

Wisdom—Comparing Ecclesiastes and Isaiah

This lesson's intent is to compare Solomon's wisdom as described in Ecclesiastes to the spirit of wisdom in Isaiah 11:1 to show the difference between mere intellectual understanding and life.

In Ecclesiastes, Solomon describes the vanity of striving after wisdom, pleasure, accomplishments, labor. He is constantly "seeing" under the sun, on this earth, with the limitations of that seeing and the limitations of this temporal existence. When focused on this existence, the comparison of wisdom versus folly shows wisdom to be the favored but with the understanding that all comes to the same end. Again, this is seeing with temporal vision. Several verses indicate this type of seeing and the conclusions based thereon. 1:14, 17; 2:1, 3, 13, 24; 3:10, 16, 22; 4:1, 4, 7; 5:13, 18; 6:1; 7:15; 8:9, 10, 17; 9:11, 13; 10:5 and 7.

"Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;" (Isaiah 11:1-3 NAS95)

In Isaiah, notice that this prophecy speaks of Jesus and it's the spirit of the LORD (Jehovah) and the spirit of wisdom and the spirit of counsel and strength, and the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. The Strong's Hebrew Lexicon defines that word "spirit" as:

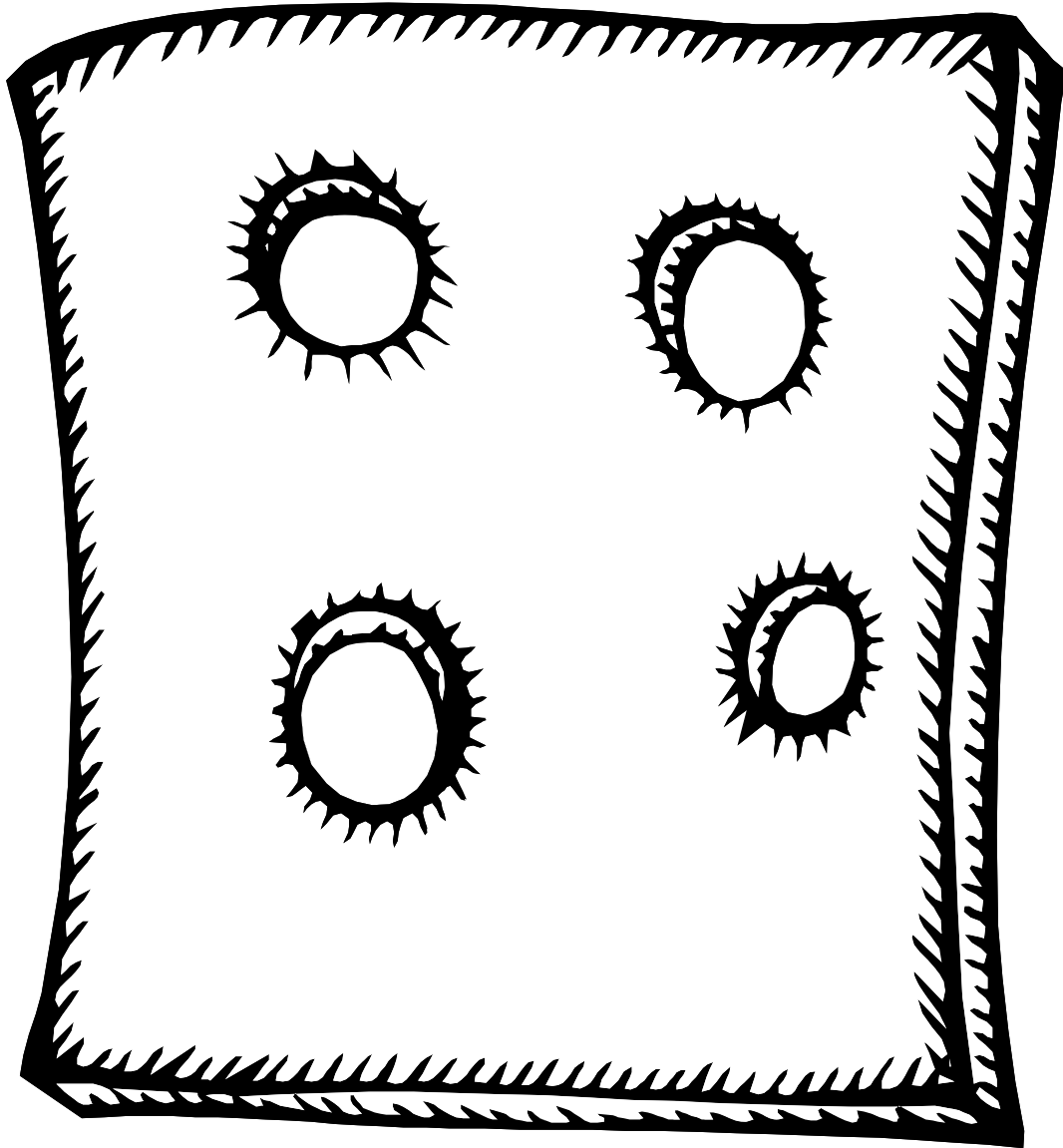
"07307. רוּחַ ruwach \@'roo' akh\@; from 07306; wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively, life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extension, a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions):— air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, X quarter, X side, spirit([-ual]), tempest, X vain, ([whirl-])wind(-y). Greek 4151 and 5590."

The contrast then between Ecclesiastes and Isaiah is life. Wisdom has benefits for this temporal existence but when seeing as Solomon expressed it, it is vanity. When wisdom is breathed and found in the person of Jesus, it supercedes anything temporal.

The point I'm trying to make—although it is somewhat rambling is simply this: the temporary benefits of the things that are "of God" (and I mean things that truly are of God) will ultimately be shown as vain from an earthly perspective (under the sun). The things that are of God, which are found in the relationship between God and His Son, are entered into by our found Oneness in that union.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:" (1 Corinthians 1:30 AV)

CRAFT/ACTIVITY: Take a picture of a slice of cheese and have the kids color it and describe it. (I used this one from Microsoft Word.) Then, ask them to cut it out to put on their sandwich or tell them to eat it...when they object, ask them what good that piece of cheese is—even though it was interesting to talk about and decorate. Show fake candy, food, etc. and how it's appealing but vain.



ACTIVITY 2: Have all the kids wash their hands well. Then, make an open “face” sandwich. (Bread, round meat, round cheese, shredded cheese, olives, optional cookie cutters)

1. First use the bread as the base.
2. Lay the round meat on the bread.
3. In the round provolone cheese, cut out eyes and mouth. We used a crescent moon cookie cutter and our fingers to make eyes and mouth. (This was supposed to represent the joy of all wisdom, etc. being found in the face-to-face relationship we have with Jesus Christ. Apparently, one was unhappy. His sandwich is not smiling.)
4. Sprinkle shredded cheese for hair.
5. Put olives on the eyes
6. Place under the broiler until cheese is melted. (Or place in a toaster oven if the kids are involved in the cooking process.)

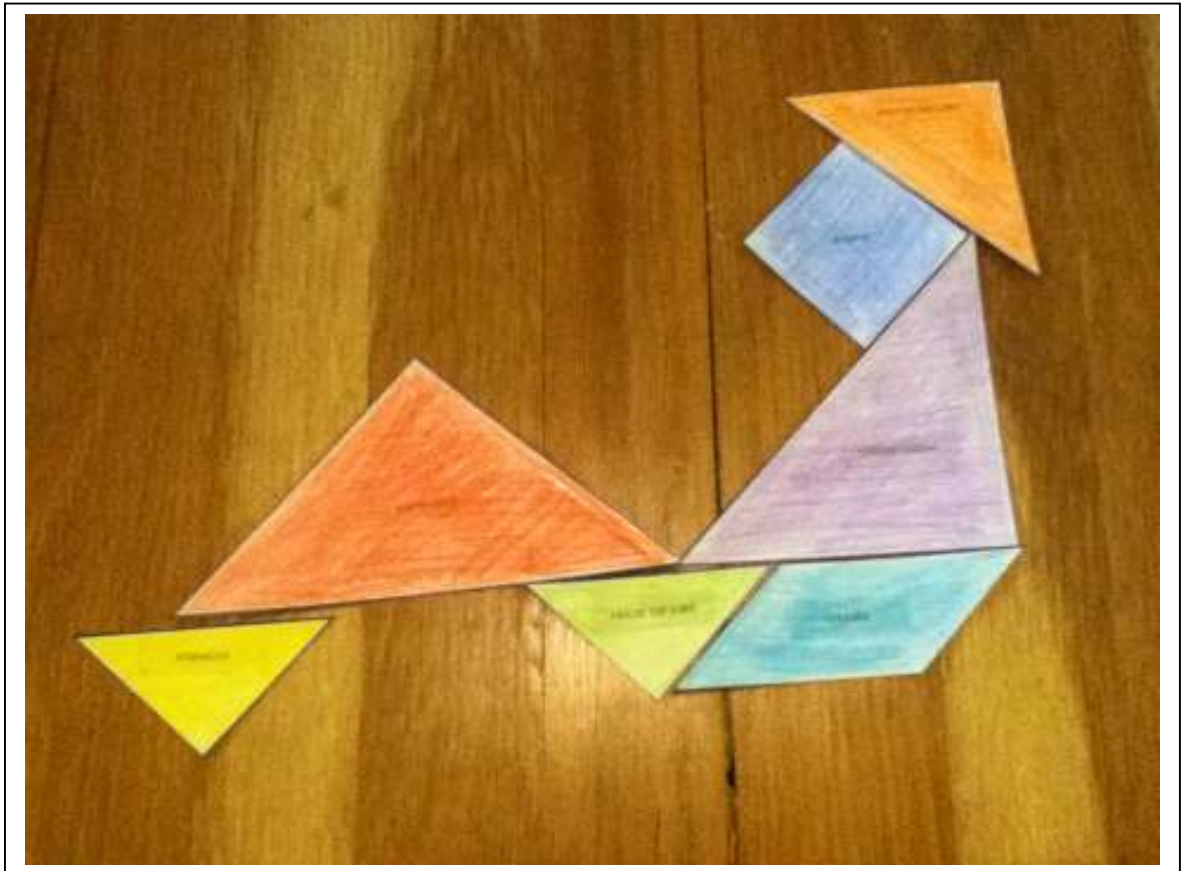


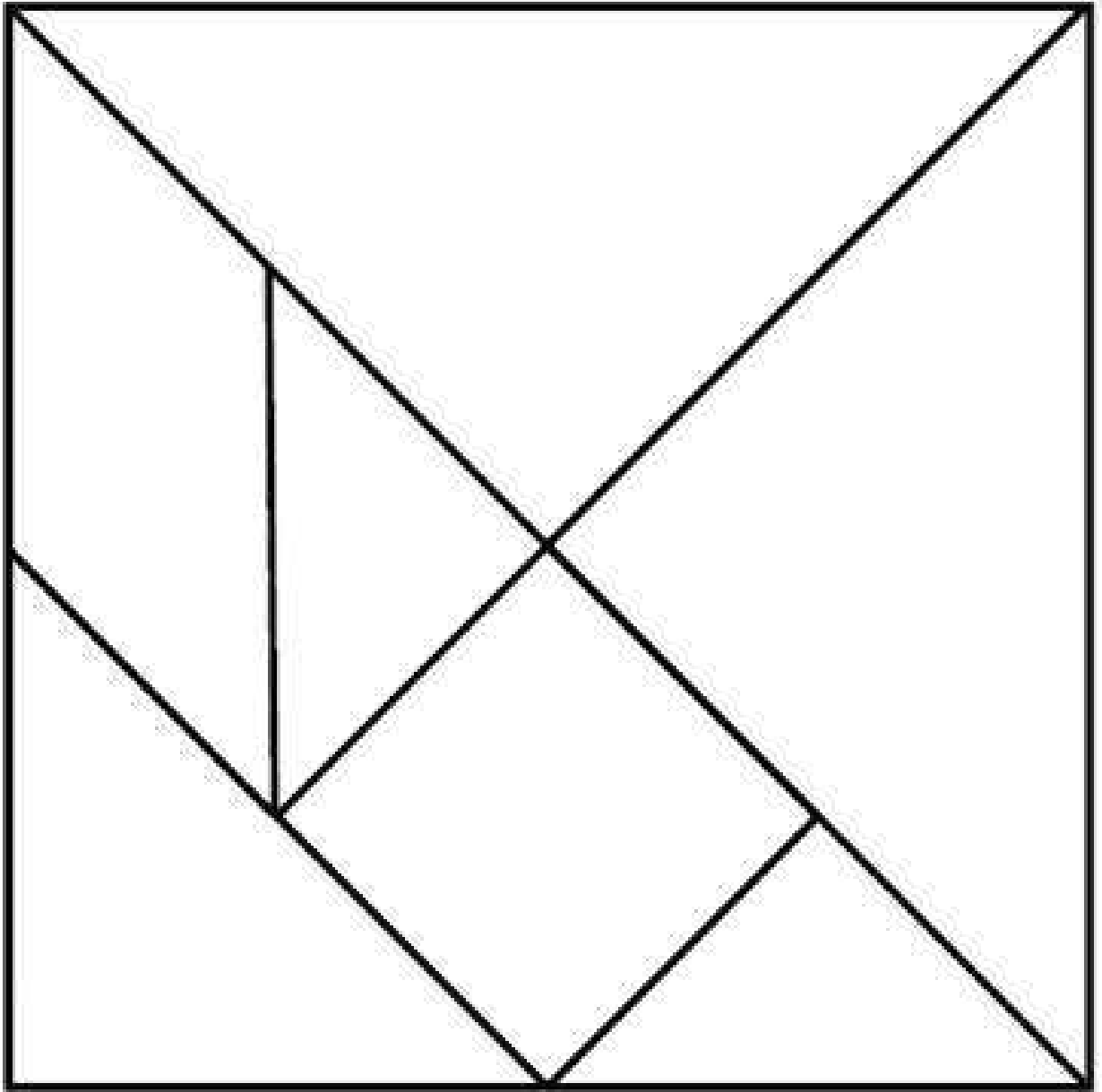
ACTIVITY 3:

Tangrams—print Tangram Pattern from <http://math.about.com> and have the kids color and cut out the 7 shapes. Then, have them play with them to create pictures (for examples of animals, candles, people, houses, etc., see: <http://tangrams.ca/download/solution02.gif>)

Put the following words on the shapes so that when arranged where all the words are upside right they can form a reclining man—representing Jesus at rest from finishing all. This represents finding all in the person of Christ—it can be fascinating to learn about all kinds of things about the Lord, but finding them in the person of Jesus gives meaning and purpose:

SPIRIT OF THE LORD
WISDOM
UNDERSTANDING
COUNSEL
STRENGTH
KNOWLEDGE
AWE OF THE LORD





obtained from <http://math.about.com>