

"SOLOMON'S EXPERIMENT"**Introduction**

1. Why have people today got it wrong?
2. They do not read their Bible
3. The Bible has the answer – but we have to read them and find them.

1. SOLOMON'S EXPERIMENT: Illustration: A laboratory

- 1) The objective and purpose of it: "Can the things of this life give us total happiness?"
- 2) The various and different experiences chosen:
 - (i) v.1, 3: pleasure and wine
ILLUSTRATION: This is as modern as anything could be
 - (ii) v.4-6: a royal building project:
houses – vineyards – gardens – orchards – trees – pools of water – forestry...
OBSERVE: Similarity: pyramids – temples – statues...
 - (iii) v.7-8: the joy of owning servants, etc.
servants – cattle – gold + silver – musicians and musical instruments
 - (iv) v.9-10: greatness unprecedented and enjoyments of every possible kind
- 3) Notice the spirit with which he did all this:
 - (i) v.1: "I will prove" my heart: test it
 - (ii) v.9: "my wisdom...", i.e. not pure hedonism or sensuality – but to prove a point
APPLICATION: Do you see the point? How to get total happiness

2. THE CONCLUSION TO WHICH SOLOMON ARRIVED

- 1) v.1: "vanity"
v.2: "mad"

v.11: ""vanity..vexation..no profit..."

OBSERVE: He means: "These do not satisfy man's heart – no total happiness".

- 2) What led him to this conclusion?
 - (i) "Even in laughter the heart is sad..."
 - (ii) There is the factor of boredom:
ILLUSTRATION: a cow in a field of clover
 - (iii) We shall soon die and leave it all
 - (iv) Perhaps the man who inherits it will be a fool
 - (v) When we are dead we are forgotten: v.15, 16.
OBSERVE: All this is wise – not pessimism – but the great lesson that our heart cannot find total happiness in worldly things.
APPLICATION: Have you learnt that lesson?

3. IS THERE TOTAL HAPPINESS ANYWHERE THEN?

- 1) No – and Yes. It depends on what you mean:
 - (i) No – not in money, houses, etc.
 - (ii) But Yes – in something beyond this life.
- 2) Christ has 2 parables:
 - (i) The pearl of great price
 - (ii) The treasure hid in a field
Meaning of them? To find eternal life.
ILLUSTRATION: Key to open the door to Happiness (gold / money / wine / laughter / company...)
- 3) The one key that opens this door is faith in Christ as our Saviour – it fills the soul.
ILLUSTRATION: See Andrew, Philip, Nathaniel, Blind Man
- 4) John's Gospel: tells of 2 sorts of people:
 - (i) those who find Christ
 - (ii) who do not

CONCLUSION

See how Solomon ends this whole Book: chapter 12, 13-14. You?

PSALM

47: 1 – 8

39: 4 – 8

89: 15 – 18