

Chapter 01

All temporal things (in comparifon of true felicitie) are vaine, 4. becaufe they are mutable, 8. neither can anie man attaine perfect knowlege, to his fatisfaction: 12. as appeareth by Salomons owne experience.

The firft part of this Sermon fheweth, that Felicitie confifteth not in anie temporal thing.

The wordes of Ecclesiastes, the fonne of Daud, king of Ierufalem. ² Vanitie of vanities, fayd Ecclesiastes: vanitie of vanities, & al thinges vanitie. ³ What hath a man more of al his labour, wherby he laboreth vnder the funne? ⁴ Generation paffeth, and generation cometh: but ^a)the earth ftandeth for euer. ⁵ The funne rifeth, and goeth downe, and returneth to his place: and there rifing againe, ⁶ compaffeth by the South, and bendeth to the North: compaffing al thinges, goeth forward in circuite, & returneth vnto his circles. ⁷ Al riuers enter into the fea, and the fea ouerfloweth not: to the place, whence the riuers iffue forth, they do returne, that they may flow againe. ⁸ Al thinges are hard: man can not explicate them in word. The eye is not filled with feing, neither is the eare filled with hearing. ⁹ What is that hath bene? the fame thing that shal be. What is that hath bene done? the fame that is to be done. ¹⁰ ^b)Nothing vnder the funne is new, neither is anie man able to fay: Behold this is new: for it hath already gone before in the ages, that were before vs. ¹¹ There is no memorie of former thinges: but neither of thofe thinges verily, which hereafter are to come, shal there be remembrance with them, that shal be in the later end. ¹² I Ecclesiastes haue bene king of Ifrael in Ierufalem, ¹³ and haue propofed in my mind, to feke and fearch wifely of al thinges, that are done vnder the

^a In the end of this world the earth fhall be purified, & fo remaine for euer.

^b Mens foules dayly created are of the fame kind as Adams foule: other creatures either were in their kindes from the beginning of the vworld, or are procreated of diuers kindes preexifting. *S. Tho. q. 73. a. 1. ad. 3.*

funne. This very euil occupation hath God geuen to the children of men, that they might be occupied in it. ¹⁴ I haue fene al thinges, that are done vnder the funne, and behold ^a)al are vanitie, & affliction of fpirit. ¹⁵ The peruerfe are hardly corrected, and the number of fooles is infinite. ¹⁶ I haue fpoken in my hart, faying: Loe I haue bene made great, and haue gone beyond al in wifdom, that were before me in Ierufalem: and my minde hath contemplated manie thinges wifely, and I haue lerned. ¹⁷ And I haue geuen my hart to know prudence, and doctrine, and errors and follie: and I haue perceiued that in thefe alfo there was labour, and affliction of fpirite, ¹⁸ for that ^a)in much ^b)wifdom there is much indignation: and he that addeth knowlege, addeth alfo labour.

ANNOTATIONS

18 In much vvifdom is much indignation.) How much more anie man profiteth in wifdom, fo much more he is angrie with himfelf, for the euils which he hath done: fo much better he knovveth the ftrict iudgement of God, which he muft paffe: fo much more he vnderftandeth the vvant of perfect vvifdom: fo much more he feeth that labour is required to procede in vertue: and to conferue that fmal portion vvwhich he hath gotten. Neither is anie man ordinarily affured that he hath gotte anie part of true vvifdom, for he knovveth not, vvwhether he be vvorthie of loue or hate. *Eccle. 9.*

VVifdom maketh men to be angrie with finne, to feare God, and to proceede in vertue.

^a Al natural thinges are infufficient meanes to attaine felicitie.

^b VVifdom is the beft thing in this vvorld, yet is not perfect felicitie, but the meanes to attaine it.