



Ecclesiastes chapter 2
Part 3 – The Vanity of Pleasure.
Pastor Anthony Nicholson

INTRODUCTION

ECCLESIASTES ONE WHO ADRESSES AN ASSEMBLY WRITTEN BY KING SOLOMON, CIRCA 930 B.C.
WISDOM LITERATURE INCLUDING WRITING STYLES INCLUDING...

- PESSIMISM
- CONDENCED LANGUAGE & IMAGERY
- PARALLELISM (SEE BOOKS OF PSALMS, JOB, PROVERBS, SONG OF SONGS)
- HEBRAISMS VANITY OF VANITIES (HEVEL – VAPOUR - TEMPORARY AND VANISHING) & UNDER THE SUN (LIFE WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING GOD)

THE MAIN THEMES OF THE BOOK ARE AS FOLLOWS:

THE MEANING AND FUTILITY OF LIFE WITHOUT GOD.
THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.
HUMANITY.
CREATION.
EVIL AND SUFFERING.
WISDOM AND FOLLY.
POVERTY AND WEALTH.
AUTHORITY AND INJUSTICE

CHAPTER 2 MAIN THEMES:

- WISDOM AND FOLLY
- VANITY OF PLEASURES
- LAUGHTER AND JOY
- ADDICTION
- PRIDE OF LIFE
- SEXUAL PROMISCUITY
- EDUCATIONAL VANITY



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Ecclesiastes 2:1-26 (NKJV)
The Vanity of Pleasure

I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure”; but surely, this also was vanity. ² I said of laughter—“Madness!”; and of mirth, “What does it accomplish?” ³ I searched in my heart *how* to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives. I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. ⁵ I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all *kinds* of fruit trees in them. ⁶ I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove. ⁷ I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. ⁸ I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, *and* ¹musical instruments of all kinds. ⁹ So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.

¹⁰ Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them.

I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure,
For my heart rejoiced in all my labor;
And this was my reward from all my labor.

¹¹ Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done
And on the labor in which I had toiled;
And indeed all *was* vanity and grasping for the wind.
There was no profit under the sun.



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The End of the Wise and the Fool

¹² Then I turned myself to consider wisdom and madness and folly;

For what *can* the man *do* who succeeds the king?—
Only what he has already done.

¹³ Then I saw that wisdom excels folly
As light excels darkness.

¹⁴ The wise man's eyes *are* in his head,
But the fool walks in darkness.

Yet I myself perceived
That the same event happens to them all. ¹⁵ So I said
in my heart,

“As it happens to the fool,
It also happens to me,
And why was I then more wise?”

Then I said in my heart,
“This also *is* vanity.”

¹⁶ For *there is* no more remembrance of the wise than
of the fool forever,
Since all that now *is* will be forgotten in the days to
come.

And how does a wise *man* die?
As the fool!

¹⁷ Therefore I hated life because the work that was
done under the sun *was* distressing to me, for
all *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

¹⁸ Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under
the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will
come after me.

¹⁹ And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool?
Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and
in which I have shown myself wise under the sun.
This also *is* vanity. ²⁰ Therefore I turned my heart and
despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under
the sun. ²¹ For there is a man whose labor *is* with
wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his
heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This
also *is* vanity and a great evil.



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²² For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun? ²³ For all his days *aresorrowful*, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity. ²³ For all his days *aresorrowful*, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity.

Laughter and Joy

ECCLESIASTES 2: 1-2 NKJV
1 I SAID IN MY HEART, “COME NOW, I WILL TEST YOU WITH MIRTH; THEREFORE ENJOY PLEASURE”; BUT SURELY, THIS ALSO WAS VANITY. 2 I SAID OF LAUGHTER—“MADNESS!”; AND OF MIRTH, “WHAT DOES IT ACCOMPLISH?”

Addiction

ECCLESIASTES 2:3 (NKJV)
3 I SEARCHED IN MY HEART HOW TO GRATIFY MY FLESH WITH WINE, WHILE GUIDING MY HEART WITH WISDOM, AND HOW TO LAY HOLD ON FOLLY, TILL I MIGHT SEE WHAT WAS GOOD FOR THE SONS OF MEN TO DO UNDER HEAVEN ALL THE DAYS OF THEIR LIVES.

PROVERBS 20:1 (NKJV)

Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.



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<p>Ecclesiastes 2:4-6 (NKJV)</p> <p>4 I MADE MY WORKS GREAT, I BUILT MYSELF HOUSES, AND PLANTED MYSELF VINEYARDS. 5 I MADE MYSELF GARDENS AND ORCHARDS, AND I PLANTED ALL KINDS OF FRUIT TREES IN THEM. 6 I MADE MYSELF WATER POOLS FROM WHICH TO WATER THE GROWING TREES OF THE GROVE.</p>	
<p>ECCLESIASTES 2:7-11 (NIV) - SEXUAL PROMISCUITY</p> <p>7 I BOUGHT MALE AND FEMALE SLAVES AND HAD OTHER SLAVES WHO WERE BORN IN MY HOUSE. I ALSO OWNED MORE HERDS AND FLOCKS THAN ANYONE IN JERUSALEM BEFORE ME. 8 I AMASSED SILVER AND GOLD FOR MYSELF, AND THE TREASURE OF KINGS AND PROVINCES. I ACQUIRED MALE AND FEMALE SINGERS, AND A HAREM AS WELL—THE DELIGHTS OF A MAN’S HEART. 9 I BECAME GREATER BY FAR THAN ANYONE IN JERUSALEM BEFORE ME. IN ALL THIS MY WISDOM STAYED WITH ME.</p>	
<p>10 I DENIED MYSELF NOTHING MY EYES DESIRED; I REFUSED MY HEART NO PLEASURE. MY HEART TOOK DELIGHT IN ALL MY LABOR, AND THIS WAS THE REWARD FOR ALL MY TOIL. 11 YET WHEN I SURVEYED ALL THAT MY HANDS HAD DONE AND WHAT I HAD TOILED TO ACHIEVE, EVERYTHING WAS MEANINGLESS, A CHASING AFTER THE WIND; NOTHING WAS GAINED UNDER THE SUN.</p>	



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ECCLESIASTES 2:17 – 23 (NKJV)
EDUCATIONAL VANITY

17 THEREFORE I HATED LIFE BECAUSE THE WORK THAT WAS DONE UNDER THE SUN WAS DISTRESSING TO ME, FOR ALL IS VANITY AND GRASPING FOR THE WIND. 18 THEN I HATED ALL MY LABOR IN WHICH I HAD TOILED UNDER THE SUN, BECAUSE I MUST LEAVE IT TO THE MAN WHO WILL COME AFTER ME.

19 AND WHO KNOWS WHETHER HE WILL BE WISE OR A FOOL? YET HE WILL RULE OVER ALL MY LABOR IN WHICH I TOILED AND IN WHICH I HAVE SHOWN MYSELF WISE UNDER THE SUN. THIS ALSO IS VANITY. 20 THEREFORE I TURNED MY HEART AND DESPAIRED OF ALL THE LABOR IN WHICH I HAD TOILED UNDER THE SUN.

²¹ For there is a man whose labor *is* with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also *is* vanity and a great evil. ²² For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun? ²³ For all his days *are* sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity.

KING REHOBOAM, THE SON OF SOLOMON,
CAUSED THE SPLIT OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.



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<p><u>THE MORAL ARGUMENT –</u></p> <p>IMMANUEL KANT (1724 – 1804) PHILOSOPHER AND THEOLOGEN</p> <p><u>PROPOSITION 1 – IF GOD DOES NOT EXIST, OBJECTIVE MORAL VALUES AND DUTIES DO NOT EXIST</u></p> <p><u>PROPOSITION 2 – OBJECTIVE MORAL VALUES AND DUTIES DO EXIST</u></p> <p><u>PROPOSITION 3 – THEREFORE GOD EXISTS</u></p>	
<p>C.S.LEWIS</p> <p>“IF EVOLUTIONARY NATURALISM IS ACCEPTED, HUMAN MORALITY CANNOT BE DESCRIBED AS ABSOLUTE AND OBJECTIVE. BECAUSE MORAL STATEMENTS CANNOT BE RIGHT OR WRONG.</p>	
<p>LUKE 8: 14 (NIV)</p> <p>THE SEED THAT FELL AMONG THORNS STANDS FOR THOSE WHO HEAR, BUT AS THEY GO ON THEIR WAY THEY ARE CHOKED BY LIFE’S WORRIES, RICHES AND PLEASURES, AND THEY DO NOT MATURE.</p>	