

Pride

by Bill Crews

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one (Obadiah 3 — said of the nation of Edom).

What are some of the causes of pride? Power, real or perceived, can cause pride. Leviticus 26:19 speaks of *"the pride of your power,"* referring to Israel when they should become strong in the land that God had promised to give them. Ezekiel 7:24 refers to the pride of the strong. Riches and possessions often cause pride. *"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked"* (Revelation 3:17 — the Lord to the church in Laodicea). Said the rich fool in a parable taught by Jesus, *"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry."* But God said unto him, *"Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"* (Luke 12:19-20). In Ecclesiastes 2:4-11 Solomon indulges himself in such things and concludes that they are *"vanity and a striving after wind."* Pride is often occasioned by worldly knowledge and wisdom, human learning, or secular knowledge. *"Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth. If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know"* (1 Corinthians 8:1b-2). *"Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God"* (1 Corinthians 3:18-19). According to 2 Chronicles 9:22, *"Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom."* But in 1 Kings 11 he did not utilize his wisdom to avoid the mess that he got himself and his kingdom into, and, after depending upon his wisdom for success, happiness and contentment and failing, he referred to it as *"striving after the wind," "much grief,"* and *"increasing sorrow"* (Ecclesiastes 1:12-18). Those who think that they are *"clever," "smart," "intellectual," "original thinkers"* have already fallen into pride. Physical beauty, whether real or perceived, can create pride in a person, and the Bible warns against this. *"As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman that is without discretion"* (Proverbs 11:22). *"Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised"* (Proverbs 31:30). A horrible judgment is pronounced from God through Isaiah upon the vain, haughty, wanton, pampered and over-bedecked *"daughters of Zion"* in Isaiah 3:16-26. There are many vain people whose vanity can be traced to their physical appearance — this is certainly foolish pride. Besides all of these things there are such matters as personal physical strength (like Samson), control over others (Diotrephes had control over a local church, 3 John 9-11), and other things. All of these, or any one of these, can lead a person to think that he is better than others or superior to others.

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