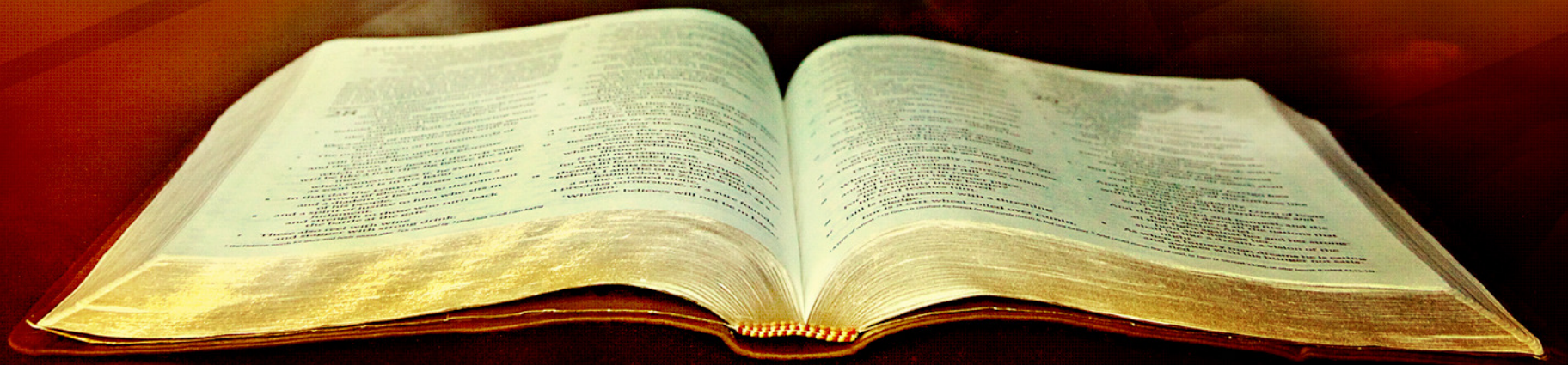


ECCLESIASTES

Eccl. 7:1-7



Eccl. 7:1 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 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 by the sadness of the countenance **the heart** is made better.

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 hear the rebuke of the wise, **than** for a man to hear the song of fools.

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

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

This evening, we continue on a wonderful, spiritual journey through the Book of Ecclesiastes, known also as “The Preacher.”

I. THE PREACHER’S SUBJECT, 1:1-11

- A. The Preacher, 1:1
- B. The Problem, 1:2-3
- C. The Process, 1:4-11

II. THE PREACHER’S SERMON, 1:12-10:20

- A. Things He Had Sought, 1:12—2:26
- B. Things He Had Seen, 3:1—6:12
 - 1. The Problem of Time Without Eternity, 3:1-11
 - 2. The Problem of a New Leaf Without a New Life, 3:12-17
 - 3. The Problem of Mortality Without Immortality, 3:18-22
 - 4. The Problem of Might Without Right, 4:1-3
 - 5. The Problem of Prosperity Without Posterity, 4:4-12
 - 6. The Problem of Sovereignty Without Sagacity, 4:13-16
 - 7. The Problem of Religion Without Reality, 5:1-7

8. The Problem of Wealth Without Health, 5:8-20
9. The Problem of Treasure Without Pleasure, 6:1-6
 - a. Take a Good Look at the Gift, 6:1-2
 - b. Take a Good Look at the Grave, 6:3-5
 - c. Take a Good Look at the Ghost, 6:6
10. The Problem of Life Without Length, 6:7-9
 - a. The Desire for Food Described, 6:7a
 - b. The Depths of Folly Described, 6:7b-9
 - (1) A Word of Despair, 6:7b-8
 - (a) Regarding Wisdom, 6:8a
 - (b) Regarding Wealth, 6:8b
 - (2) A Word of Disgust, 6:9
 - (a) Staying Desires, 6:9a
 - (b) Stupid Dreams, 6:9b
 - c. The Doctrine of Fatalism Described, 6:10-12
 - (1) You Cannot Change Your Fate, 6:10a
 - (2) You Cannot Challenge Your Fate, 6:10b
 - (3) You Cannot Choose Your Fate, 6:11-12
 - (a) Life is Very Shallow at Best, 6:11
 - (b) Life is Very Short at Best, 6:12

Tonight, we continue our study of the Book of Ecclesiastes.

- Solomon takes an axiological approach (the branch of philosophy dealing with values, as those of ethics, aesthetics, or religion) regarding “the heart” and “better...than” in dealing with a perspective from God’s viewpoint.

Let’s begin looking at “Life’s Frustrations:”

C. Things He Had Studied, 7:1-10:20

1. Life’s Frustrations, 7:1-29

a. Cynicism About the Better Things of Life, 7:1-14

(1) Character Values, 7:1a “A good name *is* better than precious ointment...”

- The “good name” is from God’s perspective – Paul, David, Moses, etc.

"name—character; a godly mind and life; not mere *reputation* with man, but what a man *is* in the eyes of God, with whom the *name* and *reality* are one thing."

Eccl. 2:26 For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

Eccl. 11:9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment.

Eccl. 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

Mt. 26:7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*. ...

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

(2) Conventional Values, 7:1b-6

(a) Life's Sum, 7:1b "...and the day of death than the day of one's birth."

- For a believer, "the day of death" is the entrance into eternal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, free from all the hindrances of human temporality!

(b) Life's Sorrows, 7:2-4

i. The House of Mourning,7:2

Eccl. 7:2 *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**.*

- For the Preacher, it is better to go to the house of mourning, because that is our ultimate destination anyway. = **REALITY CHECK!**

Prov. 15:13 A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

Isa. 22:12 And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

13 And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.

14 And it was revealed in mine ears by the LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

Prov. 4:23 **Keep thy heart with all diligence**; for out of it *are* the issues of life.

Psa. 90:12 So teach *us* to number our days, **that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.**

ii. The Heart of Man, 7:3-4

- Things We Laugh About, 7:3

Eccl. 7:3 **Sorrow is better than laughter**: for by the sadness of the countenance **the heart** is made better.

- Laughter and partying are shallow diversions compared to the sobering reality of death.
- “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.”

("At this point I should be able to bench press a Buick.")

<https://i.pinimg.com/600x315/f9/15/7e/f9157e9caa1cf5a8c4ecac08a5f8e875.jpg>

THEY SAY THAT WHAT DOESN'T
KILL YOU MAKES YOU
STRONGER. IF
THAT'S THE
CASE THEN
I WILL BE
EXPECTING MY
SUPERPOWERS
AND NEW CAPE
ANY DAY NOW.



- Things We Learn About, 7:4

Eccl. 7:4 **The heart** of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; but **the heart** of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

- The contrast reveals the unique and drastic differences between one wise or one who is a fool (from God's perspective!)

(c) Life's Seriousness, 7:5-6

i. The Rebuking Comment of the Farsighted Man, 7:5

Eccl. 7:5 *It is* **better** to hear the rebuke of the wise, **than** for a man to hear the song of fools.

- The “rebuke of the wise,” not “song” of the wise, = solid preaching of the Word of God.

- A spiritually anointed sermon from the Word of God is so much more valuable than platinum albums produced by the heathen of this world!

ii. The Ribald Cackling of the Foolish Man,
7:6

Eccl. 7:6 For **as** the crackling of thorns under a pot, **so is** the laughter of the fool: this also *is* vanity.

- The “crackling of thorns” are the sounds of empty, hollow, stubble like burning of thorns in a fire.

Joel 2:5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, **like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble**, as a strong people set in battle array.

2 Sam. 23:6 But *the sons of Belial shall be* all of them **as thorns** thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:

(3) Contemptible Values, 7:7

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

Oppression = feeling of being heavily burdened, mentally or physically, by troubles, adverse conditions, anxiety, etc.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/oppression?s=t>

- Spiritual oppression can dramatically affect “a wise man” to disable the believer from steadfastness in the faith.

Conclusion

Psa. 9:9 **The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed**, a refuge in times of trouble.

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and **healing all that were oppressed of the devil**; for God was with him.

Mt. 11:28 **Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

29 Take my yoke upon you, and **learn of me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and **ye shall find rest unto your souls.**

30 For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.