

# Ecclesiastes 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

## Analysis

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**I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces**—the Hebrew 'segullah' (סְגָלָה, peculiar treasure) denotes special, prized possessions reserved for royalty. First Kings 10:14-22 records that Solomon's annual gold income reached 666 talents (approximately 25 tons), with additional silver so abundant it was considered common. International trade made Jerusalem a commercial hub accumulating unprecedented wealth.

**I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men**—musical entertainment of the highest caliber, with professional performers of both genders. The phrase **the delights of the sons of men** (ta'anugot bene adam, תְּעִנּוּגֹת בְּנֵי אָדָם) is enigmatic. The final phrase **as musical instruments, and that of all sorts** likely refers to extensive instrumental variety, though some translations suggest concubines. Regardless, Solomon exhausted every avenue of sensory pleasure—wealth, music, entertainment, luxury—yet found none ultimately satisfying. Paul later warned: 'they that will be rich fall into temptation' (1 Timothy 6:9), and Jesus taught storing heavenly rather than earthly treasures (Matthew 6:19-21).

## Historical Context

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First Kings 10:23 declares 'King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.' The Queen of Sheba's visit (1 Kings 10:1-13) demonstrates Solomon's international reputation. Archaeological discoveries confirm extensive 10th-century BC trade networks. Solomon's fleet brought exotic goods from Ophir (1 Kings 9:26-28). His palace featured golden shields, an ivory throne overlaid with gold, and golden drinking vessels (1 Kings 10:16-21). Yet despite unparalleled wealth and refined pleasures, Ecclesiastes retrospectively pronounces it all 'vanity.' Church history confirms this pattern—wealthy rulers from Nero to Louis XIV discovered that luxury cannot satisfy the soul. Augustine's *Confessions* articulates the timeless truth: 'Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.'

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. What luxuries, entertainments, or refined pleasures have you pursued hoping they would provide lasting satisfaction?
2. How does Solomon's comprehensive experiment with every conceivable pleasure challenge the assumption that you simply haven't found the right pleasure yet?

## Interlinear Text

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מֶלֶךְ יְמִינֵּי	וּסְגָלְתָה	וְשָׁרֶת	וְשָׁרֶת	וְשָׁרֶת
I gathered	לִי	גַם	כַּף	כַּף סְתִתִּי
H3664	H0	H1571	H3701	H2091
me also	סֶרֶף	בְּגָד	בְּגָד	בְּגָד
	and gold	בְּגָד	בְּגָד	בְּגָד
	and the peculiar	בְּגָד	בְּגָד	בְּגָד
	treasure of kings	בְּגָד	בְּגָד	בְּגָד
H4428		H5459		H0
and of the provinces	I gat	and women singers	and women singers	and women singers
H4082	H6213	H7891	H7891	H0
and the delights	of the sons	of men	as musical instruments	as musical instruments
H8588	H1121	H120	H7705	
as musical instruments				
H7705				

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Kings 10:10** (Kingdom): And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

**1 Kings 9:28** (Kingdom): And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

**2 Samuel 19:35** (Kingdom): I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?

**1 Kings 10:14** (Parallel theme): Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold,