

Chapter 05

An exhortation to fpeake difcretly, and reuerently of God; 3. to performe vowes; 6. not to be trubled with imaginations, nor prefent oppreffions of the poore. 9. Auarice is neuer fatiate, 11. riches fometimes caufeth ficknes, ruine of the bodie, 18. and obliuion of God.

Speake ^{a)}not anie thing rashly, neither let thy hart be fwift to vtter a word before God. For God is in heauen, and thou vpon the earth: therefore let thy wordes be few. ² Dreames do folow manie cares, and in manie wordes follie wil be found. *Deut. 23.* ³ ^{b)}If thou haft vowed anie thing to God, differre not to pay it: for an vnfaithful and foolish promife difpleafeth him. But what foeuer thou haft vowed, pay it: ⁴ and it is much better not to vow, then after a vow not to performe the thinges promifed. ⁵ Geue not thy mouth to make thy flesh to finne: neither fay thou before ^{c)}the Angel: There is no prouidence: left perhaps God being wrath againft thy wordes, diffipate al the workes of thy handes. ⁶ Where manie dreames are, there are manie vanities, and wordes innumerable: but do thou feare God. ⁷ If thou shalt fee the oppreffions of the poore, and violent iudgements, and iuftice to be fubuerted in the prouince, meruel not at this matter: becaufe there is an other higher then the high, and ouer thefe alfo there are others more eminent: ⁸ and befides the king of al the earth reigneth ouer his feruant. ⁹ A couetous man shal not be filled with money: and he that loueth riches, shal take no fruite of them: and this therefore is vanitie. ¹⁰ Where great riches are, there are alfo manie that eate them. And what doth it profite the owner, *Iob. 20.* but that he feeth the riches with his eyes? ¹¹ Sleepe is fwete to him that worketh, whether he eate much or

^a Becaufe no man is able to attaine perfect knowlege of God, it behoueth al to fpeake and thinge foberly of him.

^b Vow or promife once made muft be fulfilled.

^c The proper Angel which affociateth euerie man.

litle: but the fatietie of the rich doth not fuffer him to fleepe. ¹² There is alfo an other very il infirmitie, which I haue fene vnder the funne: riches kept to the hurt of the owner. ¹³ For they perish in very euil affliction: he ^a)hath begotten a fonne, which shal be in great pouertie. ¹⁴ As he came forth naked from his mothers wombe, fo shal he returne, and shal take nothing away with him of his labour. ¹⁵ An infirmitie vtterly miferable: as he came, fo shal he returne. What doth it then profite him, that he hath labored into the winde? ¹⁶ Al the dayes of his life he eateth in darknes, and in miferie, and in heauines. ¹⁷ This therefore hath femed good to me, that a man eate, and drinke, and take ioy of his labour, wherewith he hath labored vnder the funne, the number of the dayes of his life, which God hath geuen him, and this is his portion. ¹⁸ And to euerie man, vnto whom God hath geuen riches, and fubftance, and hath geuen him powre to eate of them, and to enioy his portion, and to reioyce of his labour: this is the gift of God. ¹⁹ For he shal not greatly remember the dayes of his life, becaufe God doth occupie his hart with delightes.

^a As temporal riches are often the occasion of their owners ruine: fo vaine philofophie, and herefie auaille not heretikes, nor their folowers, but as they came naked from their mothers wombe, the peruerfe Church, fo shal both fuch mafters, and fcolars depart without comforth into the wrath which they prepare to themfelues. *S. Ierom. in hunc locum.*