



## Ecclesiastes 10

(2019)

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## Ecclesiastes 10.

(A brief overview of the main topics).

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### INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

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Ecclesiastes is a brilliant book that gives an overall view of human life on earth, but in having said that, a spotlight should be shone upon the truth that there will always be individual exceptions and contradictions to the general laws that apply to the collective observations of the human population as a whole. God has designed the universe this way so that no human whether righteous or wicked can find out their future or know what will happen to them tomorrow (Eccles. 7:14). Ecclesiastes contains reflections of an elderly man called, "the Preacher" as he considers questions concerning meaning in life. The Preacher looks back and sees the futility and brief, passing of life and its meaningless (i.e. the vanity of it) even if it is spent chasing after the good things this life can offer, including wisdom, work, pleasure, and wealth, the Preacher comes to this conclusion because no matter how satisfying these things maybe for a time death is certain to end this satisfaction and the enjoyment of them. The sentiment of the following two verses echo throughout the book:

- By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen. 3:19).
- The dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit (the life) returns to God who gave it (Eccles. 12:7).

The book concludes that only by living life with reverence and holy respect toward God the Creator and doing-good to others does life make sense. This is because those who live in this manner can enjoy God's good gifts on earth and will be delivered from death to eternal life and rewarded for the good, they have shown toward others.

**Vanity:** the word vanity comes from the Hebrew word (*hebel*). From Strong's Concordance it means emptiness, something fleeting and short lived and carries the idea of something being transient, brief and passing or of something unsatisfactory and meaningless.

**The Preacher:** based on the following words of verse one:

- The Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem (Eccles. 1:1)

And the following words of chapter two:

- I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. <sup>5</sup>I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. <sup>6</sup>I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. <sup>7</sup>I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup>I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the children of man. <sup>9</sup>So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem (Eccles. 2:4-9).

It is traditionally accepted by most that "the Preacher," is Solomon during the tenth century B.C.

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**NOTE:** for information of people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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- **Ecclesiastes 10:1-20** <sup>1</sup> Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench; so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor. <sup>2</sup> A wise man's heart inclines him to the right, but a fool's heart to the left. <sup>3</sup> Even when the fool walks on the road, he lacks sense, and he says to everyone that he is a fool. <sup>4</sup> If the anger of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place, for calmness will lay great offenses to rest. <sup>5</sup> There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as it were an error proceeding from the ruler: <sup>6</sup> folly is set in many high places, and the rich sit in a low place. <sup>7</sup> I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking on the ground like slaves. <sup>8</sup> He who digs a pit will fall into it, and a serpent will bite him who breaks through a wall. <sup>9</sup> He who quarries stones is hurt by them, and he who splits logs is endangered by them. <sup>10</sup> If the iron is blunt, and one does not sharpen the edge, he must use more strength, but wisdom helps one to succeed. <sup>11</sup> If the serpent bites before it is charmed, there is no advantage to the charmer. <sup>12</sup> The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him. <sup>13</sup> The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is evil madness. <sup>14</sup> A fool multiplies words, though no man knows what is to be, and who can tell him what will be after him? <sup>15</sup> The toil of a fool wearies him, for he does not know the way to the city. <sup>16</sup> Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, and your princes feast in the morning! <sup>17</sup> Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of the nobility, and your princes feast at the proper time, for strength, and not for drunkenness! <sup>18</sup> Through sloth the roof sinks in, and through indolence the house leaks. <sup>19</sup> Bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, and money answers everything. <sup>20</sup> Even in your thoughts, do not curse the king, nor in your bedroom curse the rich, for a bird of the air will carry your voice, or some winged creature tell the matter.

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This chapter is full of various proverbs about wisdom, work and kings but the primary focus is upon a fool, following are just a few.

**Calming anger:** calmness will lay great offences to rest and pacify and soothe anger.

**The wise and foolish:** a wise man's heart leads him to do right, but a fool's heart leads him astray.

**Calmness and offenses:** when the anger of a ruler rises against you, do not respond for calmness will lay great offenses to rest.

**The power of words:** the words of a wise man win him favour, but the lips of a fool consume him.

**A fool and many words:** a fool multiplies words of things that no one knows what is to be.

**Work and the fool:** the toil of a fool wearies him, because he does not know the wise way.

**Foolish kings:** the land will suffer when the king is a child (or foolish) and its princess feast during the day.

**Wise kings:** happy is the land when the king is the son of the nobility and its prince's feast at the proper time.

**Laziness and idleness:** through laziness the roof sinks in, and through idleness the house leaks.

**Wine and money:** wine gladdens life, and money answers everything.

**Gossiping:** even in your thought, do not curse the king, nor in your bedroom curse the rich, for a bird of the air will carry your voice and tell the matter.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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