

# 11. Comments on the Rat Race

Solomon has been sharing the fruit of his hard-won wisdom. After living apart from God he returns and notes some of the things he has learned concerning wisdom itself.

## ECCLESIASTES 9:11-10:20

*Godly wisdom beats the rat race.*

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**Intro – Solomon provides more insights about wisdom and its uses in life.**

*We'll learn how to deal with certain people in our lives.*

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## I. Comments on the Rat Race

Our culture did not invent the “rat race” mentality. *The idea of working harder and harder, longer and longer than gaining less and less satisfaction is not new.*

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Solomon comments on the Rat Race of his day.

Vs. 11 *Waking up earlier, running faster, being the strongest does not guarantee success.*

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Vs. 12 *It is a false notion that only the strong survive. Trouble and death ensnare them all. Rushing to be first causes it's own problems.*

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Vs. 14-15 *The rat race forgets the acts of wisdom. The rat race produces self-centered people insensitive to spiritual things.*

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Based on these observations, Solomon develops some core ideas about life in the fast lane.

1. Human activity *cannot guarantee genuine success* vs. 11

*True success in life is measured by peace, joy and love we experience and share, these are gifts of God.*

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2. Strength is more impressive but less effective than wisdom vs. 15-16a  
Wisdom is not cultivated by "doing" but by listening. When we shift gears from strength to wisdom, we take our first steps out of the rat race.

3. Wise counsel is not usually popular, rarely obeyed and seldom remembered. vs. 16b  
It is human nature that we forget the lessons we should remember.

4. Human rulers will always out shout wise counselors, and fools vs. 17  
love it this way. The rat race is noisy and most like it this way. This type of noise drowns out the quiet voice of the Spirit.

5. Wisdom is better than war vs. 18  
one foolish act can destroy much good that wisdom builds.

## II. Wisdom and Folly – Chapter 10:1-11

Solomon builds a case for living wisely.

He contrasts Wisdom vs. Folly

1. The advantages and disadvantages of wisdom vs. 1  
honor and strength vs. foolishness and ruin vs. 2

Fools eventually earn their reputations as fools. vs. 3

2. Humility and patience versus popularity and partiality vs. 4

A soft answer turns away wrath Pr. 15:1. Unqualified vs. 5-7  
people rise to the top.

3. Inevitable risk versus inexcusable stupidity vs. 8-10

### III. A Fool's Portrait - vs. 12-20

What does a fool look like?

1. Character of a fool. Solomon describes what a fool looks like.

- His language is one of disbelief. Fools live comfortable in a world without God.
- He loves sin. He lies easily - Pr. 14:8. • He has no conscience - Pr. 14:9.
- He easily offends God - Pr. 19:3

2. Actions of a fool. Solomon describes the action of a fool.

- They make foolish talk
- They have unsure future
- They are their own worst enemies
- They make poor leaders. • They waste time and money.

### IV. How to Deal with a Fool

1. Isolate them \_\_\_\_\_ Proverbs 14; 23:9

The best method for fools is to allow them to suffer the consequences of their actions.

2. Restore them only with repentance \_\_\_\_\_ Psalms 107:10-12; 39-40

Fools generally suffer before their rescue. Solid fruit should be expected before restoration.

3. When restored, proclaim the change \_\_\_\_\_ Psalms 107:21-22

Those who are restored can be powerful witnesses for Christ.