

Ecclesiastes 10

'Wisdom Ain't Enough!'

Folk to

Bob Dylan > Many FIRSTS – Protest Songs – Electric – Christian – POWER Point!

Ch 10 Qohelet > Appears RANDOM Collection of Proverbs and Maxims

RANDOM Ancient Literature of SUBTERRANEAN HOMESICK BLUES

Dominant THEME : BENEFIT of WISDOM / DESTRUCTIVENESS of FOLLY

"Wisdom brings Success" > Great IMPORTANCE of WISDOM > KEY to LIFE

MODERN Theme > Wisdom is seen as Recipe to Prosperity and Fulfillment

AMERICAN Mantra "Go to School" > USA best Educated Sinners in HISTORY

Qohelet > Older Man SEEN Much of Life > Searching for KEY to Life

But everywhere he looks he finds no key, just futility.

He looks at the NATURAL WORLD > goes endlessly around and around

Looks in Progress of Human History & Inventiveness > 'nothing new under the sun'

He looks for the key in KNOWLEDGE > 'what is crooked cannot be made straight'

He looks for the key in PLEASURE > not lasting, but purely transitory

He looks for the key in WORK and WEALTH > Futile

He looks for the key in FAME > Not Find

Wisdom? > MAYBE it holds ELUSIVE KEY to LIFE'S MEANING??

Diff between Knowledge & Wisdom: Knowledge Facts / Wisdom right use of Facts

## 1. Fools get Caught

### a. Choices

v. 2 The heart of the wise inclines to the right, but the heart of the fool to the left.

Good THEME Verse for FOX NEWS > MANTRA for RIGHT WINGERS!

WISDOM inclines to the RIGHT > LOCUS of POWER and STRENGTH

The LORD is your shade at your right hand

Psalm 121:5

Folly traced to HEART > INVISIBLE INNER SIDE of Man's Life

Biblically the Heart > Not simply Seat of Emotions also Seat of Thinking & Willing

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Proverbs 4:23

Very OFTEN in Christian Faith > HEART of the Problem is Problem of HEART

Basic Idea > WISDOM and FOLLY go in TWO Different DIRECTIONS

Folly shows a lack of good sense, lack of foresight, failing to realize the impact of the consequences of a stupid act before doing it. Charles Swindoll

Stupid is as stupid does.

Forrest Gump

v. 3 Even as he walks along the road, the fool lacks sense and shows everyone how stupid he is.

PICTURE of WRONG DIRECTION of a FOOL > ANY Direction he GOES!

POOR DECISIONS Announce STATUS of the FOOL! ALL KNOW IT!

Every prudent man acts out of knowledge, but a fool exposes his folly. Proverbs 13:16

Fool may DO RIGHT THING but for WRONG REASON

Man braved Dangerous Waters to save Drowning Friend > Why? > Wore his Watch

v. 15 A fool's work wearies him; he does not know the way to town.

Move from FOOLS WORDS to their DEEDS

ACTIONS of FOOL > Cannot FIND way to TOWN

REASON: FOOL so TIRED, Get LOST Walking home from LONG DAY at Work

A dear but “Directionally-Challenged” FRIEND came for DIRECTIONS One Day Wanted to TAKE BUS from our Suburb 20 Miles to DOWNTOWN Los Angeles Paper, Pen made MAP, Showed 3 BUSES Needed, he asked ‘**Where is bus stop?**’

COULD NOT get ACROSS the STREET > No HOPE of GOING Deep into CITY!

## b. Conversation

v. 12 Words from a wise man's mouth are gracious, but a fool is consumed by his own lips.

All WISDOM Writers deal with TONGUE > WORDS are ACID TEST of Wisdom

SPEECH: FOOL contrasted WISE: Wisdom = APPROVAL / Folly = Destruction

Controlling and restraining our tongues, our pens, and the keyboards on our computers is the work of God’s grace not merely the work of our natural temperament especially in the heat of a disagreement. Greg L. Price

FOOLS own LIPS ENGULF him > Self DESTRUCTIVE > LOST but VERBOSE

When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.  
Proverbs 10:19

Bad to EAT our Words > WORSE when OUR WORDS EAT US!

The lips of a fool bring about his own undoing. H.C. Leupold

v. 13 At the beginning his words are folly; at the end they are wicked madness -

MORE about the FOOL > CONDITION gets PROGRESSIVELY WORSE

SOURCE of Fools WORDS > Problem of INNER CHARACTER

WORDS digress from SILLINESS to INSANITY > from ODD to BIZARRE!

It is a world in which no one ever thinks to ask whether twenty-four hour news channels are a good thing (it is thought to be obvious that they are), a world in which it is self-evident that information technology is a more important college subject than philosophy, a world in which ‘Have you heard the latest?’ is a more pressing question than ‘Do you know the truth?’ It is a world in which it is estimated that by the time a child born today reaches the age of fifty, 97 percent of everything known in the world at that time will have been learned since her birth. The truth is that we have never known so much and understood so little. Iain Provan

v. 14 and the fool multiplies words. No one knows what is coming- who can tell him what will happen after him?

**FOOLS MULTIPLIES WORDS:** Have you stopped to evaluate recently how much you talk in a conversation and how much you listen? Do people walk away from conversations with you only remembering how much you said, but not really what you said because you said so much and not much worth remembering? Greg L. Price

### FOOL has Many Words but LITTLE SENSE

Number of Words in INVERSE PROPORTION to Extent of UNDERSTANDING

Man: ‘All my wife does is Talk, Talk, Talk’

Friend: ‘What does she talk about?’

Man: ‘I don’t know, she won’t say.’

## 2. Foolishness is Costly

v. 1 As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

Wisdom is Elusive and Capricious > Strive to be Wise and Succeed

One little Act of Folly - ‘fly in the ointment’ - ‘foul odour’ – UNDO All Wisdom

Much EASIER to CONTAMINATE than CREATE / BREAK than BUILD

LITTLE FOLLY can OVERWHELM Large Amounts of WISDOM

WISDOM & GLORY – Wonderful, Highly Valued – Little FOLLY Spoils Them

HEAVY Weights like WISDOM & HONOR hang on THIN WIRE of Reputation

People WILL REMEMBER the FOOLISH things Spoken LONGER than WISE

One of Greatest English Speaking PREACHERS > CHARLES SPURGEON  
Known for HUMOR > Victorian England > his Humor was UNDIGNIFIED

What a bubbling fountain of humour Mr. Spurgeon had! I laughed more...in his company than during all the rest of my life besides. He had the most fascinating gift of laughter ... When someone blamed him for saying humorous things in his sermons, he said, "*He would not blame me if he only knew how many of them I keep back.*" William Williams, a fellow pastor and colleague of Spurgeon

FLIES do same thing SINNER does to GOD'S WISDOM

v. 8 Whoever digs a pit may fall into it; whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake.

Qohelet believes in PROVIDENCE of God > NO COMFORT > No CERTAINTY

VERSES show the UNFAIRNESS of LIFE > DOING your JOB brings DANGER!

If a man digs a pit, he will fall into it; if a man rolls a stone, it will roll back on him.  
Proverbs 26:27

Did you ever dig a pit for someone – lay a trap to embarrass him, to make him look bad or injure him in some way – only to find you yourself were trapped by the situation you had designed?  
Ray Steadman

Like HAMAN who was HUNG on his OWN GALLOWS!

Do NO HARM to OTHERS > So you do NOT HURT YOURSELF

Jesus: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22:39

v. 9 Whoever quarries stones may be injured by them; whoever splits logs may be endangered by them.

ACCIDENTS in the midst of EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES?? Poetic JUSTICE??

STONES and TIMBER > POSSESSION of the RICH > Poor lived in Mud-Walls  
Added INDIGNITY > POOR Laborer RISKS LIFE for UNGRATEFUL RICH

v. 10 If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.

SUCCESS is the FRUIT of WISDOM > Next Time SAVE yourself some SWEAT!

‘An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure’ / ‘Stitch in Time, saves Nine’

v. 11 If a snake bites before it is charmed, there is no profit for the charmer.

TOO LATE to CHARM your SNAKE – AFTER the Damage had been DONE!

Woe to you who long for the day of the LORD! Why do you long for the day of the LORD? That day will be darkness, not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion only to meet a bear, as though he entered his house and rested his hand on the wall only to have a snake bite him.  
Amos 5:18-19

NEED WISDOM NOW > Cannot CLOSE BARN DOOR after COWS Escape!

### 3. Fools destroy Kingdoms

NOT KNOW Author / QOHELET Title not Name > GATHERS ASSEMBLY

Various Reasons AUTHOR NOT Solomon – Biggest Reason – NAME Never Cited

KING Very UNLIKELY to make so many NEGATIVE Comments about COURT

a. Cool them with Calm

v. 4 If a ruler's anger rises against you, do not leave your post; calmness can lay great errors to rest.

ADVICE for PEOPLE with HOT HEADED BOSS > COOL them by your CALM

COUNT to 10 > KILL them with KINDNESS > Do NOT FUEL their FIRE

LEAVING makes you SUSPECT > What did YOU do WRONG?

WISDOM is GUIDE in GOVERNMENTAL Affairs

HUMAN LIFE is BASICALLY POLITICAL > Thrive or Suffer on HOW Governed

// Ch 8 > STAY on GOOD TERMS with the GOVERNOR / POWERFUL

COMPOSURE WISDOM Brings > Seen in WISE REACTION to BAD Leaders

If you are patient enough, you can cook a stone and it will become soft.

Ewe of Ghana

EASY way to RUN OFF in a HUFF in MARRIAGE > DIVORCE

Husbands and Wives, remember that what you say to one another either helps you or destroys you because you are one flesh. You cannot bless your Husband or your Wife without blessing yourself, and you cannot hurt your Husband or your Wife without hurting yourself. Why are we so self-destructive? Greg L. Price

FOOL gives way to TIRADES and TANTRUMS

The self-controlled person with less rank is really more powerful the out-of-control supposed superior.

David Allan Hubbard

b. Crown the Competent

v. 5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, the sort of error that arises from a ruler:

EXAMPLES of our TOPSY-TURVY – Turned UPSIDE DOWN World

EVIL arises from ERROR > SERIOUSNESS of WRONG-DOING > Strong EVIL  
Real Error, bestowing Places of Honour and Profit on Undeserving Persons

PEOPLE had NO POLITICAL CHOICES > At MERCY of Autocrats & DESPOTS

v. 6 Fools are put in many high positions, while the rich occupy the low ones.

WRONG PEOPLE put into WRONG POSITIONS  
CONTRAST between RICH and FOOLS / RICH = WISE, RIGHTEOUS

Qohelet believed that with CLASS came COMPETENCE

It is the unhappy condition that prevails when incompetent people are in authority and place their friends in authority who are equally incompetent. Charles Swindoll

v. 7 I have seen slaves on horseback, while princes go on foot like slaves.

Ancient World > HORSES connected to KINGSHIP and WEALTH  
Riding HORSE > GREAT PRIVILEGE – Servants WALK Beside to Help Masters

Parthians and Persians distinguished Nobles and Servants  
Servants went on Foot, and the Freemen rode on Horses

Austrian Housepainter

Old German Aristocracy scandalized to see Adolph Hitler lead their Proud Nation  
Old French Aristocracy scandalized see Illegitimate Corporal Napoleon > Emperor

Many BUSINESSES and NATIONS: Rulers FOOLS / BRAINS & HARD WORK  
COME from PEOPLE much LOWER on CORPORATE FOOD CHAIN

The ruler's simple error of judgment results in a totally chaotic society.

Tremper Longman III

c. Character is Critical

v. 16 Woe to you, O land whose king was a servant and whose princes feast in the morning.

FOLLY in NATIONAL LIFE > 1<sup>ST</sup> Need of LEADER is MATURITY

Same FOLLY in HOME or CHURCH when IMMATURE are in Leadership

HIRING a PERSON > Most IMPORTANT Trait is their CHARACTER



BAD Marriage? --- BEGAN with CHOICE --- YOU Married person YOU Chose  
THINK CAREFULLY about LIFE-LONG Decisions you MAKE

Solomon: "Now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties."  
1 Kings 3:7

DIRGE to Land LED by IMMATURE LEADERS > DEEP TROUBLES

NOT refer to AGE but MATURITY: Young Wise King better than OLD FOOL

Maturity is being big enough on the inside to control yourself on the outside.  
Stolen from Someone by Blair

NOT just BAD KING also BAD PRINCES > Problem EAT BIG BREAKFASTS!

PROBLEM > PARTY instead of WORK > Casino, Golf Course, Sauna, Café!

Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine...they have no regard for the deeds of the LORD, no respect for the work of his hands...Therefore the grave enlarges its appetite and opens its mouth without limit; into it will descend their nobles and masses with all their brawlers and revelers.  
Isaiah 5:11-14

Without a leader, the ants are confused. Lugbara of Uganda

Goats with a lame leader do not arrive at the grass. Kikuyu of Kenya

v. 17 Blessed are you, O land whose king is of noble birth and whose princes eat at a proper time - for strength and not for drunkenness.

Another EXAMPLE of NATIONAL WISDOM is SELF-CONTROL

EVIL PRINCES Abuse ROYAL Privileges: Enjoy WINE others Endure WORK

ELITIST perspect of Qohelet > RICH, Well Mannered GUYS Class up the JOINT!

SMALL Glimmer of LIGHT in Dark Description of GREED and SELFISHNESS

LEADERS Self-Centered INDULGENCE is a NATIONAL DANGER

Egyptians LAW > LIMIT Amount of WINE KING could DRINK in a DAY

Solon's Law to the Athenians: Prince was found DRUNK Death was Punishment

Indians > IF Woman killed Drunken King > Reward was to Marry his Successor

d. Caught by Carelessness

v. 18 If a man is lazy, the rafters sag; if his hands are idle, the house leaks.

LAZY Leaders OVERSEE a LANGUISHING Land > NATION is SINKING

MONEY for HOUSE REPAIRS was SQANDERED on DRINKS and PARTIES!

“Woe to the nation that has folly in high places.” It’s a curse on the whole nation.

The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.

Proverbs 26:15

The LORD Almighty, is about to take from Jerusalem and Judah both supply and support...I will make boys their officials; mere children will govern them. People will oppress each other...  
Isaiah 3:1-5

v. 19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes life merry, but money is the answer for everything.

Live UNDER THE SUN > Bread, Wine, Money is LIMIT of their HORIZON

MANY References to ESCAPE of HEDONISTIC ENJOYMENT

Seems INCONSISTENT: v. 18 House FALLING Down, v. 19 Have a PARTY!

NEED MONEY for the Wine, the Band, and the MONTOU

Money fails in the end. Five minutes after you are dead someone else will have your money...All you live for, the accumulated wealth of a lifetime, everything you dreamed about, every cent you ever saved, every investment, all of it gone forever...After a rich man dies, people often say, "How much did he leave?" The answer is always the same: He left it all. Ray Pritchard

v. 20 Do not revile the king even in your thoughts, or curse the rich in your bedroom, because a bird of the air may carry your words, and a bird on the wing may report what you say.

Be VERY CAREFUL in DEALING with the VIP'S

Even BEFORE ESPIONAGE and INTERNET > WORDS were HEARD

Persians certain Officers: King's Ears, and Emperor's Eyes

King believed to be a god > by Ears and Eyes of Others > Spies knew ALL TECHNIQUES Known WELL in THIS PART of the WORLD

The chief has ears like those of an elephant.

Fante of Ghana

ABSOLUTE Denial of all DISSENT > Oppressors SILENCE all CRITICISM

#### 4. Fools need Christ

##### a. Guides are Good

Wisdom NOT LIFE'S HIGHEST GOOD > It is GUIDE, not a GOD

With much wisdom comes much sorrow

Ecclesiastes 1.18

v. 1 As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

WHO CAN STAND? Who has NOT SPOILED the PERFUME?

With DEAD FLIES of their OWN FOOLISH WORDS and DEEDS?

Proverb: 1 bad Apple ruins Barrel – Impossible! Even if buy Apples in Zilloni Bazaar

NO ULTIMATE HOPE in Wisdom > UNATTAINABLE by US FOOLS!

ULTIMATE TRUST in WISDOM > ETERNAL Disappointment

We'll NOT FIND TRUTH from TV CHAT Shows or Small Group DISCUSSIONS

FALSE HOPE of POLITICAL PROMISES > NO HUMAN MESSIAHS

## b. God is Great

It is the house built on His ancient Truth that will still be found standing at the end of time, when the waters have washed all the other more modern and attractive houses away.

Iain Provan

My purpose is...that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, *Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge...* Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and *your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*

Colossians 2:2-3, 3.1-3

TREASURES OF WISDOM – Hidden in CHRIST – YOU are HIDDEN IN HIM

Ultimate Folly is Living Life without God

Life must be taken day by day from the hands of God. There is security nowhere else, not even in wisdom.

Michael Eaton

Qohelet wanted his students to understand how life worked; Jesus calls his followers to know the One who makes life work.

David Hubbard

We reject the so-called wisdom of the world and we embrace the wisdom of God. For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made the foolish of the wisdom of the world? For since the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom *did not come to know God*, God was well-pleased through the foolishness

of the word preached to save those who believe...Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God...God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise...by His doing, you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Trust in God Not in Your own Wisdom > Run to Christ who is our ONLY Wisdom

10:1 As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor. 2 The heart of the wise inclines to the right, but the heart of the fool to the left. 3 Even as he walks along the road, the fool lacks sense and shows everyone how stupid he is. 4 If a ruler's anger rises against you, do not leave your post; calmness can lay great errors to rest. 5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, the sort of error that arises from a ruler: 6 Fools are put in many high positions, while the rich occupy the low ones. 7 I have seen slaves on horseback, while princes go on foot like slaves.

8 Whoever digs a pit may fall into it; whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake. 9 Whoever quarries stones may be injured by them; whoever splits logs may be endangered by them.

10 If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.

11 If a snake bites before it is charmed, there is no profit for the charmer.

12 Words from a wise man's mouth are gracious, but a fool is consumed by his own lips. 13 At the beginning his words are folly; at the end they are wicked madness- 14 and the fool multiplies words.

No one knows what is coming- who can tell him what will happen after him?

15 A fool's work wearies him; he does not know the way to town.

16 Woe to you, O land whose king was a servant and whose princes feast in the morning. 17 Blessed are you, O land whose king is of noble birth and whose princes eat at a proper time- for strength and not for drunkenness.

18 If a man is lazy, the rafters sag; if his hands are idle, the house leaks.

19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes life merry, but money is the answer for everything.

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