

LIFE UNDER THE SUN



STUDIES IN ECCLESIASTES

25 November 2018

הַבַּיִת

“What people revere, they resemble, either for ruin or restoration.”

—G.K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship*

Ecclesiastes Part 14 - “Reflecting the Wisdom of God”

Introduction: Who or what do we reflect?

- Human beings are designed by God to _____ (Gen. 1:26)
- That which we worship and revere will have the greatest _____ on who we become and how we live (Psa. 115:4-8)

“If we worship things that people produce, we will become as impotent and empty as those things, but if we worship God, by the grace of God we will become like God, and we will both ‘glorify God and enjoy him forever.’” —James Montgomery Boice

Key Point: Solomon’s repeated exhortations to us to pursue lives of _____ are calls for us to worship God and to therefore imitate what He is like.

The Proverbial Wisdom of the Teacher—Ecclesiastes 10:1-20

The Distinctions between Wisdom & Folly (10:1-4)

1. Folly makes itself known in our lives.

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

2. The wise and the foolish are on different paths in life.

Eccl. 10:2—A wise man’s heart inclines him to the right, but a fool’s heart to the left.

3. Wisdom and folly are demonstrated in both word and deed.

Eccl. 10:3-4—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.

Key Point: People’s lives tend to be _____ by either wisdom or folly.

Wisdom & Folly in Leadership (10:5-7)

Eccl. 10:5-7—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

⇒ One of the major frustrations of life is that fools are often found in positions of power.

⇒ At times, it is those who are least qualified for leadership that find themselves in power.

Key Point: Qualified leaders are far more likely to _____ wisdom as they lead.

Wisdom and Folly in Planning (10:8-11)

1. The haste of fools can ruin the value of their work.

Eccl. 10:8-9—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.

2. Thoughtful planning increases the value and efficiency of work.

Eccl. 10:10-11—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.

Key Point: _____ and _____ are vital components of working wisely.

Wisdom and Folly in Speech (10:12-15)

1. The words of the wise and the foolish bring about different results.

Eccl. 10:12—The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him.

⇒ There is a negative progression in how the speech of fools affects them.

Eccl. 10:13—The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is evil madness.

⇒ The speech of fools is often both lengthy and speculative.

Eccl. 10:14—A fool multiplies words, though no man knows what is to be, and who can tell him what will be after him?

2. Fools often refuse to listen and suffer as a result.

Eccl. 10:15—The toil of a fool wearies him, for he does not know the way to the city.

Key Point: Wisdom is often demonstrated in the tendency to _____ before _____.

The Dangers of Folly & the Benefits of Wisdom (10:16-20)

1. Folly and wisdom have consequences on a corporate and not merely an individual level.

Eccl. 10:16-17—¹⁶Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, and your princes feast in the morning! ¹⁷Happy 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!

2. Folly leads to tangible ruin while wisdom produces tangible benefits.

Eccl. 10:18-19—¹⁸Through sloth the roof sinks in, and through indolence the house leaks. ¹⁹Bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, and money answers everything.

3. Folly produces a lack of contentment which can lead to the cursing of others because we covet what they possess.

Eccl. 10:20—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.

Key Point: We need to recognize that wisdom and folly in our lives will either positively or negatively affect both _____ and _____!

Learning Wisdom from Our Shepherd-King

1. The OT expected that _____ would learn the wisdom of Yahweh and that His people would benefit from it.

Isa. 50:4—The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.

2. Jesus learned the wisdom of Yahweh throughout His life, ultimately coming to _____ it in both His actions and teaching.

Luke 2:52—And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Heb. 5:8—Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

3. Jesus came in order that He might _____ the Father to His people.

Matt. 11:27—²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

4. Jesus invites His people to come and _____ the wisdom of God from Him.

Matt. 11:28-30—²⁸Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”