

Ecclesiastes 10:8-20

The introduction says, "Bible study, fellowship, and prayer," and we're getting ready to get into our study in the book of Ecclesiastes once again. That's our Bible study. Fellowship is when we do gather around the Word and we listen and talk about the Word of God, as we're getting ready to do, and then, prayer. We can pray for each other. I may never see you in person and you may never see me in person, but we can pray for one another as the children of God. Also, I pray for you if you've never trusted Christ as your Savior. I pray that you'll do that very thing today and say, "Lord, come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior today."

Let's get into the Bible study right now and we're picking up in Ecclesiastes Chapter 10. We left off last week with verse 8, and I want to go back and just read verses 5-7. This leads up to the verses we're getting ready to study today. It says: ⁵*There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: ⁶Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place. ⁷I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.*

That's something that, when we look at it, these verses, it seems to be saying everything seems to be backwards, according to these verses. Things are just not the way they should be, according to what we think.

And then in verses 8-10, it says: ⁸*He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him. ⁹Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby. ¹⁰If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to*

more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.

Those who do things foolishly without thinking, according to these verses, hurt and hinder themselves. It doesn't necessarily hurt someone else, but it's hurting them. And this is illustrated through several examples given by the preacher here in verses 8-10.

And then we see that the result of being directed by wisdom is much better than being directed by foolish, thoughtless thinking, according to verse 10, the last part of that verse we would say *10b*.

And then as we move on into verses 11-15, it says: ¹¹*Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment... In other words, that snake doesn't have to be encouraged to bite... and a babbler is no better. And that babbler, that person who constantly talks, they don't have to be encouraged to speak, just like the snake doesn't have to be encouraged to bite.*

Verse 12 goes on to say: ¹²*The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. ¹³The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness. ¹⁴A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him? ¹⁵The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.*

Some of that, we often think, who can understand words like this that's written in the Word of God, but it is understandable, and that's what we're going to look at and that's why we've been looking at the book of Ecclesiastes. Some think it's so hard you can't

understand it. Well, God would never have anything written in the book that we cannot understand, so let's look at these verses now, verses 11-15.

I see that verses 11-15 tell us that the foolish seldom know how to restrain themselves. In other words, they don't know how to control themselves. In verse 11, it says, *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.* A snake doesn't have to be coaxed to bite, and a person who talks too much doesn't have to be coaxed. They don't know how to control their tongues, and a snake doesn't know how to control, because that's the way they're made. That's the nature of the snake, and the babbler just won't shut up.

Verse 12 goes on to say, *The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious....* The words of a wise man are kind and polite, according to what we read there in that verse. And then the next part of verse 12: *[B]but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.* The words of a fool overtake him. He can't control himself.

Verse 13 says: *¹³The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness...* We see there that the fool's words from the beginning, they just simply don't make any sense. And then verse 13 goes on to say: *[A]nd the end of his talk is mischievous madness.* When the fool stops talking, the verse is saying the result of his words are troublesome and offensive. That fool keeps talking and he's going to offend someone. He's going to cause someone trouble.

And verse 14 says: *¹⁴A fool also is full of words....* A fool talks too much, and we don't have to tell someone, "You're a fool," because all we have to do is just sit back and that person, if they just constantly talk and talk, well, the Bible says that that person is wrong, and that person needs to stop talking so much. The Bible says that person is a fool. And verse

14 continues on by saying: *[A] man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?* The fool's words do not make any sense.

And verse 15 says: *¹⁵The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them...* The work of a fool annoys and wearies people, and if you find yourself talking too much, you need to slow down. Don't be classed as a fool. Don't be classed as a simpleton here. Listen. I find that in my life and the life that I've lived up to this point, I learn more by listening than by talking. And that's the way that I believe that all of us learn, is by listening instead of talking. And so, the Bible gives us clear indication here that we need to listen more and talk less.

The sense is this: The fool wearies himself with ineffectual attempts. In other words, he does not have the sufficient knowledge of the transaction of ordinary business, according to verse 15. It says, *[B]ecause he knoweth not how to go to the city.* He just simply doesn't know how to do the simplest things, and I've found in my life, and I've seen people who you start speaking of something and they've already done it or they know all about. It makes no difference what you mention. They know everything. They know all about it, but yet, when it comes to the simplest things, they don't know how to respond.

Now, verses 16-19 say: *¹⁶Woe to thee....* Let's go back here and let me say this before we get into that. This is speaking in verses 16-19 how folly and wisdom affect the condition of a country.

And verse 16 begins here. It says, *¹⁶Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! ¹⁷Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness! ¹⁸By much*

slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through. ¹⁹A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

I go back up here and I see in this first section of Scripture in verse 16, *Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child.* I read there many things into that but also understand that, when a person who's in charge, they act like a child and they don't do the things that a person in leadership should be doing, but, *Woe to thee, O land,* it says there. Woe to the land whose leaders, first of all, are children. They act like children, and one of the ways that they prove that they are a child or acting like a child is in their feasts. They feast in the morning.

Isaiah 5:11 says: *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!* In other words, they're simply there for the enjoyment. They don't care about leading the people in the right way. They're simply there to eat, drink, and be merry. This is something that we need to pray about for our leaders that the leaders of our country should be there to take care of business, to do what they're supposed to do. Not there to live it up, but that they are there to guide, lead, and direct the country as God would have them lead.

Notice verse 17. It says, *¹⁷Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!* Blessed is the land whose leaders first of all are sons of nobles. In other words, they are noble persons. They do what is right. They are noble. And they eat in due season. What that means is that they may further and not hinder their main business and they're there for business. They're not there just to eat and drink and just have a good time,

but they're there for business. They are to take care of the things of the country. Especially we think of our country that our leaders are to take care of business, not simply to draw a paycheck and not simply just to live it up, but they are there to lead and to make decisions.

Eat in due season, it says there, that they may further and not hinder their main business. And why? It's for strength. They're able to rule when they do what is right, and that's what verse 17, the rest of that verse says, part of that verse says. The last part says not for drunkenness. This is not only nor chiefly to please the flesh and indulge themselves in sensuality. In other words, pleasure to the senses. They shouldn't be leading the country just simply to have pleasure and just to take what they can get for their position that they're in.

Now look at verse 18, it says: *¹⁸By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.* I see in connection with this Proverbs 31:4-5. It says, *⁴It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: ⁵Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.* The result of laziness is rottenness, according to this verse, corruption and ruin.

In Nehemiah 13:11, it says, *Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place.* If you read on in Nehemiah 13:11, you'll see that the people allowed ungodly people and observances to enter into their lives. They forgot God and wanted to please the flesh.

Ecclesiastes 10:19 says, *A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.* Well, money can cause

laughter the same as a feast with wine,
according to verse 19.

And verse 20 says, *Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.* Be careful what you say and don't cure the king and don't curse the rich, because what you say could reach their ears. Trust in the Lord. Let God lead you.

Father, thank You for this privilege. And I pray for those listening that You'd lead, guide, and direct.

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