

1. (v1 – 3) "SO DOES A LITTLE FOLLY"

Dead flies in the perfumer's ointment makes it putrid and stinky.

"So does a little folly to one respected for wisdom and honor"

Note: (Ecc. 9:18; Song of Solomon 2:15, 1 Cor. 5:6, James 3:5)

Culturally, the "right hand" signified power and "the left" displayed weakness, and the foolish person displays it even when walking by the way with no sense of direction.

2. (v4-7 and v16-19) THE FOOLISH RULERS

1) (v4) "If the spirit of the ruler rises against you" - (Proverbs 25:15)

Solomon gives us a proper response to this out-of-control ruler:

(v4) "Do not leave your post" - don't be too quick to quit and don't retaliate.

(v4) "Conciliate" - means to pacify, mediate, and soothe.

(Proverbs 15:1) "A soft answer turns away wrath, harsh words stir up anger"

(Proverbs 16:14) "... a wise man will appease it" (v32) "he who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit is better than he who takes a city"

(Proverbs 25:15) "By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, and a gentle tongue breaks a bone"

(Romans 12:18) "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men"

2) (v5-7) (v6) "Folly is set in great dignity"

Solomon describes this ruler's folly as "an evil" and "an error" "under the sun"

This foolish ruler replaces or side-lines the qualified person (seasoned veteran) and puts the unqualified person in charge.

Illustrations: let's put the "servants on horses" and the "princes on the ground."

3) (v16) "Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child"

The people suffer "woe" when the childish king puts people into positions not earned.

"Woe" when upstart son doesn't have a clue; so, "in the morning" when he should be attentive to work, he is attending a "feast" or party.

4) (v17) "Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles"

Here is the opposite: a ruler who has been properly tutored by family, and

he will "feast at the proper time for strength."

This "prince" will behave rightly and not drink himself silly, "not for drunkenness"

5) (v18) "Because of laziness ... " - (Proverbs 24:30-34)

"the building decays" - roof is weathered, timber rots, and windows are broken.

"through idleness of hands the house leaks" - things are getting worse.

6) (v19) **“But money answers everything”** - only “under the sun”

Yes, a lot may be had, maintained, and fixed with treasure; yet,
it answers nothing to the soul. - The right answer is in (Luke 12:15-21).

3. (v8 – 10) FIVE FOOLISH WORKERS - don't be foolish, be careful.

- 1) (v8) **“He who digs a pit will fall into it”** - the trap you set may catch you.
- 2) (v8) **“And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent”**
Yes, fools rush in, and look before you leap, and consider consequences of your actions.
- 3) (v9) **“He who quarries stones may be hurt by them”** - rock-slide, sparks, chips.
- 4) (v9) **“And he who splits wood may be endangered by it”** - watch out for chips.
- 5) (v10) **“If the ax is dull ... but wisdom brings success”** - it is not wasted time to sharpen your tool. With dull ax one works twice as hard, twice as long, half results.

4. (v11 – 15, v20) THE FOOLISH TONGUE

- 1) (v11) **“A serpent may bite when it is not charmed; the babbler is no different”**
The charmer is not so charming when his work comes back to bite him.
The “babbler” speaks words that may come back and bite him. (Galatians 5:15)
- 2) (v12) **“... the lips of a fool ...”** - (Proverbs 21:23) **“Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.”**

“the words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious” - (Colossians 4:6)
- 3) (v13) **“The words of his mouth begin with foolishness, end is raving madness”**
This one starts out talking nonsense and ends up with craziness and evil.
- 4) (v14) **“A fool also multiples words ... who can tell him what will be after him?”**
(Proverbs 10:19) **“In the multiple of words sin is not lacking,
but he who restrains his lips is wise”**
(Proverbs 27:1) **“Do not boast of tomorrow, for you don't know what a day may bring”**
- 5) (v15) **“The labor of fools wearies them,
for they do not even know how to go to the city”**
The foolish man is so fatigued from work, wearied, that he cannot find his way home.
Why listen to a “babbler” when he has no sense of direction?
- 6) (v20) **“Do not curse the king, even in your thought ... even in your bedroom;
for a bird of the air may carry your voice, and a bird of flight may tell the matter”**
We have heard or used the expression: **“A little bird told me”**
Solomon’s warning: some people cannot keep a secret.

CLOSE: (Proverbs 4:23) **“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life”**

(Psalm 19:14) **“Let the words of my mouth and the mediation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.”**