

## Message #33

## Ecclesiastes 9:13-18

Tucked away in II Samuel 20 is a remarkable story about a remarkable woman. A worthless man named Sheba convinced all the men of Israel, with the exception of the men of Judah, to turn against David (II Sam. 20:1-2). Joab led a military effort to track Sheba down and kill him (20:13). Joab searched and searched for him and finally found him in the city of Abel Bet-maacah (20:15). Joab's men started to build a mound against the city so they could go in and destroy it (20:15). That is when a wise woman came out of the city and coolly and calmly and collectively convinced Joab to not destroy the city, but just the evil man Sheba. Joab took her advice and the city was spared (20:16-22). The truth is we don't even know this woman's name. There is no mention that she was rewarded or honored for her efforts. The sad reality is most people don't even know this story is in the Bible.

**BEING A WISE PERSON AND HAVING GOD'S WISDOM IS THE BEST THING A PERSON CAN HAVE IN THIS WORLD, BUT IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THIS PERSON WILL BE PRESTIGIOUS , POWERFUL , RICH , GREAT OR HONORED IN THIS WORLD.**

This was no small point for Solomon to realize because he was the wealthiest, most honored and most prestigious man on the earth at the time he lived. Solomon was powerful, he was rich and he was honored. So for him to come to terms with this important truth is something that truly is a great work of God in his life.

Solomon came to understand that godly, wise people are in the best position in this life, but most times they aren't even recognized or remembered by people of this world.

**SEGMENT #1 – Solomon's illustration . 9:14-15**

The illustration given is that of a small city. The city was small in size and numbers when a great king and his powerful forces came up against it. They constructed "large siegeworks" against it. H. C. Leupold does a good job explaining that a "siegework" was some type of military tower constructed for the purpose of climbing so one could see the weak areas and vulnerable areas in the city, and also for the purpose of entering the city when it was time to attack (Leupold, p. 223).

Now as the story continues in **verse 15**, in this small city there was, in many ways, a small man. He didn't have much of anything except God's wisdom. He apparently saw the threat coming against the city and by his wisdom he somehow delivered the city. The text does not tell us what he said or what he did. All it says is this one poor man used his wisdom to deliver this city.

Now we would naturally think that this man would be branded a hero. The whole city was in jeopardy and he used his great wisdom to deliver it. We would think his brilliance would be held up for all to see. But notice the end of the verse, "no one remembered that poor man."

Public gratitude and public applause is not often given to the poor wise man. The world looks for a winning persona. It looks for one who has made it, who has achieved, who has climbed to the top. That is the one it seeks to honor. But the poor wise man, for most, isn't a man even worth remembering by people of this world.

In this case, the fact that a poor wise nobody had delivered this city probably was an embarrassment to the leaders.

**SEGMENT #2** – Solomon's insight. **9:16-18**

**Conclusion #1** - It is far better to be wise rather than strong. **9:16a**

Most people do not realize the value of wisdom. But it is better than gold and it is better than physical strength.

The strongest men of this little city could not deliver it from its pending disaster, for the opposition was too strong.

**Conclusion #2** - One who is wise will probably not be esteemed or heeded. **9:16b**

For the most part, one who sets forth the wisdom of God will not be honored. Truth is he will be despised. For the most part, most won't even want to hear what the wise man has to say.

**Conclusion #3** - The words of the wise heard in quietness are better than loud political gatherings. **9:17**

When we get before Jesus Christ, it won't have been impressive political speeches that accomplished anything eternal, but many eternal things will have been accomplished at quiet little prayer meetings.

**Conclusion #4** - Wisdom is better than weapons of war. **9:18a**

It is far better to have God's wisdom than to have any weapon. It isn't our weapons or our ability that really counts; it is the wisdom of God.

**Conclusion #5** - One sinner can destroy much good. **9:18b**

One who is wise can be destroyed by one foolish sinner. One who is pushy and powerful can manipulate his or her way and do great harm in this life. But that will all end when we get before God.

God will honor the wise man and He will punish the fool. Which is our status? Are we one who God would say is moving down the path of wisdom? If we are, we probably won't look too impressive to most people of this world. But in the next life we will be honored!