



Go For It!

Ecclesiastes 11



I. Risk Courageously





Ecc 11:1

- “Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days.”
- שִׁלַּח (sallah, to send) is the word we translate “cast.”
- תִּמְצָאֲנָה (tmsa'an) means to find, to obtain, to find what was sought). Profiting, even. What you sent comes back multiplied in some way.

Ecclesiastes recap

- Achievements and possessions are profitless (Ecc 2:11)
- Wisdom is better than folly, but is ultimately *hevel* (Ecc 2:15)
- Anything we earn, we can't take with us, and our children might well squander their inheritance (2:21), *but* it's still better than not passing it on to anyone at all (Ecc 4:8)
- God has placed ignorance in man's heart (3:11)
- Oppression is common and inevitable (Ecc 4:1), and the extortion of the poor is common and expected (5:8)
- It's better to be dead than alive, but the best is never to have been born in the first place (Ecc 4:2, 6:3)
- Skillful work is usually rooted in sinful competitiveness (4:4)
- It's better to be poor and wise than a king (Ecc 4:13) *but* you won't be listened to or appreciated (9:16)

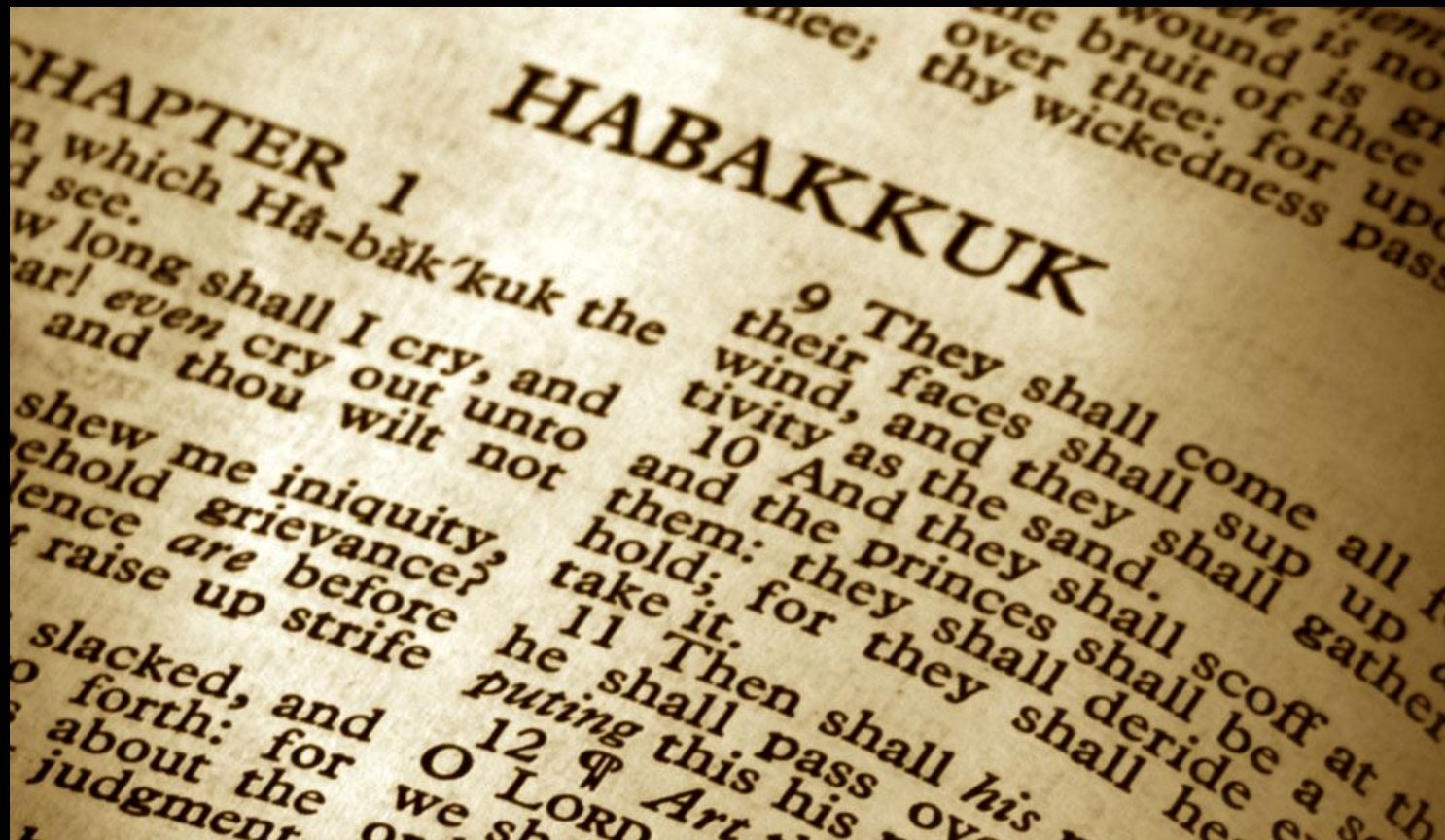
Ecclesiastes recap

- Money is the answer to everything (10:19), but the more money you have the more problems come with it (5:11)
- Sometimes you might get everything you want and work hard for, and God will rob you of the ability to enjoy any of it (6:2)
- Our heart is set on the future (3:11), but no one can know what it is (6:12).
- The king is probably ignorant and will make you mad, but you shouldn't quit him or question him (Ecc 8)
- Sometimes the righteous get what the wicked deserve, and the wicked get what the righteous deserve (8:14)
- No one knows what God is doing in the present, not even the wise (8:17)
- Everyone dies, whether they live good lives or bad lives (9:3)
- God ordains failure sometimes even among the fastest, strongest, wisest, and most discerning (9:11)
- Work is dangerous (10:8-11)



And yet his
answer to living
in the face of all
that is: **risk**
courageously.

Habbakuk 2



“And the LORD answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but **the righteous shall live by his faith.**”

Hebrews 10:38

*“my righteous one shall live by faith, and if
he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in
him.”*

John 4:4

“The hour is coming,” he said, “and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”





Joshua 1:9

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Hedge your bets – Ecc 11:2

- “Divide your merchandise among seven or even eight investments, for you do not know what calamity may happen on earth.”
- NET Bible Notes: “The phrase you do not know is repeated throughout this section. Human beings are ignorant of the future. This should motivate a person to invest their financial resources wisely (11:1–3) and to work diligently (11:4–6).”

Ecc 11:3

- “If the clouds are full of rain, they will empty themselves on the earth, and whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, the tree will lie wherever it falls. He who watches the wind will not sow, and he who observes the clouds will not reap.”
- **There is inevitability in life, and that often takes the form of calamities major and minor. But we’re not meant to be frozen by that fact.**



Ecc 11:5

- “Just as you do not know the path of the wind, or how the bones form in the womb of a pregnant woman, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.”
- Translations differ here. It’s either the “way of the wind” or “how the spirit comes” (the word for wind and spirit is the same)


“Do Not Let Your Hands Rest”

- **Ecc 11:6** “Sow your seed in the morning, and do not stop working until the evening; for you do not know which activity will succeed—whether this one or that one, or whether both will prosper equally.”
- **John 9:4** that “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.”





II. Rejoice Greatly (11:7-10)



“Rejoice and
Remember” (Ecc 11:7-8)

“Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for a person to see the sun. So, if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all, but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many—all that is about to come is obscure.”



“Rejoice in them *all*.”

- **Phil 4:4** “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice! Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand, do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Rejoice and *know* (Ecc 11:9)

“Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes but know that God will judge your motives and actions.”

Ecc 11:10

“Banish emotional stress from your mind. and put away pain from your body; for youth and the prime of life are fleeting.”

- “Remove” (הָסֵר, haser) *hif’il* imperative – take off (clothes), push aside, set aside, do away with.
- Push aside, set aside, take off – *what?* כָּאָס (ka’as) - has a broad range of meanings related to emotional stress: “anger” (Deut 4:25; 9:18), “irritation” (Deut 32:21), “offence” (2 Kgs 23:26; Neh 3:37), “vexation” or “frustration” (Ezek 20:28), “grief” (1 Sam 1:6), and “worry” (Ps 112:10; Eccl 7:9).



Set aside the
obstacle of
emotional stress.
Step over the
obstacle of pain
from your body.

Stress is optional!



C.S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

“All their life in this world and all their adventures had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”