

A.M. OUTLINE
5 / 19 / 2024

THE "BETTER" CHOICE

(Ecclesiastes 7:1 – 10)

INTRODUCTION - Solomon is not teaching about things that are right versus wrong in life; rather, when looking at two right things, one choice is better than the other.

1. (v1) **"A good name is better than precious ointment"**
(Proverbs 22:1) "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches."

(v1) **"... and the day of death than the day of one's birth"**
In the day of death, looking back on a good name (a good life) is better than looking forward to an unknown name (a life yet to be lived).

2. (v2) **"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 take it to heart."**

Solomon takes us to the funeral home, "house of mourning," and teaches 2 lessons:
1) the brevity of life 2) knowing that, we should live to have a good name.

3. (v3) **"Sorrow is better than laughter"** - sorrow provides more lessons than merriment.

4. (v3-4) **"For by a sad countenance the heart is made better."**

The "house of mourning" is the wise man's school, and the "house of mirth" is the foolish man's house because he thinks sorrow hampers his fun-times.

5. (v5) **"It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools"**

(v6) **"For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool"**
Meaning, the laughter of the fool is noisy and won't last long.

6. (v8) **"The end of a thing is better than its beginning"** - we are glad when certain things are over: this sermon, pain, a training or education, finishing a task. ... As enjoyable is the journey, we are happy when we reach our destination.

7. (v8) **"The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit."**

8. (v10) **"Do not say, Why were the former days better than these?
For you do not inquire wisely concerning this."**

Thinking "the good old days" were better is a foolish reflection
on God who has brought us safely thus far.
It takes away the sight of God's work in our lives today. Count your blessings!