Ecclesiastes - Commentaries by James M. Freeman

Manners and Customs of the Bible, 473. Bread on the Waters

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Ecclesiastes 11:1. Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

Many interpreters are of the opinion that there is here an allusion to the manner of sowing rice in Egypt, that is, by scattering it broadcast in the mud, or upon the overflowing waters of the Nile. Others, however, dispute this, claiming that there is no evidence of the cultivation of rice having been introduced into Egypt as early as the days of Solomon. These commentators consider the expression merely figurative without being based on any actual custom.