

Ecclesiastes

12th CHAPTER, 1st to 7th VERSES

An Interpretation from the Walkes Masonic Collection

Almond tree: A tree whose blossoms are exceedingly white; hence, a symbol of man in his declining years.

Daughters of music: The expression "daughters of music shall be brought low" is a symbolic utterance referring to the infirmities of old age, when the hearing becomes dull and the natural gifts and accomplishments fade.

Desires shall fade: This quotation is used in its figurative sense, referring to the fact that in the infirmities of old age; men are no longer concerned about the carnal and secular things of the earth.

Door shall be shut: "The doors shall be shut in the streets when the sound of the grinding is low" refers to the decrepitude of old age when chewing shall be difficult because of the loss of teeth.

Dust to earth: Man's body was made from the earth and must return to the dust in one form or another. The use of this phrase points to the mortality and frailty of the physical being and to the need for recognizing the immortality of the spirit of man.

Fears shall be in the way: This phrase describes the failing courage of old age, the nervous and excited state of mind natural to declining years.

Golden bowl be broken: This is a figurative expression relating to the broken state of man's mind, or brain, as a result of the decrepitude of old age.

Grasshopper shall be a burden: This expression is a figure of the weakness accompanying old age.

Grinders cease because they are few: This term indicates the decrepitude of old age when the teeth are almost gone and chewing can no longer be performed.

Keepers of the house shall tremble: This expression is the figure of the failings of the body in old age or as weakened by the approach of death.

Mourn as go about the streets: This is a poetical expression and reference to the practice of having hired mourners in and about the house following the death of a loved one.

Pitcher be broken at the fountain: The heart is the fountain of human life, and the great vein which carries the blood to the right ventricle is, symbolically, called the pitcher. When this is broken as the result of the decrepitude of old age, or by human disease, death soon follows.

Those that look out of the windows be darkened: This is a figurative and poetic expression indicating the failure of eyesight as the result of the decrepitude of old age, or as one approaches death.

Wheel broken: A symbol of the infirmation of old age, a representation of the great artery that receives the blood from the left ventricle of the heart, symbolized by the cistern.

Walkes, Joseph *Ecclesiastes, 12th Chapter, 1st to 7th Verses*

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