

KEC ORDER OF SERVICE/SERMON OUTLINE 24th July 2022 (KEC Hybrid Service)

The livestream can be accessed at

https://www.facebook.com/bemkec/live_videos/ or <https://youtube.com/bemkec/live>

Welcome to church! Here at BEM KEC, these are our core convictions:

- To be centred on the gospel
 - To be driven by God's Word
 - To be focused on growing disciples
 - To be a community of truth and love
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1. CALL TO WORSHIP – 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

2. Worship in SONG (with Joshua Baru):

SONG 1: Forever Reign

SONG 2: No Greater Hope

SONG 3: Ancient of Days (NEW SONG)

SONG 4: King of kings

3. Prayers

4. Bible reading: Ecclesiastes 7:1-29

⁷ A good name is better than fine perfume,
and the day of death better than the day of birth.

² It is better to go to a house of mourning
than to go to a house of feasting,
for death is the destiny of everyone;
the living should take this to heart.

³ Frustration is better than laughter,
because a sad face is good for the heart.

⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure.

⁵ It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person
than to listen to the song of fools.

⁶ Like the crackling of thorns under the pot,
so is the laughter of fools.
This too is meaningless.

⁷ Extortion turns a wise person into a fool,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.

⁸ The end of a matter is better than its beginning,
and patience is better than pride.

⁹ Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit,
for anger resides in the lap of fools.

10 Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?"
For it is not wise to ask such questions.

11 Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing
and benefits those who see the sun.

12 Wisdom is a shelter
as money is a shelter,
but the advantage of knowledge is this:
Wisdom preserves those who have it.

13 Consider what God has done:
Who can straighten
what he has made crooked?

14 When times are good, be happy;
but when times are bad, consider this:
God has made the one
as well as the other.
Therefore, no one can discover
anything about their future.

15 In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these:
the righteous perishing in their righteousness,
and the wicked living long in their wickedness.

16 Do not be overrighteous,
neither be overwise—
why destroy yourself?

17 Do not be overwicked,
and do not be a fool—
why die before your time?

18 It is good to grasp the one
and not let go of the other.
Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.^[a]

19 Wisdom makes one wise person more powerful
than ten rulers in a city.

20 Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous,
no one who does what is right and never sins.

21 Do not pay attention to every word people say,
or you may hear your servant cursing you—

22 for you know in your heart
that many times you yourself have cursed others.

23 All this I tested by wisdom and I said,
"I am determined to be wise"—
but this was beyond me.

24 Whatever exists is far off and most profound—
who can discover it?

25 So I turned my mind to understand,

to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things
and to understand the stupidity of wickedness
and the madness of folly.

²⁶ I find more bitter than death
the woman who is a snare,

whose heart is a trap
and whose hands are chains.

The man who pleases God will escape her,
but the sinner she will ensnare.

²⁷ “Look,” says the Teacher,^[b] “this is what I have discovered:
“Adding one thing to another to discover the scheme of things—

²⁸ while I was still searching
but not finding—

I found one upright man among a thousand,
but not one upright woman among them all.

²⁹ This only have I found:
God created mankind upright,
but they have gone in search of many schemes.”

SERMON OUTLINE: Living wisely within our limits (Ecclesiastes 7:1-29)

Recap

Hebel = breath/vapour/mist = ephemeral & enigmatic

The big question so far: in such a *hebel* world, what gain is there to be had?
Conclusion? v.6:9b

A slightly different question: 6:12a

“For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few and meaningless days they
pass through like a shadow? ...”

Could wisdom (the subject of the next few chapters) be the answer?

1. Wisdom is v _____

Gives protection (v.11-12)

Its power (v.19)

Its praises sung (8:1)

Our world & our lives – more than just a set of rules to be followed

Biblical wisdom = skill in living according to God's design; discerning what is the most faithful and fitting to do in any given scenario

eg. Proverbs 26:4-5

So go all-out to pursue wisdom! Right? But hang on....

2. Wisdom has I _____

a) Wisdom is I _____ because it cannot make right a crooked world (v.19)

b) Wisdom is I _____ because it cannot make right our crooked hearts (v.20-22, 7)

c) Wisdom is I _____ because it cannot change the destination of our crooked paths (eg. v.2, 15, 17)

“Consider what God has done: who can straighten what he has made crooked?” (v.13)

◆ When exactly did God make crooked what was straight?

So what do we do with these twin truths?

Path #1: If wisdom is v _____, then let death put us on the path to wisdom

v.1a = classic wisdom!...but v.1b!!!

What the Teacher is not saying

What's the Teacher's point?

Death invites you to stop being superficial

I walked a mile with Pleasure;
She chatted all the way;
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow,
And ne'er a word said she;
But, oh! The things I learned from her,
When sorrow walked with me.
- Robert Browning

Path #2: if wisdom is l _____, then put your ultimate trust in the Lord instead

The basic gist of v.16: Don't try to be righteous or wise in a purely transactional sense, where you think it'll give you an advantage over others!

You're limited! (v.23-24, 28)

What's the best thing to do?

"The truth is, the crook in the lot is the great engine of Providence for making men appear in their true colours, discovering both their ill and their good. And if the grace of God is in them, it will bring it out, and cause it to display itself. It so puts the Christian to his shifts, that however it makes him stagger for awhile, yet it will at length evidence both the reality and the strength of grace in him."
(Thomas Boston)

The wisest thing you can do

Response Song: O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Connect cards**
- **Giving**
- You can fill in your missions pledge card online at <https://bemkec.my/missions-pledge-2022/>.
- Our **AGM** will be held **next Sunday, 31st July, 10.30am-12.30pm**, in **Conference Room 1** (Overflow Room also available in the Seminar Room). It will be held in hybrid format. AGM Booklets are available to be picked up from our church administrator Julie Kong at the back of the hall.
- If you wish to host a watchparty for the **Klang Valley Bible Conference**, you can do so directly at <https://bit.ly/kvbc2022watchparty>. For more information about the conference in general, go to: <https://kvbctrust.org/events/kvbc-bible-conference/> Register at: <https://bit.ly/KVBC2022>
- **KVBC NextGen** is also taking place online from **August 31-September 3!** This training conference, aimed at 18-35 year olds, equips the next generation of Christian leaders to handle and teach the Word well. Register at <https://nextgen.kvbctrust.org>. The DEADLINE for registrations is **next Sunday, 31st July**.
- **Impact UK Malaysia** is a conference for Malaysians going to study in the UK, or who have just recently graduated from the UK. It aims to encourage Malaysian Christian students to live wholeheartedly for Jesus and to network with others at a similar stage. This year, Pastor Brian is giving the main talks at their online conference on **Saturday, August 6th**. Find out more and register at <https://new.equip.org.my/impact-uk/>
- **Teh C Talks Special Edition: "Does God Control Everything?" Date: August 6. Time: 8.00pm. Venue: ROTM (Canaan Square)**

To some people, God is a being who dictates every event that happens. To others, God is an absent Creator that left the world entirely into the hands of humans. Is God a micromanaging ruler? Or is he an apathetic deity? Do our day to day choices matter if God has already decided everything? This time around, instead of a 15-minute talk in the beginning, join us for a roundtable discussion on God's sovereignty. There will be facilitators that lead discussion questions at each table throughout the evening and every participant is encouraged to share their comments or thoughts. We welcome anyone from any spiritual background. Free drinks offered! Sign-up here: www.tinyurl.com/TCTAUG22
- Our **Church Library** is open this morning, after the service.
- Our **Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting** this week will be in person, **8-9.10pm**.
- The time of our **Mandarin service** will be changed to **Sunday, 4.30-6pm**, starting **August 7th**.

<p>Home Fellowship Groups</p> <p>Most groups have started meeting! (Usually Thursday/Friday evenings). If you would like to register your interest in joining a Home Fellowship Group, please do so at https://bemkec.my/home-fellowship-groups/</p>	<p>English Youth Ministry</p> <p>Our youth group meets every Saturday evening at church (Conference Room 1), 8-9.30pm.</p> <p>If you're interested to come, do let us know at https://bemkec.my/english-youth-ministry/</p>
<p>Sunday School</p> <p>Sunday school lessons will be held in the classrooms located in the Apartment Block as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Group 1 (Children ages 3-4): Conference Room 1, 1st Floor. 1.2 Group 2 (Children ages 5-6): Room K1, Ground Floor. 1.3 Group 3 (Children ages 7-9 i.e. Primary 1 to 3): Room 2B, Ground Floor. 1.4 Group 4 (Children ages 10-12 i.e. Primary 4 to 6): Conference Room 2, 1st Floor. <p>If your child is below 3 years old, please do not send them to Sunday School but utilise the creche instead.</p> <p>Sunday School S.O.Ps</p> <p>If you would like to see the current Sunday School S.O.Ps in full, please refer to our Sunday School notice board.</p>	

BENEDICTION

May the Lord grant you wisdom that comes down from above, that is pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere, and may he bring forth in you a harvest of righteousness.

- Based on James 3:17-18.

COFFEE QUESTIONS

- Are you tempted to under-value or over-value wisdom? How does this morning's sermon offer a corrective?
- Ecclesiastes 7 show us that true wisdom is more about learning to live in this present, fallen world than about trying to resolve all of life's paradoxes. It is accepting that we cannot comprehend all of God's ways, but learning to fear and trust Him instead. Do you struggle with that? How does knowing what Jesus is like help us trust him?
- The prospect of Death invites us to be a deep and focused person, giving us some examples of areas where we should not foolishly go astray (v.7-10 – money, patience, nostalgia). Which area of life do you think you need to grow in wisdom and depth? Why not pray for that today?

Further recommended reading (all available in church library):

- *Remember Death* by Matthew McCullough
- *Eternity changes everything* by Stephen Witmer
- *Big God* by Orlando Saer