Chapter 13

Men folowing their phantaſies knew not God by his creatures, but honored the creatures for goddes. 10. Moſt ſottiſhly alſo worshipped thinges fashioned by mens handes, as goddes.

B ut al men be vaine, in whom there is not the knowlege of God: and of theſe good thinges, which are ſene they could not vnderſtand Him ᵃ⁾that is, neither attending to the workes haue they agniſed who was the workeman: 2 but either the fyre, or the wind, or the ſwift ayre, or a circle of ſtarres, or exceding much water, or the ſunne and the moone, they thought to be goddes rulers of the world. 3 With whoſe beautie if being delighted, they thought them goddes: let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful then they. For the author of beautie made al thoſe thinges. 4 Or if they merueled at their vertue, & operations, let them vnderſtand by them, that he which made theſe, is ſtronger then they: 5 for by the greatnes of the beautie, and of the creature the creator of them may be ſene, to be knowen therby. 6 But notwithſtanding there is yet in theſe leſſe complainte. For they alſo perhaps erre, ſeeking God, and deſirous to finde him. 7 For whereas they conuerſe in his workes, they enquire: & they are perſwaded that the thinges be good which are ſeene. 8 But againe neither ought theſe to be pardoned. 9 For if they could know ſo much, that they were able to eſtimate the world: how did they not more eaſely find the Lord therof? 10 But they are vnhappie, & their hope is among the dead, who haue called ᵇ⁾the workes of mens handes goddes, gold & ſiluer, the inuention of art, and the ſimilitudes of beaſtes, or an vnprofitable ſtone

Rom. 1.

Deut. 4.

ᵃ Gods moſt proper name is HE WHICH IS. *Exo. 3. v. 14.*
ᵇ Seing no creature how excellent ſoeuer, is or may be eſtemed a god, it is more fooliſh to thinke, an Image, or *ſtatua*, or anie thing framed by mans handes can be God.

the worke of an old hand. ¹¹ Or if an artificer a carpenter, cut ftreight timber out of the wood, & pare of al
the barke therof cunningly, and vfing his art, diligently frameth a veffel profitable for the common vfe of this life, ¹² and vfeth the chippes of that worke to dreffe his meate: ¹³ and maketh that which is left therof, which is for no vfes, but being a crooked peece of wood, and ful of knobes, carueth it diligently in the holownes therof, and by the skil of his art fashioneth it, and maketh it like to the image of a man, ¹⁴ or compareth it to fome beaft, ftraking it ouer with redde, and with paynting making the colour therof ruddie, and layeth a colour ouer euerie fpot that is in it: ¹⁵ and maketh a worthie habitation for it, and fetting it in a wal, and faftening it with yron, ¹⁶ left perhaps it fal, prouiding for it, knowing that it can not helpe it felfe: for it is an image, and it nedeth helpe. ¹⁷ And concerning his fubftance, & his children, & for mariage, making a vow he feeketh to it. He is not ashamed to fpeake with him, that is without foule: ¹⁸ and for health certes he befecheth the weake, and for life asketh the dead, and for helpe inuocateth him that is vnprofitable: ¹⁹ and for a iourney asketh him, that can not walke: and for getting, and for working, and for the euent of al thinges he asketh him, that in al is vnprofitable.

Annotations

1 They could not vnderftand Him, that is.) Philofophers difcuffing the nature of manie creatures, faw that euerie creature proceded of fome other thing, & fo there muft nedes be one beginning of al, abfolute of itfelfe, neither proceding nor depending of an other, nor a limited fubftance. As the thing that is a man, is not a beaft; an oxe is not a horfe: &c. and telling what anie thing is, we exclude therby that it is not other thinges, but faying without addition, HE WHICH IS, we shew the beginning of al, in no forte limited: and this is God. VVhom fome Philofophers, by fuch difcourfe found, & knew, in general, & fometimes confeffed, but did not honour him as God, and therfore were inexcufable, as S. Paul concludeth againft them. *Rom. 1.*

God is the beginning of al thinges, abfolute and independing.