

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (February 19) – Ecclesiastes 1, 2

These are the words of the preacher, Solomon, the son of David, who proclaims God's word. He speaks of vanity of vanities, of breath, vapor, or something quickly passing. All is vanity, he says. For what can man gain by all that he does in this life (v. 3)? There is nothing new under the sun (v. 9). The good king speaks honest words of the fallen existence we all experience due to sinfulness. In chapter 2 the king explores pleasures God has given in this life. Still, all is vanity, for all come to the same end (v. 14). As St Paul said, the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

It is possible that Solomon wrote these words later in life, reflecting back on sinful choices he had made. The believer, in regretting poor choices, can learn from past errors and with repentance continue to grow in faith. The preacher does acknowledge God's goodness, that a person should eat and drink and find enjoyment, yet only from the hand of God. For apart from God none can truly find joy (vv. 25–26).

Tuesday (February 20) – Ecclesiastes 3, 4

Our Lord holds all things in His hands in this earthly existence. There is a season and time for every matter (3:1). Indeed, our Lord makes everything to be as it ought to be, beautiful and right in its time (v. 11). And yet, all that is in this world is fleeting. Even so, although there is oppression and there are tears (4:1) and vanity under the sun (v. 7), God gives the gift of friendship and marriage that we would find comfort in this life (vv. 9–11).

Wednesday (February 21) – Ecclesiastes 5, 6

In chapter 5 the preacher speaks of drawing near to God with fear. As we worship, let us guard our steps in attending the services of His house (v. 1). Rather than speaking carelessly in His presence, let us approach our God in reverence, taking care not to let our mouths lead us into sin. God is the one we must fear (vv. 6–7). In chapter 6 Solomon speaks of the evil he has seen. God has given blessings to a man who has no power to enjoy them. True joy in life is knowing God and receiving from Him what He grants this side of heaven by way of faith. Thanks be to God for the power He gives to know Him, the true God in Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 17:3).

Thursday (February 22) – Ecclesiastes 7, 8, 9

In words that speak like proverbs, the king in chapter 7 reminds that the day of death is better than the day of birth (v. 2). Indeed, for the child of God through faith in Christ life eternal awaits! Chapter 8 begins with words of wisdom. The king reminds that it will be well for those who fear God, but it will not be well with the wicked because he lacks the fear of God (vv. 12–13). In chapter 9 Solomon reminds that the one that is joined with all the living has hope (v. 4). Indeed, Christ our life has joined us to Himself. With words of wisdom, the king speaks of eating and drinking with a merry heart before God. God has given life in this

fallen world, so it is that whatever we find to do, we do it with all our might and in faith (vv. 7–10). Although Solomon speaks with wisdom, it is Jesus Christ who is our true wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Friday (February 23) – Ecclesiastes 10, 11, 12

Solomon speaks more proverbs in chapter 10. Words of wisdom are from God alone. James reminds that the one who lacks wisdom should ask of God in faith (James 1:5–6). In Chapter 11 the preacher indicates that none know the work of God who makes all things (v. 5). Chapter 12 gives the conclusion of the matter. Remembering God in the days of your youth before evil days come is wise (v. 1). The preacher has taught the people knowledge, and he recorded words of truth (vv. 9–10). Thanks be to God for His holy words of truth recorded in the pages of Holy Scripture. Solomon’s words of wisdom conclude his work, speaking of the whole duty of man, to fear God and keep His commandments (v. 13).

Saturday (February 24) – Song of Solomon 1, 2

In poetic beauty this work extolls marital faithfulness and commitment. From ancient times the words have also been seen in reference to the faithful God who calls and weds His bride, the church. Martin Luther once said that the Lord kisses and embraces His bride with His word! In chapter 1, the Lord’s holy bride exults and rejoices in her Groom and extols His love more than wine (v. 4). As God’s people we rejoice in our Lord always (Phil 4:4)! In chapter two the Beloved speaks to His beloved bride calling her away (v. 10). In the *Small Catechism* we confess that we cannot by our own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ as Lord, or come to Him ourselves, but the Holy Spirit is He who calls us by the Gospel and enlightens us with His gifts. In the same way He also does so for His bride, the whole Christian church on earth.

Sunday (February 25) – Song of Solomon 3, 4, 5

Chapter 3 begins with the image of human love as a time of courtship and seeking to grow in that love (vv. 1–2). So in our relationship to our Lord, we seek to grow in faith day-to-day. Faith awaits the moment our Lord calls His bride to His heavenly home (v. 5). In chapter 4 the bridegroom admires his beautiful bride (v. 10). Marital love is a gift of God. Indeed, husband and wife are heirs together of the grace of eternal life (1 Peter 3:7). Earthly marriage models the relationship of God’s people to their Lord, the Bridegroom, who comes to call us all to Himself (Ephesians 5:25-27). The church is His sister (an ancient way of speaking of one’s spouse), His holy bride (5:1)!