



“Snake Bites, Speech Class, and Talking Birds”

Eccl. 10:11-20

August 16, 2020

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Situations

1. Digging pits
2. Breaking down walls
3. Quarrying stones
4. Splitting logs
5. Chopping wood

Dangers

1. Falling into the pits
2. Being bitten by a serpent
3. Being hurt by the stones
4. Endangering oneself
5. Overexertion because of a dull ax

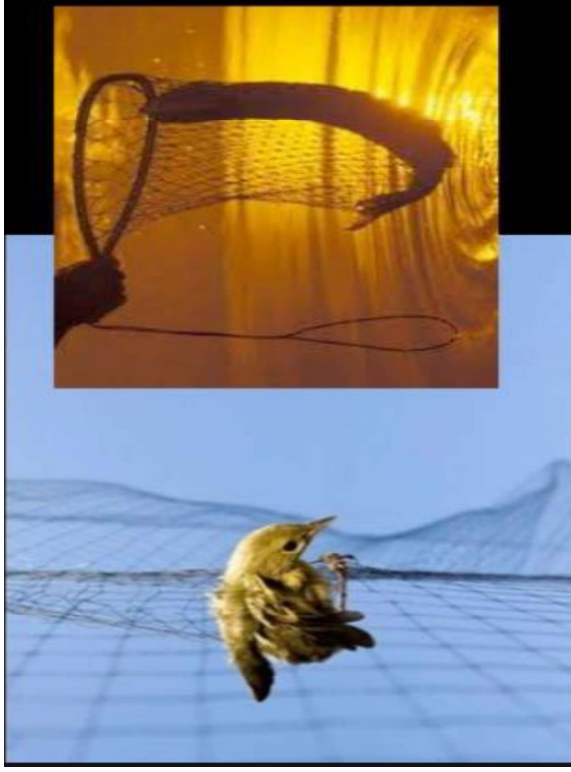
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Snake Bites:

- Solomon loves to use animals to illustrate truth.

1. SHEEP (577 TIMES)
2. GOATS (172 TIMES)
3. BULLS (171)
4. DONKEYS (154)
5. HORSES (166)
6. LIONS (145)
7. OXEN (98)
8. CAMELS (71)
9. DOGS (42)
10. EAGLES (30)

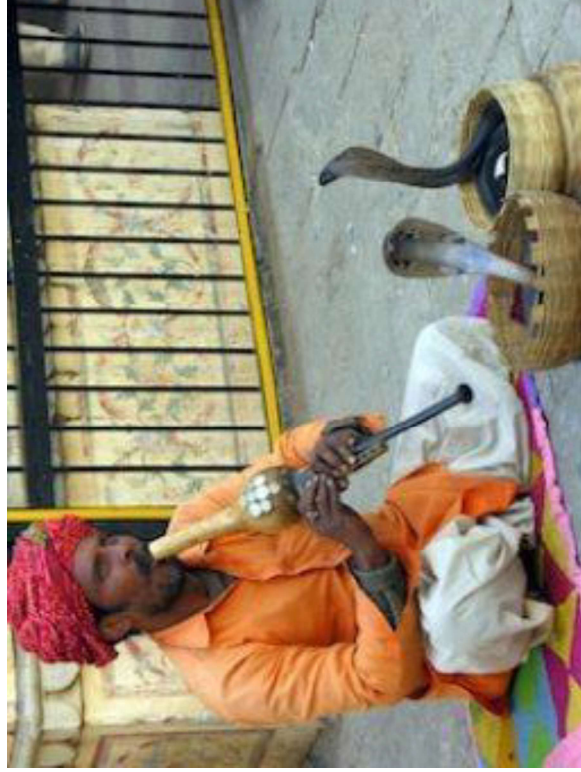
***OVER 100 DIFFERENT ANIMALS ARE MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE.**



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Snake Bites:

- Solomon loves to use animals to illustrate truth.
- So let's look at a snake charmer.



- It is believed that snake charming started in Egypt. Today you will still find it in India, Pakistan, and other middle eastern countries.
- Snake charmers were common as entertainers in that time.
- They would go from village to village on open market days.
- Find a place to set-up.
- Open their boxes with usually cobra's inside. Sometimes vipers were used.
- The charmer would then begin playing on a Punji (reed instrument, sounds like a bagpipe).
- Snakes have no external ears. They pick up sound waves primarily through the bone structure of the head.

Ps 58:3-5

- 3 The wicked are estranged from the womb;
These who speak lies go astray from birth.
- 4 They have venom like the venom of a serpent;
Like a deaf cobra that stops up its ear,
- 5 So that it does not hear the voice of charmers,
Or a skillful caster of spells.

- So, more than the playing of the music by the charmer, it is the charmer's disciplined actions (swaying & staring) that hold the snakes attention & keep the serpent under control. It is indeed a skill. They follow the Pungi that the "snake charmer" holds with his hands. The snake considers the person and Pungi a threat and responds to it as if it were a predator.
- A basket or container was available for people to drop their money into.
- When finished he would pack up his Punji and snakes, and move on to the next village.
- However if he was careless when setting up, in a hurry, made a wrong move, got too close, before the snake was charmed, he might not move along to another village.
- Situation: The charmer has a skill, he can charm the serpent, but if he doesn't exercise his skill at the **right time** it's no advantage to him, and he ends up gets bitten and dies.
- So wisdom is good to have, but it gives no advantage unless it is used, and even then it must be exercised at the **right time**.

Timing is important -

1. In an election year timing is everything:
 - Commercials.
 - VP choice.
 - Release of a book or information.
 - Travel to campaign in a state or city.
2. Are you using your skills now for the glory of God?
 - If you wait until after you die, it will be too late. That's bad timing.
 - Wisdom says use them now. Don't be snake bitten.

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Prov 10:8

8 The wise of heart will receive commands,

But a babbling fool will be ruined.

Prov 10:21

21 The lips of the righteous feed many,

But fools die for lack of understanding.

Prov 15:2

2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable,

But the mouth of fools spouts folly.

Prov 18:7

7 A fool's mouth is his ruin,

And his lips are the snare of his soul.

- Jesus always knew what to say & when to say it.
- Howard Hendricks.
- James 3 says the tongue is very small but it's effects are very large.
- Your entire life and reputation will be based on how you use the tongue, so take care to think before you speak.
- That's why it's so important for you to gain wisdom so that you can choose your words wisely.
- In a speech class you are not allowed to ramble on.
- The presidential election may be decided on who is able to best articulate what he believes.

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Speech Class Rule #1: Choose your words wisely.

- The wise man measures his words. His words are well thought through. They extend grace. They win favor.
- The fool keeps talking about subjects he does not understand without realizing how much harm he is doing to himself. The words of a fool bring him to “destruction.”
- The fool gets “swallowed up” in all of his words.

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- The fool should talk less and listen more:
 - 4 benefits of talking less and listening more:
 - (1) you can listen carefully to what others say.
 - (2) you have time to frame your thoughts.
 - (3) those around you will value your words because you have listened to them.
 - (4) you run a much lower risk of saying something foolish.

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Speech Class Rule # 2: If you have a bad beginning, it will only get worse.

- You cannot expect foolishness to magically turn into wisdom.
- In other words, a speech begins with stupidity and ends with insanity. It means, everything the fool says just gets crazier and crazier.
- Politicians and even some theologians absolutely bury themselves when they espouse their beliefs.
- It is rare to find someone who has really thought through their argument.

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Speech Class Rule #3: Be brief, to the point, and avoid empty statements.

- We live in a society of words, words, and more words.
- There has never been a time in history like today in which people are so bombarded with so many words coming from all forms of media. Yet so much of it is empty and misleading.
- We have fools everywhere spouting off words.
- We've got quantity without content.
- Remember: Solomon's words in the Book of Ecclesiastes were inspired by God, so God also has no use for careless jabbering.
- To speak, and to speak well, are two different things.
- A fool may talk, but a wise man speaks.
- So, when you see someone speaking with certainty regarding the future, it is a fool's tongue at work. Why? Because he leaves out of his equation the sovereignty of God.
- Fools give people false senses of reality.
- Look at all of the information and predictions that has been given during the pandemic.
- Listen to the words that will be spoken for the upcoming election and the predictions made – "If I am elected . . ."

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Ecc1 6:11-12

- 11 For there are many words which increase futility. What then is the advantage to a man?
- 12 For who knows what is good for a man during his lifetime, during the few years of his futile life?

Ecc1 7:14

- 14 In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider — God has made the one as well as the other

So that man will not discover anything that will be after him.

Ecc1 8:7

- 7 If no one knows what will happen, who can tell him when it will happen?

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Speech Class Rule #4: Your endless amount of words will lead to confusion.

- The toil of the fool is the toil of talking too much. He talks so much he wears himself out. Doesn't know where he is at.
- "In Bible times, the roads to the cities were well-marked so that any traveler could find his way, but the fool is so busy talking about the future that he loses his way in the present." - Warren Wiersbe
- They knew so much about the future, yet needed to ask directions to the next well marked city.
- The fool doesn't know "The Way to San Jose."
- Confused about the pandemic? Confused about the election? Guess where it came from? Words without wisdom.

16 Woe to you, O land, whose king is a lad and whose princes feast in the morning.

Leadership in Government: Use wisdom when you select your leaders.

- "Woe" – this is a warning.
- "lad" - does not mean "young" when used of a king. Rather, his is a person who is characterized as being immature, naive, incompetent, impulsive, arrogant, inexperienced, simpleminded, vain, insecure, or even untrustworthy and weak in their personal lives.
- The reason they were elected is because maybe they had good looks or charm or were popular or had a slogan that tugged on people's heartstrings or offered them a government handout.
- But this person is not a responsible, disciplined person as evidenced by how he conducts his office and those under him. Solomon described foolish rulers as feasting in the morning when they should be working for the good of their nation and their people.
- They act like children and spend their mornings eating and drinking instead of concentrating on the work of the day.

17 Blessed are you, O land, whose king is of nobility and whose princes eat at the appropriate time — for strength and not for drunkenness.

- Here is a land that is blessed.
- Their king is experienced – comes from a noble line – he is not a novice.
- They eat their meals at regular hours, not to get drunk, but for nourishment, so they can have strength for their responsibilities. They enjoy good things in moderation, so they can concentrate on governing well.
- This is a well disciplined administration.
- Laziness, incompetence, or moral failure in any organization will cause it to collapse.
- The first priority for bad rulers is to fulfill their own appetites and desires.

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Isa 3:1-5

- 1 For behold, the Lord God of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah
Both supply and support, the whole supply of bread
And the whole supply of water;
- 2 The mighty man and the warrior,
The judge and the prophet,
The diviner and the elder,
- 3 The captain of fifty and the honorable man,
The counselor and the expert artisan,
And the skillful enchanter.
- 4 And I will make mere lads their princes,
And capricious children will rule over them,
- 5 And the people will be oppressed,
Each one by another, and each one by his neighbor;
The youth will storm against the elder
And the inferior against the honorable.

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- Solomon compares a nation to a house.
- This house is in bad shape.
- Important items have been neglected.
- The rafters and the roof (critical to the structure and function of the house) were once in good shape are now in disrepair because other less important things have taken priority.
- Here is what has happened . . .

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- Why does the roof leak and the rafters sag (vs. 18)?
- Because leaders in government are doing 3 things:
 1. Feasting.
 2. Drinking.
 3. Spending.
- The leaders do not eat food for nourishment, but for entertainment.
- They do not drink fresh juices to strengthen their bodies, but fermented wine for boisterous laughter.
- They believe money can solve all of a nation's problems. Fund more projects and programs - spend more money – print more money – spend more money. More debt, more taxes. Spending is out of control.
- However they ignore the spiritual and moral needs of a nation, which if neglected will cause the house (nation) to collapse. Money has no answer to meet these needs.

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Speech Class Rule #5: Your speech will be heard.

Talking Birds

- The bedroom, next to the bathroom, is the most private part of the house.
 - In spite bad leadership, Solomon urges restraint.
 - In Solomon's day, if you complain, those in authority may eliminate you. Corrupt officials often had supporters in the most private places who take the names and words of complainers back to their masters.
- ### **1 Peter 2:17**
- 17 Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.
- The American way is to elect a man to office, give him six months to change everything, and if he does not do it, spend the next three and a half years complaining about it. There is a destructive element in complaining and griping all the time about what government does.
 - Here is where “a little birdie told me” came from.

A Little Bird 'Told Me



- Why birds? 1.The ears of birds are more sensitive than human ears and can pick up sounds even in a noisy environment. 2. They can travel with speed nearly anywhere.
- **"Walls have ears."**
- **"Loose lips sink ships."** They also sink careers and friendships."
- **Principle:** A wise person doesn't say something in private that he wouldn't want someone to hear in public.

"Among my most prized possessions are words
that I have never spoken."

Sam Rayburn (1882-1961)
Former Democratic Speaker of the
House of Representatives