

Ecclesiastes 7:1-15

Adversity is not always or necessarily evil

Evaluating outward fortunes—6:1-7:15

Explain and Apply God's Plan—6:1-8:15

1) Proverbs to grasp concerning adversity—7:1-13

a) Contrasts—7:1-9

- i) Good reputation or accumulation of wealth—7:1 ¹ *A good name [shem] is better than a good ointment [shemen] (for burial?), and the day of death than the day of one's birth.* (cf. Proverbs 22:1)
- ii) Grief or festivity—7:2-4 ² *Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, because this is the end of every person, and the living should take it to heart.* ³ *Grief is better than laughter, because in sadness of face 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 pleasure.*
- iii) Wisdom or fools—7:5-9
 - (1) Listening—7:5 ⁵ *It is better to listen to the rebuke of the wise than for one to be listening to the song [shir] of fools.*
 - (a) "We become that to which we listen." (Barrick, 122)
 - (2) Taking the long look—7:6 ⁶ *For as the crackling of thorns [sirah] under the pot [sir], so is the laughter of the fool: this also is illusory.*
 - (3) Responding to pressure—7:7 ⁷ *For oppression makes a wise person irrational, and a bribe corrupts the heart.*
- iv) Procrastination or patience—7:8-9 ⁸ *The end of a matter is better than its beginning; patience (length) of spirit is better than a proud (height) spirit.* ⁹ *Do not be quick in your spirit to be vexed, for vexation rests in the bosom of fools.*

b) The benefits of wisdom—7:10-12

- i) ¹⁰ *Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?" because it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.*
- ii) ¹¹ *Wisdom is good along with an inheritance, and an advantage to those who see the sun.*
- iii) Why? ¹² *For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money, but the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of him who possesses it.*
- iv) Biblical wisdom involves **right teaching** (from Scripture) that produces **right thinking** resulting in **right choices** that make for **right living**. (Barrick, 125)

c) Summary command—7:13 ¹³ *Consider the work of God, for who is able to straighten what He has bent (the afflictions of our life)?*

- i) Cf. Job 2:10; Romans 8:28; 1st Thessalonians 5:18; Philippians 4:11-12

2) Rejoice in and consider God's sovereignty over your days—7:14 ¹⁴ *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other, so that one may not discover anything that will be after him.*

3) The appearance of injustice—7:15 ¹⁵ *I have seen everything in my illusory days; there is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs in his evil doing.*