

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 204 – A Good Name Through Don't Say The Past Is Better (Ecclesiastes 7:1-10)

1. Is it important to have a good reputation?

Yes: *"A good name is better than precious ointment..." (Ecclesiastes 7:1).*

- **Proverbs 22:1, Matthew 5:14-16, Acts 22:12, Romans 12:17, I Peter 3:8-17, and III John 12.**

2. Could it be said, for some, that death is a good thing?

Yes: *"...and the day of death than the day of one's birth" (Ecclesiastes 7:1).*

- Verse eight says this in part: *"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof..." (Ecclesiastes 7:8)*
- **Psalms 116:15, II Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:21-23, and Revelation 14:13.**

3. Why is it better to go to the house of mourning more than the house of feasting?

To lay to heart the reality of death for all: *"It is 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 lay it to his heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2).*

- Unless Christ comes first, death is the end of all of us (**Psalms 89:48, Ecclesiastes 3:20, Romans 5:12, and Hebrews 9:27**).
- Lay the reality of death, consequences, etc. to heart (**Isaiah 47:6-9, Malachi 2:1-2, and Luke 8:15**).

4. What positive effect can sorrow have on a person?

The heart is made better: *"Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better" (Ecclesiastes 7:3).*

- Consider these Scriptures as commentary on this verse: **Psalms 119:67-72, Luke 6:21, and James 4:8-10.**

5. Do fools consider serious matters or do they seek to have fun?

Fools just want to have fun: *"The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth" (Ecclesiastes 7:4).*

- This is not to say we should not seek to be happy or laugh (**Psalms 144:15, Proverbs 16:20, Proverbs 17:22, Proverbs 18:14, Romans 5:11, etc.**).
- What we must do, as this context is discussing, is take time to consider serious matters. We have to be in touch with our spiritual condition (**I Corinthians 11:28-32**).
- Yet, caution must be exercised here. Too much sorrow can swallow us (**II Corinthians 2:7**).

6. Is it a good idea to surround ourselves with “friends” who tell us what we want to hear?
 No: *“It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools”* (Ecclesiastes 7:5).
- **Leviticus 19:17, Psalms 141:5, Proverbs 9:8, Proverbs 28:23, Ecclesiastes 7:5, Galatians 2:11-17, I Timothy 5:20, II Timothy 4:2, Titus 1:10-14, and Titus 2:15.**
7. How long does the laughter of a fool continue?
 It is as short as thorns crackling in the fire under a pot: *“For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity”* (Ecclesiastes 7:6).
- **Proverbs 10:8, Luke 6:25, and Luke 12:16-21.**
8. Does oppression and bribery help people?
 No: *“Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart”* (Ecclesiastes 7:7).
- **Proverbs 29:4, Jeremiah 22:13-19, Zephaniah 3:1, and Amos 5:12.**
9. What is better than being proud in spirit?
 Being patient in spirit: *“Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit”* (Ecclesiastes 7:8).
- **James 5:11 and I Peter 1:13.** See question #2 for more.
10. Should we be in any hurry to be angry?
 No: *“Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools”* (Ecclesiastes 7:9).
- **Psalms 37:8, Proverbs 14:17, Proverbs 14:29, Proverbs 16:32, Proverbs 25:28, Ephesians 4:26, Ephesians 4:31, Colossians 3:8, and James 1:19-20.**
11. Should we get caught in the foolishness of thinking the past is better than the present?
 No: *“Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this”* (Ecclesiastes 7:10).
- This is common though. People think that things are worse now than in the past. Really, that is foolishness (**Genesis 6:5, Genesis 18:16-19:29, Jeremiah 32:35, Galatians 1:3-4, Titus 3:3, and I John 5:19**).
 - Even in U.S. history. We have had the slaughter of races (Indians; 1838 “Trail of Tears”), 1857 Dred Scott decision (blacks are property not people), Civil War, the “roaring 20’s”, the flower power 70’s, etc. People think that society is getting worse because they are ignorant of history and only mindful of present day media.