

## Flies in the Ointment

Ecclesiastes 9:18 and 10:1-20

- I. **GENERAL ADVICE** (9:18; 10:1-3)
  - A. **Your Reputation** (1)
    1. A little folly ruins a lot of good.
    2. We are all capable of falling.
  - B. **Your Inclination** (2; Gen 6:5; Pr 23:7; Jn 6:44)—your bent, tendency, leaning,
    1. Wisdom is a matter of the heart, not just the intellect.
    2. We are drawn to things.
      - a. **The Right**—blessing; strength, favor, the best
      - b. **The Left**—curse; unskilled, not the best
  - C. **Your Behavior** (3)—your stupid is showing!
- II. **DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT RULER** (4-11)— King, boss, authority
  - A. **A Ruler's Anger** (4)—personal offense
    1. Stay calm.
    2. Don't quit.
    3. Don't escalate the situation.
    4. Keep doing your job. .
  - B. **A Bad Government** (5-7)—the wrong people in charge
    1. Unqualified
    2. Dishonorable
  - C. **Social Change** (8-11)—dangers to avoid
    1. **Digging a Pit** (8a)—laying a trap for someone
    2. **Breaking through a Wall** (8b)—violating a boundary
    3. **Quarrying Stones** (9a)—tearing down or reordering
    4. **Splitting Logs** (9b)—hard and dangerous
    5. **Using a Dull Axehead** (10)—force and violence instead of using skill and diplomacy
    6. **Charming a Snake** (11)—enchanted rather than escalating

### III. **FOOLISHNESS ON DISPLAY** (12-15)—don't be this person!

#### A. **Fool's Talk** (12-14)

1. **Goes from bad to worse** (Ja 3:5a & 4:13-16)—*progress from simple folly to wicked madness*

- a. **Foolish**—silly, inane, stupid, unwise, indiscrete, lacking judgment
- b. **Wicked**—profane, blasphemous, immoral, depraved, malicious
- c. **Mad**—wild, preposterous, reckless, stupid, crazy

2. **Talk too much**—*many words, little substance*

- a. **Tedious Monologue**
- b. **Inappropriate Conversation**

3. **Boast about themselves** (Pr 27:1; Ja 3:5-6 & 4:13-16)—*future deeds, prospects*

4. **Consumed by their own lips**—*they are harming themselves*

B. **Fool's Business** (15)—talk a lot and do little, unstudied & unskilled

### IV. **THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP** (16-20)—affects our lives on many levels

A. **Character of Leaders** (16-17)—affects the welfare of the entire nation or organization

1. **Bad Leaders**—bring **woe** (misery, distress, misfortune, suffering)

- a. King was a **servant/child**—*unqualified; easily influenced*
- b. Princes **feast in the morning**—*self-indulgent, undisciplined*

2. **Good Leaders**—bring **blessing** (benefit, well-being, advantage)

- a. King of **noble birth**—*qualified, worthy*
- b. Princes eat at the **proper time**—*self-disciplined, responsible*

B. **Responsibility of Leaders** (18-19)—to care for the kingdom

1. **Diligent Management**—responsible, attentive, active upkeep

2. **Financial Integrity**—balances the budget, pays the bills

C. **Attitude Toward Leaders** (20)

1. **Be careful what you say** (Lk 12:3)—someone will hear and report

2. **Be careful who is listening** (Ps 139:4)—someone else always overhears

3. **Watch your thoughts** (Mat 12:34)—it starts in your heart

Psalms 19:14; 51:6; 139:23-24; James 1:5

LISTEN TO “Draw Me Lord ” (*Selah*)  
<https://youtu.be/XrvoBzcrANs>