

Ecclesiastes 7

New King James Version (NKJV)

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The Value of Practical Wisdom

- 1 A good name is better than precious ointment,
And the day of death than the day of one's birth;
- 2 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.
- 3 Sorrow is better than laughter,
For by a sad countenance the heart is made better.
- 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
- 5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise
Than for a man to hear the song of fools.
- 6 For like the crackling of thorns under a pot,
So is the laughter of the fool.
This also is vanity.
- 7 Surely oppression destroys a wise man's reason,
And a bribe debases the heart.
- 8 The end of a thing is better than its beginning;
The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
- 9 Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry,
For anger rests in the bosom of fools.
- 10 Do not say,

“ Why were the former days better than these?”
For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance,
And profitable to those who see the sun.

12 For wisdom is a defense as money is a defense,
But the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom gives
life to those who have it.

13 Consider the work of God;
For who can make straight what He has made crooked?

14 In the day of prosperity be joyful,
But in the day of adversity consider:
Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other,
So that man can find out nothing that will come after
him.

15 I have seen everything in my days of vanity:

There is a just man who perishes in his righteousness,
And there is a wicked man who prolongs life in his
wickedness.

16 Do not be overly righteous,
Nor be overly wise:
Why should you destroy yourself?

17 Do not be overly wicked,
Nor be foolish:
Why should you die before your time?

18 It is good that you grasp this,
And also not remove your hand from the other;
For he who fears God will escape them all.

19 Wisdom strengthens the wise
More than ten rulers of the city.

20 For there is not a just man on earth who does good
And does not sin.

21 Also do not take to heart everything people say,
Lest you hear your servant cursing you.

22 For many times, also, your own heart has known
That even you have cursed others.

23 All this I have proved by wisdom.

I said, "I will be wise";

But it was far from me.

24 As for that which is far off and exceedingly deep,
Who can find it out?

25 I applied my heart to know,

To search and seek out wisdom and the reason of
things,

To know the wickedness of folly,

Even of foolishness and madness.

26 And I find more bitter than death

The woman whose heart is snares and nets,

Whose hands are fetters.

He who pleases God shall escape from her,

But the sinner shall be trapped by her.

27 "Here is what I have found," says the Preacher,

"Adding one thing to the other to find out the reason,

28 Which my soul still seeks but I cannot find:

One man among a thousand I have found,

But a woman among all these I have not found.

29 Truly, this only I have found:

That God made man upright,

But they have sought out many schemes."