

Ecclesiastes VIII

The Cost of Foolishness

Ecclesiastes 10:1-20

- I. FOOLISHNESS COMPARED (Ecclesiastes 10:1-3)
 - a. Cleanliness and Dirtiness Compared
 - i. Apothecary
 1. Also known today as a pharmacy or pharmacist
 2. Would be a place of cleanliness and clean fragrances
 - ii. Dead Flies
 1. Associated with dirtiness/filthiness
 2. *“Dead flies”* – flies attracted by dead carcasses
 - iii. The above do not combine well – Don’t go together
 - b. Foolishness and Wisdom
 - i. They are opposites
 1. A little folly
 - a. In one that is in high reputation
 - b. In one considered wise
 - c. Sends forth a terrible stink
 2. Examples from the kings
 - a. Saul and his rebellion (1 Samuel 15:23)
 - b. Solomon and his sin with strange women (Nehemiah 13:26)
 - c. David and his sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:9)
 - ii. The word *“fool”*
 1. Shows up 8 times in this chapter – in only 20 verses
 2. 8 times in variant forms – *“fool, folly, foolish, foolishness”*
 - iii. A fool by his actions – says he’s a fool (Ecclesiastes 10:2-3)
- II. SUBMISSION – A MARK OF WISDOM (Ecclesiastes 10:4) – (1 Samuel 25:23-31)
- III. FOLLY IN HIGH PLACES (Ecclesiastes 10:5-7)
 - a. An *“Evil”* *“Under the Sun”* – 5 times in Ecclesiastes this phrasing occurs. None outside Ecclesiastes. (Ecclesiastes 4:3; 5:13; 6:1; 9:3; 10:5)
 - b. This *“evil”* involves folly that is seen in rulers
 - i. We saw examples of this earlier in Saul, David and Solomon
 - ii. When folly is exalted in rulers it will bring trouble to many
 1. David and his folly with Bathsheba is a great example of this

- a. It caused the death of Uriah (2 Samuel 11:16-17)
 - b. It caused the death of David's men (2 Samuel 11:17)
 - c. David's folly brought sadness to Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:26)
 - d. It caused the death of David and Bathsheba's child (2 Samuel 12:14)
 - e. It caused the folly of David's son Amnon with his daughter Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-3, 5, 6-15)
 - f. It caused the death of Amnon (2 Samuel 13:28-39)
 - g. It caused the folly of Absalom (2 Samuel chapters 13-18)
 - h. It caused the death of Absalom (2 Samuel 18:9-16)
 - iii. Modern day examples: Politics, Business, etc.
 - 1. Folly set on high (Politics, business, in the home)
 - 2. Servants upon horses (Politics, business)
 - 3. Princes walking as servants (All of the above)
 - a. The man of the home is not taking responsibility
 - b. The wrong people are in power and are bringing folly to the positions they are in
 - c. Evil is being exalted – therefore bringing folly upon the position and the nation.
- IV. FOLLY IN PREPARATION (Ecclesiastes 10:8-11)
- a. The Lack of Preparation (Ecclesiastes 10:8-11)
 - i. Notice that we are dealing with the subject of folly or foolishness
 - ii. A fool has no desire to learn or prepare for anything (Proverbs 1:7, 22; 17:16; 18:5)
 - b. The Need of Wisdom (Ecclesiastes 10:10-11)
 - i. The necessity for preparation
 - ii. The consequences without the preparation
 - iii. The profit of wisdom
 - 1. Wisdom says prepare
 - 2. Wisdom says to research and do better
 - a. Joseph in Egypt (Exodus 18:19-23)
 - b. Solomon as King (1 Kings 3:9)
- V. THE WEARINESS OF THE FOOLISH (Ecclesiastes 10:12-15)
- a. The Wise Man's Words
 - i. Are full of grace (Job 4:3-4; Psalm 37:30)
 - ii. Are comforting (Job 16:5)
 - b. The Foolish Man's Words
 - i. Are thoughtless (Proverbs 10:14)
 - ii. Are depressing (Proverbs 10:8, 13)

- iii. The example of the Amalekite with David (2 Samuel 1:16)
 - c. The Foolish Knoweth Nothing (Ecclesiastes 10:15)
 - i. His heart has no desire to learn (Proverbs 17:16; 18:2)
 - ii. His understanding is weak (Matthew 7:26-27)
- VI. THE MANY WOES OF FOOLISHNESS (Ecclesiastes 10:16-20)
- a. Woe to the land (Ecclesiastes 10:16)
 - i. When the king is a child – NOTE: (This would imply a lack of wisdom, no formal training for the task, etc.)
 - ii. When the princes feast at the beginning – in a drunken fashion (see v. 17)
 - iii. By Contrast – The Land is Blessed (Ecclesiastes 10:17)
 - 1. When the king is the son of nobles
 - 2. When the princes eat for strength
 - b. Woe When the Building Decayeth (Ecclesiastes 10:18)
 - i. Cause of decay (Proverbs 20:4; 21:25)
 - 1. Slothfulness
 - 2. Idleness
 - ii. The result (Proverbs 24:30-31)
 - 1. The building decayeth
 - 2. The house droppeth through
 - c. Woe When There is a Feast of Laughter (Ecclesiastes 10:19)
 - i. The feast of laughter and wine (Ecclesiastes 2:1-2; Daniel 5:1-12)
 - ii. The better event (Ecclesiastes 7:2-6, 11-12)
 - d. Woe to Those that Curse Authority (Ecclesiastes 10:20)
 - i. Practiced by those that are disobedient (Exodus 22:28; 2 Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8)
 - ii. Will be heard by all (Ecclesiastes 10:20b; Luke 12:3)