

¹Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.² A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.³ Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom 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 yielding pacifieth great offences.⁵ There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler:⁶ Folly is set in great dignity, 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 an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.⁹ Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.¹⁰ If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.¹¹ Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.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 mischievous madness.¹⁴ A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?¹⁵ The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.¹⁶ Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the

¹الدُّبَابُ الْمَيِّتُ يُتَنُّ وَبَحْمُرُ طَيْبِ الْعِطَارِ. جَهَالَةُ قَلِيلَةٍ أَثْقَلُ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَمِنْ الْكَرَامَةِ. ²قَلْبُ الْحَكِيمِ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ، وَقَلْبُ الْجَاهِلِ عَنْ يَسَارِهِ. ³أَيْضًا إِذَا مَسَى الْجَاهِلُ فِي الطَّرِيقِ يَنْقُصُ فَهْمُهُ، وَيَقُولُ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ إِنَّهُ جَاهِلٌ. ⁴إِنْ صَعِدَتْ عَلَيْكَ رُوحُ الْمُتَسَلِّطِ فَلَا تَتْرُكْ مَكَانَكَ، لِأَنَّ الْهُدُوءَ يُسَكِّنُ خَطَايَا عَظِيمَةً. ⁵يُوجَدُ شَرُّ رَأْيِهِ تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ كَسَهْوِ صَادِرٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْمُتَسَلِّطِ. ⁶الْجَهَالَةُ جُعِلَتْ فِي مَعَالِي كَثِيرَةٍ، وَالْأَعْيَاءُ يَجْلِسُونَ فِي السَّافِلِ. ⁷قَدْ رَأَيْتُ عَبْدًا عَلَى الْحَيْلِ، وَرُؤَسَاءَ مَاشِينَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ كَالْعَبِيدِ. ⁸مَنْ يَخْفُزُ هُوَّةً يَقَعُ فِيهَا، وَمَنْ يَنْقُصُ جِدَارًا تَلْدَعُهُ حَيَّةٌ. ⁹مَنْ يَقْلَعُ جَارَةً يُوجِعُ بِهَا. مَنْ يُشَقِّقُ خَطْبًا يَكُونُ فِي خَطَرٍ مِنْهُ. ¹⁰إِنْ كَلَّ الْحَدِيدُ وَلَمْ يُسَنَّ هُوَ حَدَّةٌ، فَلْيَزِدِ الْقُوَّةَ. أَمَّا الْحِكْمَةُ فَتَنَافَعُهُ لِلْإِجَاحِ. ¹¹إِنْ لَدَعَتِ الْحَيَّةُ يَلَا زُفْيَةَ فَلَا مَنَفَعَةَ لِلرَّاقِي. ¹²كَلِمَاتُ قِمِّ الْحَكِيمِ نِعْمَةٌ، وَشَفَتَا الْجَاهِلِ تَبْتَلَعَانِهِ. ¹³إِثْنَاءُ كَلَامٍ قِمِّ جَهَالَةٍ، وَآخِرُ قِمِّ جُنُونٍ رَدِيءٌ. ¹⁴وَالْجَاهِلُ يَكْثُرُ الْكَلَامَ. لَا يَعْلَمُ إِنْسَانٌ مَا يَكُونُ. وَمَنْ يُخَيِّرُهُ مَاذَا يَصِيرُ بَعْدَهُ. ¹⁵تَعَبُ الْجُهْلَاءِ يُغَيِّبُهُمْ، لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَيْفَ يَذْهَبُ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ. ¹⁶وَلَكِ لِي أَيْتُهَا الْأَرْضُ إِذَا كَانَ مَلِكُكَ وَلَدًا، وَرُؤَسَاؤُكَ يَأْكُلُونَ فِي الصَّبَاحِ. ¹⁷طُوبَى لَكَ أَيْتُهَا الْأَرْضُ إِذَا كَانَ مَلِكُكَ ابْنًا شَرَفَاءَ، وَرُؤَسَاؤُكَ يَأْكُلُونَ فِي الْوَقْتِ لِلْقُوَّةِ لَا لِلسَّكْرِ. ¹⁸بِالسَّكْرِ الْكَثِيرِ يَهْطُ السَّقْفُ، وَبِتَدَلِّي الْيَدَيْنِ يَكْفُ الثَّبْتُ. ¹⁹لِلصَّخِّكَ يَعْملُونَ وَلِيمَةً، وَالْحَمْرُ تُفَرِّخُ الْعَيْشَ. أَمَّا الْفِصَّةُ فَتُخْضَلُ الْكُلَّ. ²⁰لَا تَسُبَّ الْمَلِكَ وَلَا فِي فِكْرِكَ، وَلَا تَسُبَّ الْعَبِيَّ فِي مَضْجَعِكَ، لِأَنَّ طَيْرَ السَّمَاءِ يَنْقُلُ الصَّوْتَ، وَدُو الْجَنَاحِ يُخَيِّرُ بِالْأَمْرِ.

morning!¹⁷ Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!¹⁸ By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.¹⁹ A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but 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.