

## A Little Birdie Told Me

Ponder: Words and attitudes

Scripture: “Do not curse the king, even in your thought. Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom. For a bird of the air may carry your voice, and a bird in flight may tell the matter” (Eccl. 10:20, NKJV).

Many of our common idioms come from the Bible. “That’s the fly in the ointment” (Eccl. 10:1). “He escaped by the skin of his teeth” (Job 19:20). “It’s just a drop in the bucket” (Isa. 40:15). And in today’s text, “A little birdie told me.”

Being a king himself, Solomon knew the trouble one might bring on himself by cursing the king. A curse could be a thinly veiled threat of bodily injury or death; at the very least it would involve a wish that harm would befall the king. And though we might think words spoken in one’s own bedroom would remain private, such isn’t always the case. It’s as though a bird was listening and then flew away to start the gossip chain. Note to self: Your words may come back to haunt you!

Most who read this devotional don’t live under a monarchy, but all of us should check our attitude toward civil authorities and bridle our tongue. In the first place, badmouthing civil officials violates Scripture. We are to honor them and pray for them even when we disapprove of their policies or their conduct (1 Pet. 2:27; 1 Tim. 2:2). But Solomon pointed out that minding our manners is our best interest in earthly matters too. When a gunman injured former president Trump a few weeks ago, a congressional staffer was fired and a Dallas police officer placed on administrative leave for commenting that the shooter should have had better aim. In the past I’ve heard similar ugly remarks about other presidents from both sides of the political aisle.

In a season inundated with harsh rhetoric, may our speech be with grace, seasoned with salt (Col 4:6).

Hymn: “Angry Words”

Prayer: Father, please help us to reject ugly attitudes and ungodly words. In Jesus’ name, Amen.