

Ecclesiastes 07 - Wisdom Makes Life Better and Helps Us See Life Clearly; The Problem of Evil

IV. Solomon's search for meaning in wealth (Eccl 6:1—8:15)

(2) Proverbial wisdom (Eccl 7:1—8:15)

(A) Enjoyment of life while learning from adversity (7:1-14)

(a) Wise should learn from death's inevitability, rebuke, and evil days (7:1-10)

(b) Wise should use prosperity and wisdom for purposes of self protection (7:11-12)

(c) Wise should accept God's sovereign ways and be happy when He bestows prosperity (7:13-14)

(B) Pragmatism (7:15-29)

(a) Wise should be moderate in their righteousness (7:15-18)

(b) Wise should recognize the fallenness of man and consequently temper his judgment toward others (7:19-22)

(c) Preacher admits the reality of life's mysteries (7:23-24)

(d) After investigating the folly associated with evil living the preacher discovers that there are a few righteous (7:25-29)

Ecclesiastes 7

(2) Proverbial wisdom (Eccl 7:1—8:15)

(A) Enjoyment of life while learning from adversity (7:1-14)

(a) Wise should learn from death's inevitability, rebuke, and evil days (7:1-10)

1 A good name is better than good oil, And the day of *one's* death is *better* than the day of one's birth.

1 A good name is better than a good ointment, And the day of *one's* death is better than the day of one's birth.

1 A good name exceeds the value of fine perfume, and the day of someone's death exceeds the value of the day of his birth.

1 A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

2 It is better to go to a house of mourning Than to go to a house of feasting, Because that is the end of every person, And the living takes *it* to heart.

2 It is better to go to a house of mourning Than to go to a house of feasting, Because that is the end of every man, And the living takes *it* to heart.

2 It's better to attend a funeral than to attend a banquet, for everyone dies eventually, and the living will take this to heart.

2 It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter, because the heart is made better through trouble.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

4 The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning, While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.

4 The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning, While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.

4 For the wise person thinks carefully when in mourning, but fools focus their thoughts on pleasure.

4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

5 It is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise person Than for one to listen to the song of fools.

5 It is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise man Than for one to listen to the song of fools.

5 It is better to listen to a wise person's rebuke than to listen to the praise of fools.

5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

6 For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot, So is the laughter of the fool; And this too is futility.

6 For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot, So is the laughter of the fool; And this too is futility.

6 For as thorns burn to heat a pot, so also is the laughter of the fool— even this is pointless.

6 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.

7 For oppression makes a wise person look foolish, And a bribe corrupts the heart.

7 For oppression makes a wise man mad, And a bribe corrupts the heart.

7 Unjust gain makes the wise foolish, and a bribe corrupts the heart.

7 Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

8 The end of a matter is better than its beginning; Patience of spirit is better than arrogance of spirit.

8 The end of a matter is better than its beginning; Patience of spirit is better than haughtiness of spirit.

8 The conclusion of something is better than its beginning, and a patient attitude is more valuable than a proud one.

8 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

9 Do not be eager in your spirit to be angry, For anger resides in the heart of fools.

9 Do not be eager in your heart to be angry, For anger resides in the bosom of fools.

9 Never be in a hurry to become internally angry, since anger settles down in the lap of fools.

9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Do not say, "Why is it that the former days were better than these?" For it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.

10 Do not say, "Why is it that the former days were better than these?" For it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.

10 Never ask "Why does the past seem so much better than now?" because this question does not come from wisdom.

10 Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.

(b) Wise should use prosperity and wisdom for purposes of self protection
(7:11-12)

11 Wisdom along with an inheritance is good, And an advantage to those who see the sun.

11 Wisdom along with an inheritance is good And an advantage to those who see the sun.

11 Wise use of possessions is good; it brings benefit to the living.

11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

12 For wisdom is protection *just as* money is protection, But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom keeps its possessors alive.

12 For wisdom is protection *just as* money is protection, But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the lives of its possessors.

12 Indeed, wisdom gives protection, just like money does, but it's better to know that wisdom gives life, to those who have mastered it

12 For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

(c) Wise should accept God's sovereign ways and be happy when He bestows prosperity (7:13-14)

13 Consider the work of God, For who is able to straighten what He has bent?

13 Consider the work of God, For who is able to straighten what He has bent?

13 Consider the work of God: Who is able to straighten what he has bent?

13 Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

14 On the day of prosperity be happy, But on the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other So that a person will not discover anything *that will come* after him.

14 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.

14 When times are good, be joyful; when times are bad, consider this: God made the one as well as the other, so people won't seek anything outside of his best.

14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

(B) Pragmatism (7:15-29)

(a) Wise should be moderate in their righteousness (7:15-18)

15 I have seen everything during my lifetime of futility; there is a righteous person who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked person who prolongs *his life* in his wickedness.

15 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.

15 I have seen it all during my pointless life: both a righteous person who dies while he is righteous, and a wicked person who lives to an old age, while remaining wicked.

15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

16 Do not be excessively righteous, and do not be overly wise. Why should you ruin yourself?

16 Do not be excessively righteous and do not be overly wise. Why should you ruin yourself?

16 Do not be overly righteous, nor be overly wise. Why be self-destructive?

16 Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?

17 Do not be excessively wicked, and do not be foolish. Why should you die before your time?

17 Do not be excessively wicked and do not be a fool. Why should you die before your time?

17 Do not excel at wickedness, nor be a fool. Why die before your time?

17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?

18 It is good that you grasp one thing while not letting go of the other; for one who fears God comes out with both of them.

18 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.

18 It is good for you to grab hold of this and not let go, because whoever fears God will escape all of these extremes.

18 It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

(b) Wise should recognize the fallenness of man and consequently temper his judgment toward others (7:19-22)

19 Wisdom strengthens a wise person more than ten rulers who are in a city.

19 Wisdom strengthens a wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city.

19 Wisdom given as strength to a wise person is better than having ten powerful men in the city.

19 Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.

20 Indeed, there is not a righteous person on earth who *always* does good and does not ever sin.

20 Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who *continually* does good and who never sins.

20 For there is not a single righteous man on earth who practices good and does not sin.

20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

21 Also, do not take seriously all the words which are spoken, so that you do not hear your servant cursing you,

21 Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken, so that you will not hear your servant cursing you.

21 Don't listen to everything that is spoken— you may hear your servant cursing you,

21 Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:

22 for you know that even you have cursed others many times as well.

22 For you also have realized that you likewise have many times cursed others.

22 since you also know how often you have cursed others.

22 For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

(c) Preacher admits the reality of life's mysteries (7:23-24)

23 I tested all this with wisdom, *and* I said, "I will be wise," but *wisdom* was far from me.

23 I tested all this with wisdom, *and* I said, "I will be wise," but it was far from me.

23 I used my wisdom to test all of this. I said, "I want to be wise," but it was beyond me.

23 All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.

24 What has been is remote and very mysterious. Who can discover it?

24 What has been is remote and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it?

24 Whatever it is, it's far off and most profound. Who can attain it?

24 That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

(d) After investigating the folly associated with evil living the preacher discovers that there are a few righteous (7:25-29)

25 I directed my mind to know and to investigate, and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know the evil of foolishness and the foolishness of insanity.

25 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.

25 I committed myself to understand, to learn, to search for wisdom and explanations, and to understand both the evil that is foolishness and the stupidity that is delusion.

25 I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:

26 And I discovered as 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.

26 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.

26 I discovered for myself a bitterness that surpasses that of death: the woman whose heart is full of snares and nets, whose hands are chains of bondage. Whoever pleases God will escape from her, but the transgressor will be trapped by her.

26 And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

27 "Behold, I have discovered this," says the Preacher, "*by adding* one thing to another to find an explanation,

27 "Behold, I have discovered this," says the Preacher, "*adding* one thing to another to find an explanation,

27 "Look at this," says the Teacher. "Linking one thing to another, I reached this conclusion:

27 Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account:

28 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.

28 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.

28 Among the things I seek but have not found: one man among a thousand I did find, but I have not found one woman to be wise among all these.

28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.

29 Behold, I have found only this, that God made people upright, but they have sought out many schemes."

29 Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices."

29 I have discovered only this: God made human beings for righteousness, but they seek many alternatives."

29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.