

# THE THIRD PART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, CONTEINING SAPIENTIAL BOOKES.

## THE ARGUMENT OF SAPIENTIAL BOOKES

Hitherto *the Law*, and *Hiftorie of Gods peculiar people* are fet forth in the former partes of the holie Bible: after which folowed the *Booke of Pfalmes*, which in maner of ftile, being al in verfe, is a diftinct part, but in fubftance of matter, is an *Epitome* or briefe Summe of *al holie Scripture*: moft conueniently therefore placed in the middes of the reft, as the Sunne amongft other Planetes, a shining great light in a large houfe. Now enfueth the third part, conteining *Diuine Instructions*, or *Rules of good life*. A doctrine moft agreable to Gods hiegh wifdom, and moft fitly commended to Man, his reasonable creature in earth. But befides this principal fubiect, as before is noted (that each part participateth with others in their proper contents) fo here be manie *precepts of the Law renewed*; fundrie *examples* of men, and thinges paff *repeted*, and diuers *prophecies vttered* of thinges to come: though in this part more fpecially is shewed *the ground*, and as it were, the very *life or foule of the Law*, which is *Reafon*, the true Rule or Directorie wherin al good lawes are grounded.

For it both sheweth what ought to be done, or auoided, & directeth mans iudgement to embrace that is good, and to flee from al euil, not only illuminating the vnderftanding to fee that is right and iuft, but alfo difpofing the internal affection to defire, loue, choofe, and preferre the right path of Gods law, before whatfoeuer otherwife femeth pleafant or profitable: & fo, notwithstanding al dangers, difficulties, diftreffes, worldlie calamities, and death itfelf, effectually perfwading to perfeuere to the end in holie conuerfation. Al which by a general name is called *Wifdom*: comprifing in one word, *al good defires, holie vertues, fupernal giftes, godlie endeuoures, and the whole meanes wherby God is rightly knowen, & duly ferued*; wherof thefe fiue *Bookes*, teaching this moft excellent and moft neceffarie maner of life, are called *Sapiential*. Neuertheles foure of them haue alfo other

The coherence of this part with the reft.

The contents of Sapiential bookes.

*Preface before Iofue.*

Why they are fo called.

particular names, as appeareth in their titles. Only the fourth is called the *Booke of Wisdom*, by appropriation of the general name.

*Proem. Annot.*  
*Prefac. Tobiaë.*  
  
*S. Iero,*  
*in Proem.*  
*S. Aug. li. 17.*  
*c. 20. Ciuit.*  
  
*Prologo galeato.*

*Al fiue are Canonical and affured holie Scripture:* as is shewed before: and may be further proued of the two later, which Proteftants denie. It is also eident that King *Salomon* was *Auctor of the three former:* as S. Ierom. S. Auguftin, and other Fathers proue by the holie text it felfe. As it is likewife certaine that he either writte, or at leaft by diuine infpiration vttered, much more then is now extant. For the holie Scripture (*3. Reg. 4.*) teftifieth, that he fpake *three thousand Parables:* and *his Songes were a thousand and fiue.* He difputed of the trees from the ceder that is in Libanus, vnto the hyffop which cometh out of the wal: and he difcourfed of beaftes, and foules, and creeping wormes, and fishes. Iofephus (*li. 8. c. 2. Antiq.*) folowing fome other Edition, faith his songes were fiue thousand, and parables (as the ordinarie text hath) three thousand. For he deduced a parable (faith Iofephus) throughout euerie kinde of trees, from the hyffop to the ceder. In the fame maner he treated of beaftes, and other liuing creatures of the earth, water, and ayre. For he was not ignorant of anie natural thing, neither omitted to treat therof, but clerly explicated al their natural proprieties. Moft briefly S. Ierom declareth both the Auctor, and matter of thefe three bookes, faying: *Salomon the Peaceable, and amiable of our Lord a correcteth maners: b teacheth the nature* (of creatures) *c ioyneth the Church and Chrift; and fingeth the fwete bridal fong of the holie Mariage.*

They are al Canonical Scripture. Salomon is auctor of the three firft.

Other bookes of Salomon not extant.

A brief fumme of thefe three: a Prouerbs, b Ecclefiastes, c Canticles.