

## Ecclesiastes 10

### New King James Version (NKJV)

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1 Dead flies putrefy[a] the perfumer's ointment,  
And cause it to give off a foul odor;  
So does a little folly to one respected for wisdom and honor.

2 A wise man's heart is at his right hand,  
But a fool's heart at his left.

3 Even when a fool walks along the way,  
He lacks wisdom,  
And he shows everyone that he is a fool.

4 If the spirit of the ruler rises against you,  
Do not leave your post;  
For conciliation pacifies great offenses.

5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun,  
As an error proceeding from the ruler:

6 Folly is set in great dignity,  
While the rich sit in a lowly place.

7 I have seen servants on horses,  
While princes walk on the ground like servants.

8 He who digs a pit will fall into it,  
And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent.

9 He who quarries stones may be hurt by them,  
And he who splits wood may be endangered by it.

10 If the ax is dull,  
And one does not sharpen the edge,

Then he must use more strength;  
But wisdom brings success.

11 A serpent may bite when it is not charmed;  
The babbler is no different.

12 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious,  
But the lips of a fool shall swallow him up;

13 The words of his mouth begin with foolishness,  
And the end of his talk is raving madness.

14 A fool also multiplies words.

No man knows what is to be;  
Who can tell him what will be after him?

15 The labor of fools wearies them,  
For they do not even know how to go to the city!

16 Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child,  
And your princes feast in the morning!

17 Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son  
of nobles,

And your princes feast at the proper time—  
For strength and not for drunkenness!

18 Because of laziness the building decays,  
And through idleness of hands the house leaks.

19 A feast is made for laughter,  
And wine makes merry;

But money answers everything.

20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought;  
Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom;  
For a bird of the air may carry your voice,  
And a bird in flight may tell the matter.