

## **Life is Short; Death is Certain!**

7:1 A good reputation is better than precious perfume; likewise, the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth.

There are two ways to understand this proverb: (1) Happy times teach us less than hard times which can bring about moral improvement (2) It is better to come to the end of one's life with a good reputation than to merely be starting life in an auspicious manner in joy and wealth. Folly and wickedness could foil a good beginning so that a person ends life as a fool. For example, Solomon began as the wisest man who ever lived, only to end life as one of history's greatest fools.

7:2 It is better to go to a funeral than a feast. For death is the destiny of every person, and the living should take this to heart.

Think of the shortness of life rather than spend time in partying.

7:3 Sorrow is better than laughter,  
because sober reflection is good for  
the heart.

You can make changes in your life  
that improve upon past mistakes.

7:4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of merrymaking.

Serious reflection vs. a place of riotous gluttony and drinking.

7:6 For like the crackling of quick-burning thorns under a cooking pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This kind of folly also is useless.

It does no good.

## **Ecc 7.7-10**

**A man's wisdom can be changed by problems.**

7:7 Surely oppression can turn a wise person into a fool; likewise, a bribe corrupts the heart.

7:8 The end of a matter is better than its beginning; likewise, patience is better than pride.

7:9 Do not let yourself be quickly provoked, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

7:10 Do not say, “Why were the old days better than these days?” for it is not wise to ask that.

Wisdom can enhance one's life

Ecc 7:11-12 Wisdom along with an inheritance is good And an advantage to those who see the sun. For wisdom is protection just as money is protection, But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the lives of its possessors. (NAS)

Or “Wisdom with an inheritance, is good”; or “Wisdom is as good as an inheritance.” This use of the preposition may denote: (1) accompaniment: “together with,” or (2) comparison: “as good as; like; in comparison to”. The translations are divided: “wisdom with an inheritance is good” (KJV, ASV margin, RSV, NASB, YLT); “wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing” (NIV); “wisdom is as good as an inheritance” (ASV, NRSV, MLB, NJPS, Moffatt); “wisdom is better than an inheritance” (NEB)

# God rules not man

Consider the work of God, For who is able to straighten what He has bent? In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider-- God has made the one as well as the other So that man will not discover anything that will be after him.

(Ecc 7:13-14) NAS

so that no one can discover what the future holds. NET

## **Problems in receiving justice in this life.**

I have seen everything during my lifetime of futility; there is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his wickedness. Do not be excessively righteous and do not be overly wise [in your own estimation]. Why should you ruin yourself? Do not be excessively wicked and do not be a fool. Why should you die before your time? It is good that you grasp one thing and also not let go of the other; for the one who fears God comes forth with both of them. (Ecc 7:15-18)

# **Wisdom is useful because no one is truly righteous.**

Wisdom strengthens a wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city. Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins. Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken, so that you will not hear your servant cursing you. For you also have realized that you likewise have many times cursed others.

(Ecc 7:19-22)

# Human Wisdom is Limited

I tested all this with wisdom, and I said, "I will be wise," but it was far from me. What has been is remote and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it?

(Ecc 7:23-24)

I directed my mind to know, to investigate and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know the evil of folly and the foolishness of madness. And I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her, but the sinner will be captured by her. "Behold, I have discovered this," says the Preacher, "adding one thing to another to find an explanation, which I am still seeking but have not found. I have found one man among a thousand, but I have not found a woman among all these. "Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices."

(Ecc 7:25-29)

Snare – a repeated habitual action

Solomon reflects on his contacts as kings – many wives, none of whom sought God with him but who sought for their sons prominence.

Ecc 8.1-9

Governments are limited by lack of  
Wisdom.

Who is like the wise man and who knows the interpretation of a matter? A man's wisdom illumines him and causes his stern face to beam. I say, "Keep the command of the king because of the oath before God. "Do not be in a hurry to leave him. Do not join in an evil matter, for he will do whatever he pleases." Since the word of the king is authoritative, who will say to him, "What are you doing?" He who keeps a royal command experiences no trouble, for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure.

For there is a proper time and procedure for every delight, though a man's trouble is heavy upon him. If no one knows what will happen, who can tell him when it will happen? No man has authority to restrain the wind with the wind, or authority over the day of death; and there is no discharge in the time of war, and evil will not deliver those who practice it. All this I have seen and applied my mind to every deed that has been done under the sun wherein a man has exercised authority over another man to his hurt.

(Ecc 8:1-9)

Ec 8.10-15

**Problems in receiving justice in this  
life. Enjoy Life despite injustices**

So then, I have seen the wicked buried, those who used to go in and out from the holy place, and they are soon forgotten in the city where they did thus. This too is futility. Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil. Although a sinner does evil a hundred times and may lengthen his life, still I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly. But it will not be well for the evil man and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear God.

There is futility which is done on the earth, that is, there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked. On the other hand, there are evil men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous. I say that this too is futility. So I commended pleasure, for there is nothing good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry, and this will stand by him in his toils throughout the days of his life which God has given him under the sun.

(Ecc 8:10-15)

## **There are limits of Human Wisdom**

When I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which has been done on the earth (even though one should never sleep day or night), and I saw every work of God, I concluded that man cannot discover the work which has been done under the sun. Even though man should seek laboriously, he will not discover; and though the wise man should say, "I know," he cannot discover.

(Ecc 8:16-17)