

# Ecclesiastes 10

JPS [\[Online\]](#)

## Wisdom and Folly

<sup>1</sup>Dead flies make the ointment of the perfumer fetid and putrid; So doth a little folly outweigh wisdom and honour. <sup>2</sup>A wise man's understanding is at his right hand; But a fool's understanding at his left.

**3**Yea also, when a fool walketh by the way, his understanding faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool. **4**If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, Leave not thy place; For gentleness allayeth great offences.

**5**There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, Like an error which proceedeth from a ruler: **6**Folly is set on great heights, And the rich sit in low place. **7**I have seen servants upon horses, And princes walking as servants upon the earth.

**8**He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; And whoso breaketh through a fence, a serpent shall bite him. **9**Whoso quarrieth stones shall be hurt therewith; And he that cleaveth wood is endangered thereby. **10**If the iron be blunt, And one do not whet the edge, Then must he put to more strength; But wisdom is profitable to direct. **11**If the serpent bite before it is charmed, Then the charmer hath no advantage. **12**The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; But the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. **13**The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; And the end of his talk is grievous madness. **14**A fool also multiplieth words; Yet man knoweth not what shall be; And that which shall be after him, Who can tell him? **15**The labour of fools wearieth every one of them, For he knoweth not how to go to the city. **16**Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a boy, And thy princes feast in the morning! **17**Happy art thou, O land, when thy king is a free man, And thy princes eat in due season, In strength, and not in drunkenness! **18**By slothfulness the rafters sink in; And through idleness of the hands the house leaketh. **19**A feast is made for laughter, And wine maketh glad the life; And money answereth all things. **20**Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, And curse not the rich in thy bedchamber; For a bird of the air shall carry the voice, And that which hath wings shall tell the matter.