

Chapter 02

Humane delightes are al vaine: 4. as gorgious buildinges, fruitful vinyards, plentie of fish, cattle, feruantes, filuer, gold, mufike: 11. not fatisfying mans defire. 18. Neither can anie man know, how his heyre wil behaue himfelf.

I fayde ^a)therefore in my hart: I wil goe, & flow in delightes, and enioy good thinges. ^b)And I faw that this alfo was vanitie. ² Laughter I haue reputed error: and to ioy I haue faide: Why art thou deceiued in vaine? ³ I haue thought in my hart, to withdraw my flesh from wine, that I might transferre my minde to wifdom, and might auoid follie, til I might fee what should be profitable for the children of men: what is nedeful to be done vnder the funne, in the number of the dayes of their life. ⁴ I haue magnified my workes, I haue built me houfes, & planted vineyards, ⁵ I haue made gardens, and orchards, and fet them with trees of al kindes, ⁶ and I haue made me ponds of waters, to watter the wood of fpringing trees, ⁷ I haue poffeffed menferuants and wemenferuants, and haue had a great familie: heardes alfo, and great flockes of shepe, aboue al that were before me in Ierufalem: ⁸ I haue heaped together to myfelf filuer, and gold, and the fubftance of kinges, and prouinces: I made me fingingmen, & fingingwemen, and the delightes of the children of men: cuppes, and goblets to ferue to powre out wines: ⁹ and I furpaffed in riches al, that were before me in Ierufalem: wifdom alfo hath perfeuered with me. ¹⁰ And al thinges, that myne eies defired, I haue not denied to them: neither haue I ftayed my hart, but that it enioyed al pleafure, & delighted itfelf in thefe thinges, which I had prepared:

^a A vvorldlie man may obiect, that feing vvifdom bringeth not felicitie in his life, it femeth beft to take his pleafure & eafe, & not to labour for it.

^b But the wifeman cōfuteth this conceipt. Befaufe vvorldlie ioy is fhort & vncertaine, neither is anie ioy that men haue in this life true ioy of the bleffed, but only a confolation in miferies.

and this I eftemed my portion, if I did vse my labour.
11 And when I had turned myself to al the workes, which
my handes had done, & to the laboures, wherin I had
fwette in vaine, I faw in al thinges vanitie, and affliction
of minde, & nothing to be permanent vnder the funne.
12 I paffed further to contemplate wifdom, and errors,
and follie (what is man, quoth I, that he can folow the
king his Maker?) 13 and I faw that wifdom fo much
excelled follie, as light differeth from darknes. 14 The
a)eyes of a wifeman are in his head: the foole walketh in
darknes: and I haue lerned that there was one death of
both. 15 And I fayd in my hart: If the fal of the foole &
myne shal be one, b)what doth it profite me, that I haue
bestowed greater labour for wifdom? And fpeaking with
my minde, I perceiued that this alfo was vanitie. 16 For
there shal be no memorie of the wife in like maner as
of the foole for euer, and the times to come shal couer
al thinges together with obliuion: the lerned dieth in
like maner as the vnlearned. 17 And therefore I haue bene
wearie of my life, feing al thinges vnder the funne to
be euil, and al thinges vanitie and affliction of fpirite.
18 Againe I detefted al myne induftrie, wherwith I haue
laboured vnder the funne moft ftudioufly, being like to
haue an heyre after me: 19 whom I know not, whether
he wil be a wifeman or a foole, and he shal rule in my
labours, wherewith I haue fwette and haue bene careful:
and is there anie thing fo vaine? 20 Wherfore I ceafed,
and my hart hath renounced to labour anie more vnder
the funne. 21 For whereas one laboreth in wifdom, and
doctrine, and carefulnes, he leaueth the thinges gotten
to an idle man: and this therefore is vanitie, and great
euil. 22 For what profite shal be to a man of al his labour,
and affliction of fpirite, wherwith he is vexed vnder the
funne? 23 Al his daies are ful of forowes and miferies,
neither by night doth he reft in minde, and is not this
vanitie? 24 Is it not better to eate and drinke, and shew

^a Confideration is the directorie of al good workes.

^b The conceit of worldlie men not confidering the life to come.

vnto his foule good thinges of his laboures? ^{a)}& this is of the hand of God. ²⁵ Who shal fo deuour, and flow with delightes as I? ²⁶ To a man good in his fight, God hath geuen wifdom, and knowlege, and ioy: but to the finner he hath geuen affliction, and fuperfluous care, to adde, and to gather together, and deliuer it to him that hath pleafed God: but this alfo is vanitie, & vaine carefullnes of the minde.

^a It is better to vse that is honeftly gotten for our neceffitie, then to be ftill folicitous to get more.