

Ecclesiastes 10:16-11:6
February 16, 2022

III. Human Limits (6:10-12:8)

D. Enjoy Life Now (9:1-10)

E. Time and Chance (9:11-10:15)

F. Living with Risks (10:16-11:6)

DON'T FORGET YOUR QUESTIONS FOR ME!

1. Political Uncertainty (10:16-20)

In the last section, we saw how Solomon noted that *folly is set in great dignity, while the rich sit in a lowly place* (10:6). He now revisits this foolishness in vv. 16-20. Indeed, the land is cursed whose *king is a child* (v. 16; probably better as *servant* [NIV]). Also, those leaders who spend their entire day in gluttony and revelry also lead to the downfall of the land (v. 16).

In contrast, nations are *blessed* when the *king is the son of nobles* and knows that it's better to *feast at the proper time* (v. 17). The wisdom and righteousness of a country's leaders matters; it makes a big difference. When people pursue power for the sake of that power, a nation will all but certainly falter.

Usually, laziness and idleness accompany such leaders (v. 18), and this verse is a good proverb for all of us! Nevertheless, too often kings and princes are wrapped up in the pleasures that accompany that power, thinking that *money answers everything* (v. 19). Is there a problem? Throw more money at it! That'll be sure to fix it!

Ancient political leaders seem to be a lot like ours today, and much uncertainty comes as a result of it. Who knows what the leader will do today, or what promise they will break, or what lies they will tell? Their unrighteousness is rampant! Nevertheless,

Solomon warns in v. 20 to be wary of what we say and who we criticize. "Little birds" are everywhere!

2. Economic Uncertainty (11:1-6)

Solomon then moves from political uncertainty to economic uncertainty. We move to the all-too-related realm of finances. He seems to have both investment and charity in mind. Either way, the truth of the matter is we don't know what will happen in the future. Just fourteen years ago, entire retirement accounts were wiped out over night! There's no financial guarantee in this life:

- *you do not know what evil will be on the earth* (v. 1)
- *you do not know what is the way of the wind* (v. 5)
- *you do not know the works of God* (v. 5)
- *you do not know which will prosper* (v. 6)

What an answer to the question *For who knows what is good for man in life, all the days of his vain life which he passes like a shadow?* (6:12)!

For this reason, may we help others, not knowing when it might be that we ourselves will need help. For this reason, let's not put all of our financial eggs in one basket, not knowing whether it'll be good or bad. We don't have money at our disposal the way civil rulers do (10:19)!

Money is a stewardship from the Lord, and we must appropriate it responsibly. Stockpiling is not responsible (Matt 25:25; Luke 19:20). After all, there's no guarantee that we will last long enough to make use of it, and then what happens to it (cf. Ecc 2:18-21)? Better to make hay while the sun shines and use all that the Lord has given to us for His purposes. Faithful service most definitely brings about a certain result!