



Lesson Ten: Wisdom Is Better
Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:20
Robby Higginbottom | November 12, 2024

Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:20

^{9:13} I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. ¹⁴ There was a little city with few men in it, and a great king came against it and besieged it, building great siegeworks against it. ¹⁵ But there was found in it a poor, wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. ¹⁶ But I say that wisdom is better than might, though the poor man’s wisdom is despised and his words are not heard.

¹⁷ The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools. ¹⁸ Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

^{10:1} Dead flies make the perfumer’s ointment give off a stench;
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

² A wise man’s heart inclines him to the right,
but a fool’s heart to the left.

³ Even when the fool walks on the road, he lacks sense,
and he says to everyone that he is a fool.

⁴ If the anger of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place,
for calmness will lay great offenses to rest.

⁵ There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as it were an error proceeding from the ruler: ⁶ folly is set in many high places, and the rich sit in a low place. ⁷ I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking on the ground like slaves.

⁸ He who digs a pit will fall into it,
and a serpent will bite him who breaks through a wall.

⁹ He who quarries stones is hurt by them,
and he who splits logs is endangered by them.

¹⁰ If the iron is blunt, and one does not sharpen the edge,
he must use more strength, but wisdom helps one to succeed.

- ¹¹ If the serpent bites before it is charmed,
there is no advantage to the charmer.
- ¹² The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor,
but the lips of a fool consume him.
- ¹³ The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness,
and the end of his talk is evil madness.
- ¹⁴ A fool multiplies words,
though no man knows what is to be,
and who can tell him what will be after him?
- ¹⁵ The toil of a fool wearies him,
for he does not know the way to the city.
- ¹⁶ Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child,
and your princes feast in the morning!
- ¹⁷ Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of the nobility,
and your princes feast at the proper time,
for strength, and not for drunkenness!
- ¹⁸ Through sloth the roof sinks in,
and through indolence the house leaks.
- ¹⁹ Bread is made for laughter,
and wine gladdens life,
and money answers everything.
- ²⁰ Even in your thoughts, do not curse the king,
nor in your bedroom curse the rich,
for a bird of the air will carry your voice,
or some winged creature tell the matter.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the "big rocks" in a wise or foolish perspective on life?
In what areas of life are we tempted to believe that the foolish perspective is better?
2. Flies (10:1), serpents (10:8, 10:11) and birds (10:20) are all small animals that cause big problems.
Share examples of "little folly" (10:1) in Scripture and in our lives that causes great damage.
3. What practical wisdom can we glean from Ecclesiastes 10:8-11? How do we kick against this wisdom?
4. Contrast wisdom and folly when it comes to our words (Ecclesiastes 10:12-14).
How do we need the Lord to help us to grow in wisdom with our words?
5. How does our struggle to live and lead wisely drive us to Jesus?