

### Series: “Chasing the Wind”, Lesson #3

## EXPLORING WORLDLY PLEASURE

“I said to myself, ‘Come now, I will test you with pleasure (simechah).’” (2:1) The Hebrew word for pleasure is simechah. Simechah is an emotional expression of some visible or external matter that causes extreme happiness in your life. It could be good or bad depending on its source.

This Hebrew word was used when David returned from his victory over Goliath and the women of Israel came out to celebrate. “And it happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments. And the women sang as they played, and said, ‘Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.’” (1 Sam.18: 6-7)

Simechah was used three times in our lesson text and establishes a study outline.

- Test (2:1) I will test (nasah / piel impf) you with pleasure.
- Teach (2:2) Pleasure, what does it accomplish (asah / kal ptc)?
- Testimony (2:10) I did not withhold (lo-mana / kal pf) my heart from any pleasure.

Solomon used the same Hebrew word for exploring (tur) as he did in exploring worldly wisdom (1:13) and with the same conclusion (1:14).

- I explored with my mind how to stimulate my body (2:3).
- Behold, all was vanity and chasing after the wind and there was no profit under the sun (2:11).

We will examine our lesson text by the following six homiletical points.

- Exploration of wine (2:1-3) I explored (tur / kal pf).
- Exploration of work (2:4-6) I made (asah / kal pf).
- Exploration of Wall Street (2:7) I possessed (hayah / kal pf).
- Exploration of wealth (2:8) I collected (kanas / kal pf).
- Exploration of worldliness (2:9-10) I became great (gadal / kal pf).
- Explanation of the Exploration (2:11) I considered (panah / kal pf).

Solomon’s conclusion was that there was no profit in seeking pleasure apart from God for the believer. It was vanity and Chasing after the Wind.

<b>This lesson will study four aspects of the futility of exploring worldly pleasure.</b>
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### 1. This was during a time in Solomon’s life when he was in a frantic search for happiness apart from God.

Since Solomon couldn’t find satisfaction from worldly wisdom, he thought that maybe he could find happiness and satisfaction from the external and visible world of pleasure. He wanted to explore worldly pleasure without any restriction placed on him by God. He mentioned five areas he explored in this lesson (wine, work, Wall Street, wealth, and worldliness).

Eve tried the same experiment with the same results (Gen.3: 6). What lesson do they teach us?

## 2. This type of pursuit is a big snare of the devil.

“Now flee from youthful lusts, pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.” (2 Tim.2:22) “And they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive to do his will.” (2 Tim.2:26)

**The pursuit of worldly pleasure can ensnare a believer by OSN (old sin-nature) lust gratification:** “For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedience, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.” (Titus 3:3)

**It can enslave a believer when he attaches it to OMCD (old man cosmos diabolicus) thinking:** “Instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.” (Titus 2:12-13)

In this lesson, Solomon explored worldly pleasure through wine, work, Wall Street, wealth, and worldliness. He concluded that it was Chasing after the Wind. James came to the same conclusion - “You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” (James 4:3-4)

## 3. Satan takes good things like pleasures and people and turns them against God, Jesus Christ, and God’s plan.

Adam and Eve, the Tree of knowledge, and the serpent were all good from divine viewpoint (Gen.1: 24-31) [Day 6, very good]. Yet Satan turned them against the God and His plan. How did he do it? (Gen.3)

Satan attempts to separate us from BD as the working object of our faith (Luke 8:11-12) [roadside] “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7) **Note the procedure and the promise.**

## 4. Solomon’s testimony is that worldly pleasure attacks divine norm and standards, values, goals, and aspirations towards the plan of God in the life of a believer.

After Solomon was firmly established as king of Israel, God asks him to name whatever he desired, in 1 Kings3: 5. Solomon’s answer impressed God to such an extent that he gave him more than he ask, wealth, death of enemies, administering justice, wise and discern heart like none other, riches and honor, greatness as a king, plus a long life if he walk with God. (1 Kings 3:10-14) Solomon’s request: “So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people.” (3:9)

By his pursuit of worldly pleasure, Solomon became the friend of the world rather than the friend of God – “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” (James 4:4)

The pursuit of pleasure is contrasted in the lives of Lot (friend of world) and Abraham [friend of God] (Gen.13: 8-12; 15:6; 2 Chron.20: 7) – “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,’ and he was called the friend of God.” (James 2:23)

**EXPLORING WORLDLY PLEASURE IS VANITY AND CHASING AFTER THE WIND!**