



Daily Verse and Comment

Ecclesiastes 7:8-10

(8) Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. (9) Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. (10) Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.

King James Version

Solomon compares [patience](#) and hasty anger. We become frustrated easily and frequently. Often, doing a good job is superior simply because it has been done well and does not have to be inspected by someone else to check and double-check the quality of workmanship. How often does a person's temper feed into the way and the quality of the job? [God](#) is clearly suggesting that a person's temperament has a distinct effect on the quality and consistency of his workmanship.

Does an angry person make a good spouse? Does an angry or impatient person make a good employee? Does an angry person make a good church member? Does a driver burning with road rage make a good driver? Most of the time, anger is not [wisdom](#). Anger can be good if it is used at the right time, is controlled, is directed toward the right ends, and is not simply an expression of personal, willful frustration because things are not going as expected. Notice how the following verses confirm anger's ability to hinder good:

» [Proverbs 14:17](#): “A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, and a man of wicked intentions is hated.”

» [Proverbs 14:29](#): “He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly.”

» [Proverbs 16:32](#): “He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”

» [James 1:19-20](#): “So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

Solomon expressly states in [Ecclesiastes 7:9](#), “Anger resides in the bosom of fools.” He describes an anger ready to burst out at even slight irritations because a person's pride convinces him that even slight irritations simply should not happen to such a wonderful person as he is. He explodes because of his impatience.

From impatience, it is often but a short step to bribery, which Solomon mentions in verse 7. A bribe is often given or taken because the individual wants to hurry the process of achieving his goal. The recipient convinces himself it is merely a shortcut. It is a means of getting the job done quicker. However, in reality the bribe is a trap that binds him by indebtedness to another and ultimately, to shame.

Do not be misled by the word “end” in verse 8. It does not necessarily suggest a job that is finished. Rather, Solomon is thinking of the outcome, the fruit produced, or the quality achieved. Some things that do not seem to start well actually become quite productive. There is a saying: “All's well that ends well,” which is the sort of end Solomon means, one that is quite important to growing and overcoming.

Many times, we fear becoming involved with even the first small steps of overcoming a character flaw to improve our conduct, so we procrastinate. We often find, however, that once involved in disciplining ourselves and taking some small hesitant steps, we are encouraged because more good is happening than we ever thought possible. Some insignificant beginnings have endings of major consequence.

A clear example is found in the fact that [Jesus Christ](#) was born as a babe, in a second-rate, occupied, and enslaved nation and into an insignificant family—but that “project” will end in the awesome things written in Revelation 22 with billions of glorified, immortal persons gathered into one awesome

Family. This illustration feeds into this principle and the overall thoughts about how we think about life now that we are in the midst of our calling and have a much clearer view of how things are going on Planet Earth.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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[Ecclesiastes and Christian Living \(Part Nine\): Wisdom as a Defense](#)

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