

# CHAPTER 10:5-11:8

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## KEY VERSE(S)—

### OUTLINE—

- I. **OBSERVATION:** Foolish Rulers (10:5-19)
  - A. Rulers Take Unfair Advantage of Their Position (10:5-7)
  - B. How You Deal with this Situation (10:8-15)
    - 1. Wisdom Brings Success (10:8-10)
    - 2. Foolish Words Destroy (10:11-15)
  - C. Folly of the Morally Foolish King (10:16-19)
- II. **INSTRUCTION:** Deal Wisely with Such Rulers (10:20-11:8)
  - A. Proper Response to a Foolish King (10:20)
  - B. Always Do the Best you Can (11:1-8)

## KEYS WORDS (Themes)—

### SUMMARY—

The Preacher shows us that power and wisdom do not always coincide. The powerful are not always wise—they may even exalt folly (10:5-7). He has already observed that to be true (cf. 9:11). This is obviously not a fair situation, but wisdom helps us cope with this fact.

Next he emphasizes that there are consequences to certain actions (10:8-10). At first glance it may seem he is reassuring us that such a ruler will “*get what he deserves*,” but he ends by saying “*wisdom brings success*” (10:10). Likely this is enjoining wisdom in the man who sees such injustice—he must be careful how he responds or trouble can come to him (10:4,8-14,20). Be careful what you say about such a man—being “right” is little consolation when the evil man destroys you because of it (10:11-14).

The entire nation suffers when rulers are ungodly—drinking, reveling, and bribing others (10:16-19). The challenge is for us to hold our tongues lest the wrong people hear our disapproving speech (10:20). That would be a foolish thing to do considering the kind of person this king is, and the way he will take advantage of his position to harm or silence you permanently.

What is the best way to respond to all this? Don’t let this inequity stop you from doing what wisdom dictates regarding those who are in need (11:1-2) or your work (11:3-4). Remember that all this is in God’s hands anyway, not the king’s (11:5-6). Therefore, do not withhold good when you can do it. Even though you get to experience the good that God bestows, don’t forget that these “*days of darkness will be many*” (11:7-8). In each of these selections the conclusion is that you “reap what you sow.”

### QUESTIONS—

- 1) Summarize this passage in one sentence.
  
- 2) Why won’t an unjust ruler respond fairly to your criticism of him (10:8-10,20)?

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- 3) *In what ways are the words of the wise and the words of the fool contrasted in this section (10:11-14)?*
  - 4) *Why is there a time to keep silent (10:20; cf. 3:7)?*
  - 5) *Are good deeds worth performing if we are not repaid for them (11:1-2)?*
  - 6) *How should we react to the things we cannot change or control (11:3-6)? Is anyone in control?*
  - 7) *Who causes the wind to blow (11:5), the baby to grow (11:5), and the seed to grow (11:6)? So where does our trust need to be... in the weather or in God (11:4-5)?*

**ASSIGNMENT—**

All through this book the Preacher has been comparing things in life which are vain and things which are good. Review each chapter in this book. Use the chart below to list everything in that chapter that is vain alongside everything that is called good.

	Vain Things	Good Things
Chap 1		
Chap 2		
Chap 3		
Chap 4		
Chap 5		
Chap 6		
Chap 7		
Chap 8		
Chap 9		
Chap 10		
Chap 11		
Chap 12		

**READING SCHEDULE—**

Read this passage every day before the upcoming class (check the box after each day that you read the passage)

Sunday   
  Monday   
  Tuesday   
  Wednesday   
  Thursday   
  Friday   
  Saturday