

madness and folly. To compare wisdom with the pursuit of pleasure, which is madness. **What can the man do?** He means that no man could make the comparison under more favourable conditions than himself, the wisest man, and the greatest monarch of his time. No other man could strike the balance so well between a life devoted to search after truth and one devoted to search after pleasure.

13. Wisdom excelleth folly. That is, in its power to satisfy the soul, in the present life, without considering the future world: a life spent in cultured aims is far more noble and satisfying than one spent in the search for worldly pleasure. Even that life of culture he had pronounced "vanity," but it was vanity of a nobler sort than the other.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness. Eccl. 2. 13.

OUTLINE.

1. A Wise Man's Folly, v. 1-10.
2. A Wise Man's Wisdom, v. 11-13.

LESSON HYMNS.

Wisdom divine! who tells the price
Of wisdom's costly merchandise?
Wisdom to silver we prefer,
And gold is dross compared to her.

Her hands are filled with length of days.
True riches, and immortal praise;
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her flowery paths are peace.

Happy the man who wisdom gains;
Truly happy, who his guest retains:
He owns, and shall forever own,
Wisdom, and Christ, and heaven, are one.

No. 100, S. S. Hymnal.

Yield not to temptation.

No. 99, S. S. Hymnal.

Sowing their seed by the dawnlight fair.

TIME.—B. C. 980.

EXPLANATIONS.—*I said in mine heart*—King Solomon, after seeking to satisfy his soul with wisdom, now turns toward pleasure. *Go to—"Come, now."* *Vanity*—He sums up the result in one word, as worthless, a mere breath. *Laughter, It is mad!*—It is like the laughter of an insane person. *Unto wine*—To find whether wine would give the pleasure which some claimed. *Acquainting mine heart with wisdom*—He sought wine, not from appetite, but to seek wisdom and experience—a dangerous experiment. His aim was to find "what was good," and he tells us that this was "vanity." *Great works*—These are the various works wrought by Solomon, some of which, as his pools, still remain. *Great and small cattle*—Oxen and sheep. *Peculiar treasure*—Such treasure as only kings can gather. *My wisdom*—In all this pleasure he was still seeking for

wisdom. *Heart rejoiced*—What pleasure there was he tasted. *No profit*—He found that in none of these things could his soul find satisfaction and enjoyment. *Come, after the king*—No man could do more than King Solomon; hence, if he found it all in vain, none can find it a success in satisfying the heart.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Vanity of worldly pleasures. Eccl. 2. 1-13
Tu. The effects of pleasure. Luke 8. 4-15.
W. Enemies of truth. 2 Tim. 2. 1-7.
Th. Folly studied. Eccl. 1. 12-18.
F. Remedies for vanity. Eccl. 7. 1-15.
S. The king's riches. 1 Kings 10. 10-14.
S. The vanity of life. Psa. 39. 1-13.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **A Wise Man's Folly, v. 1-10.** What foolish experiment did Solomon try? Who was guilty of like folly? Luke 12. 19. What did the king find idle pleasure to be? What course did he then take? What satisfaction did this afford? Chap. 1. 17. In what labors did he seek rest? What aid did he procure? What was the extent of his flocks and herds? What was the measure of his wealth? What had been promised him? 1 Kings 3. 13. What did he seek in music? What had he besides all these employments? What did his heart delight in? What does a worldly heart become? 1 John 2. 16. What advantage is gained by this? Eccl. 5. 11. What is lost by gaining the world? Matt. 16. 25.

2. **A Wise Man's Wisdom, v. 11-13.** To what conclusion did the wise man come? When will all these pleasures end? Eccl. 9. 10. How is wisdom compared with folly? What is the first thing to be sought for? Matt. 6. 33.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson is it shown—

1. That a life spent in pleasure is a life lived in vain?
2. That there is but one source of true happiness?
3. That those only are wise who find it?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.—(For the entire school.) 1. What did the preacher try to ascertain? What was good for man. 2. What did he do to that end? Entered into every enjoyment. What was his conclusion as to worldly pleasures? "All is vanity." 4. When he arrayed wisdom against madness and folly, what did he then see? "That wisdom excelleth folly." 5. To how great a degree? "As far as light excelleth darkness."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The folly of a godless life.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **A Wise Man's Folly, v. 1-10.** In what book is this lesson found, and who is supposed to have been its author? What is the purpose of this book? What conduct of the wise man is related in this lesson? What was his purpose in this conduct? Was he led by appetite or love of pleasure in this conduct?