

Life Lessons (Part 2)

Ecclesiastes 7:7-14

1. Introduction.
 - a. Kinds of wisdom in Scripture
 - i. Traditional/Proverbial – Wisdom in accordance to God’s design (Prov. 8).
 - ii. Non-traditional – Wisdom that tries to make sense of the backwards things in life.
 - b. Review of 7:1-6
2. V.7.
 - a. V.1a.
 - i. “Making mad (making foolish)” carries the idea of exposure.
 1. The experience of oppression can sometimes expose a person for what they really are.
 2. The proverb is speaking to the fact that a person in power will have opportunities to leverage and extort those in a weaker positions.
 3. The proverb is warning a person in power to guard their heart.
 - b. V.1b.
 - i. Even a good, wise person can give into a temptation they never thought they would. When this happens, it has a way of causing the person to become corrupt (i.e., broken).
 1. Their deeds have been exposed.
 2. Their reputation is ruined.
 3. All that could have been simply blows away in the wind in that one moment of folly.

- ii. The point of Solomon is to guard your heart, especially those in positions of power and authority. No person is beyond temptation.

3. V.8.

- a. The point of the proverb is that a wise person gives a full hearing to a matter.
 - i. Prov. 18:17
 - ii. The end of a matter is when a person has the fullest of possible knowledge and can therefore weigh an issue from all sides.
 - iii. The haughty person thinks they've got insight that no one else has.
- b. The wise person gives a full hearing because it's the wise person who knows it requires the end of a matter (i.e., fullness of a matter) to render a truly just judgement.

4. V. 9.

- a. A foolish person will be quick to render judgement at corruption (v. 8), but an equally foolish person is quick to become angry at the corruption.
- b. A wise person gathers all possible information before rendering a judgment, but they also have an incredibly long fuse.

5. V.10.

- a. Longing for the past is a mark of a fool.
 - i. The context is of a king not being able to solve the problems of today because he's busy dwelling on the past.
 - ii. The Lesson—No amount of wishing for things to be as they once were will solve the problems of today.
- b. This is a mark of a fool because it's a mark of someone who has forgotten yesterday was actually like—they've forgotten the truth of ch. 1, namely, that there is nothing new under the sun.
 - i. Today is what yesterday was.
 - ii. Tomorrow will be what today is.

6. Vss.11-12.

- a. Key term of “wisdom” connects these verses.
- b. Wisdom is an advantage (or “gain”) to those who see the sun.
 - i. “Seeing the sun” is a phrase in reference to the fullness of joy. It is contrasted with those who live “under the sun” and are vexed by life.
 - ii. “Advantage (or ‘gain’)” is a key term we’ve seen all throughout Ecclesiastes. It’s a term that speaks of a person trying to achieve something that will give them release from the futility of life.
 - iii. Wisdom is protection (lit. “shadow). A person who walks in wisdom is protected from the difficulty that a foolish life brings.
- c. After 10 verses of proverbial wisdom, Solomon is saying, “Heed it!”
 - i. Don’t hear and ignore.
 - ii. Listen and apply, for it bring joy and vitality (i.e., gain) to life.

7. Vss.13-14.

- a. Pain, hardship, and suffering is not merely the result of living in a broken world, but in an ultimate sense, the result of God’s hand.
 - i. In the midst of prosperity, Solomon commands—be happy and enjoy life.
 - ii. In the midst of adversity and hardship, Solomon commands—consider the work of God.
 - 1. Similar to James 1:1-4.
 - 2. God uses means to cause us to persevere.

8. Conclusion.

- a. We are called to look at a difficult situation and regard it as good.
- b. God is using it to chisel out a pure faith that will cause you to persevere until the end.