### Ecclesiastes

## Chapter 10

1‘As a dead fly can spoil a good ointment;  
 A little folly can conquer great wisdom.  
  
 2‘The hearts of the wise are at their right hands,  
 But the hearts of fools stay on their left.  
 3So, whichever way a fool chooses to go;  
 In his heart, he’s sure that he’ll fail,  
 Since he thinks that he can’t succeed.  
  
 4‘If the spirit of a ruler flares against you,  
 Don’t turn away from your place;  
 For, [patience] heals all great sins.  
  
 5‘I’ve observed a wickedness under the sun…  
 It’s when a ruler does something in haste,  
 6And puts a fool over important things,  
 While those who’ve proven their worth are put low…  
 7I’ve seen ‘slaves’ who are riding on horses,  
 And ‘princes’ who are walking as slaves on the ground.  
  
 8‘The one who’s digging a cesspool  
 Is also the one who’ll fall in it;  
 And those who move boundary markers,  
 Will find themselves bitten by snakes.  
  
 9‘Quarry workers may be harmed by the rocks [they’ve hewn],  
 And those who split logs are in danger.  
  
 10‘If the axe isn’t sharp, you’ll work harder;  
 So, doing what’s wise paves the way to success.  
  
 11‘If a snake-charmer whispers and the serpent still bites;  
 All of his charming is worthless.  
  
 12‘Words from a wise mouth bring favor,  
 While foolish lips rip it away.  
 13And if foolish words are accepted;  
 It’ll end in what’s wicked and crazy.  
  
 14‘The fool often speaks many words,  
 Although he doesn’t really know what will happen,  
 Or what will soon come to be.  
 So, who’ll walk behind and announce him?  
  
 15‘The efforts of fools bring them trouble…  
 For, they know not the right ways to enter a town.  
  
 16‘Woe to you, O great city,  
 Where your king is just a young [man],  
 And your princes eat meals in the mornings.  
 17Rather, blest is the land  
 Where the king has been born of nobles,  
 And whose princes eat at the right times.  
 For, the things that they eat makes them strong,  
 So they’ll never be shamed.  
  
 18‘By sloth and neglect a home [falls apart],  
 And with idle hands, [its roof] starts to leak.  
  
 19‘Bread, wine, and oil are made to cause laughter,  
 And to bring joy to the living…  
 But, they must also be [paid for].  
  
 20‘Never curse a king in your mind,  
 Nor curse the rich in your bedrooms or closets.  
 For your words will be carried by birds in the skies,  
 And those with wings will report what you’ve said.’