太后书“逃避少年的私欲”的告诫是一样的。 But just stopping doing things isn't the whole answer. The best defence against evil is to fill the mind with positive good. That is why Chapter 12 in tomorrow's reading starts with the advice to "remember now your Creator in the days of your youth" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). 但是停止做事情并不是全部答案。克去邪恶的最好办法是在脑子里充满积极的好的思想。这就是在明天将要读的 12 章一开始就有这样一个建议“你趁着年幼，……，当记念造你的主。”（传道书 12：1）

Conclusion

结论

After considering all of the ways of life on the earth, the Preacher gives us his conclusion in Chapter 12:13-14 在思考过所以在地上的生活方式后，传道者在 12: 13—14 给了我们他的结论。"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man". “这些事都已听见了。总意就是敬畏神，谨守他的诫命，这是人所当尽的本分。” The book finishes with: * a command to fear God and keep his commandments (12:13) * and then has a final comment upon God's judgments (12:14). 传道书从以下两个方面来结束： * 敬畏神，谨守他的诫命 * 人所作的事，神都必审问。 Both these are relevant to us today. However the final answers to the Preacher's frustrations are only found in Christ. In Christ, we have the hope which is able to lift us above the daily activities of life and to see beyond our present problems. 这两个方面和我们今天的生活都是相关的。然而对传道者的挫败的答案我们只能在基督中找到答案。在基督里，我们能够超越目前的问题而把自己提升到日常生活之上。

We come this morning to remember the way opened up by the Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we can lift up our eyes to "behold the sun", as it were, to see the future hope of glory. And meanwhile we can be so thankful for the benefits that have come to us through his death, resurrection and ascension to heaven and the benefits that are in store for us at his coming again. 今天早上我们聚在这里用主耶稣基督给我们开创的方式来纪念他。通过他，我们能举目“得见日光”，像曾经的一样，看见将来荣耀的希望。同时，我们是如此的感激主耶稣通过他的死，复活和升天给我们带来的益处，以及那为我们保守到他来临的时候的益处。 Let us together "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man". 让我们一同“敬畏神，谨守他的诫命，这是人所当尽的本分。”

Points for Discussion on Ecclesiastes **传道书讨论要点**

1. Much of Ecclesiastes is speaking about life lived without God's promises. The Preacher describes this as living "under the sun". To help understand the Book, it is useful to colour in the occurrences of the phrase "behold the sun". This phrase is found in: 1:3, 9, 14 2:11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22 3:16 4:1, 3, 7, 15 5:13, 18 6:1, 12 8:9, 15 (twice), 17 9:3, 6, 9 (twice), 11, 13 10:5 传道书多次提到没有神的许诺的生活。传道者描述为“日光之下”的生活。为了理解本书，我们把所有的“日光之下”的字眼都标记出来是很有用的。可以在以下章节看到： 1:3, 9, 14 2:11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22 3:16 4:1, 3, 7, 15 5:13, 18 6:1, 12 8:9, 15 (twice), 17 9:3, 6, 9 (twice), 11, 13 10:5
2. Ecclesiastes chapter 12 commences with advice for young people to remember their Creator while they are young. The Preacher then describes old age in verses 2 to 7 in symbolic language. Discuss what the symbolic language means. 传道书 12 章给年轻人提了一个当他们年轻时当纪念造他们的

主的告诫。传道者在 2—7 节用象征性的语言描述了年老时的样子。讨论一下这些象征性语言的含义。

3. Ecclesiastes 12:11 describes the words of the wise as: (1) "goads", and (2) "nails fastened by the master of assemblies". Discuss why these descriptions are appropriate. 传道书 12: 11 描述了智慧人的言语如下： (1) “刺棍” (2) “钉稳的钉子” 讨论为什么这样的描述时恰当的。 8.

4. Who is the "one shepherd" referred to in verse 11? 在 11 节谁是这个“牧者”?