ECCLESIASTES;
OR,
THE PREACHER.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

(Introversion.)

A | 1. 1. INTRODUCTION.

B | 1. 2—6. 9. THE CHIEF GOOD. WHAT IT IS NOT.
B | 6. 10—12. 12. THE CHIEF GOOD. WHAT IT IS.

A | 12. 13, 14. CONCLUSION.

1 The name of this book comes direct from the Latin Vulgate through the Sept. version. The Hebrew name is KOHELETH = Assembler or Convener (an appellative, not a proper name). It is feminine, to agree with the word "Wisdom", which is feminine, and is therefore Wisdom personified (as in Prov. 1. 20; 8. 1, and always with masculine verbs. Op. Matt. 11. 18; Luke 7. 32; 11. 49, 50). KOHELETH is from kohel—to call, assemble, or gather together. This is what Solomon did (1 Kings 8. 1, 2, 6). It occurs with a feminine verb in 7. 27. The word Koheleth occurs seven times in the book (Ap. 10): three times at the beginning (1. 1, 2, 12); three times at the end (12. 8, 9, 10); and once in the middle (7. 27).

This book formed part of the Hebrew Bible long before the time of Christ, and is therefore included in His word, "the Scriptures" (Matt. 22. 42; 2 Tim. 3. 15, &c.). It is given in the list of canonical books by Josephus (A.D. 87), and is included in all the Ancient Versions made before Christ. It has been rejected by some, or put to a late date, on account of its alleged Theology. Theology is man's reasoning about the Word of God, as Science (so called) is man's reasoning about the Works of God. Because Genesis does not agree with Science that book is rejected by Rationalists. Because Ecclesiastes does not agree with Theology, this book is rejected, as uninspired, even by some Evangelical theologians.

True, the Bible contains an inspired record of what people said and did; and it does not follow that all that they said or did was inspired. Nevertheless, it is inconceivable that this can apply to a whole book, without a word of warning. Those who can imagine such a thing refuse the evidence that Christ in Luke 16. 19-30 is using the language of His enemies, and in v. 31 giving His own Divine pronouncement. They strain out the grain and swallow the camel. They do not see that, if anyone whole book is not a part of "the oracles of God", every Christian doctrine loses its foundation. There could have been in that case no Divine selection or preservation of books, and no Divine Canon or Scripture. If one book is thus ruled out, then another may be. Doubt is thus cast upon the whole Bible, and we have no "Word of God" at all! If this book be not part of the Word and words of God, then we have no reply to those who reject Genesis, Daniel, Jonah, or the Apocalypse, who do so on the same ground of human reasoning. If the inner consciousness of each individual is to decide what is and what is not "Scripture", there is an end of Divine Revelation altogether.

In any case Solomon's "wisdom" was given him by God (1 Kings 3. 5-12; 4. 29-34), and this "wisdom" was therefore "from above" (Jas. 1. 17), as Luke's was (see note on Luke 1. 3). Moreover, Solomon did not lose it, for it "remained with " him (Ecc. 2. 9).
ECCLESIASTES;
OR, THE PREACHER.

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity.

3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

4 One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever.

5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where it arose.

6 The wind goeth toward the south, and returneth about unto the north; it whirlèth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to the circuits.

7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

8 All things are full of labour; one cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

10 Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

11 There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

12 The Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are

1 The words. Rashi says that, when this expression occurs at the beginning of a book, it shows that the book is meant for reproof, and he gives evidence from Deut. 1: 1 (cp. 32: 15). Amos 1: 1 (cp. 4: 1). Jer. 1: 1 (cp. 30: 6). David, 2 Sam. 25: 1 (cp. v. 6).

2-6.9 (B, p. 906). THE CHIEF GOOD.
WHAT IT IS NOT.

(Division and Repeated Introduction.)

1. 2-11 (B, above). MAN. HIS LABOUR.

2 Vanity of vanities. Fig. Polyptoton. Ap. 6. Note also the Fig. Epinométhis (Ap. 6), by which v. 2 begins and ends with the same word. These figures are used for the greatest emphasis, and denote utter vanity, all—the whole, or “the sum total.” Not everything in the universe, but all the human labours of vv. 3, 8, vanity. Heb. kabul, used of that which soon vanishes.


E 3. under the sun. This expression is peculiar to this book, and occurs twenty-nine times: (1. 3, 8, 14; 2. 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22; 3. 10; 4. 1, 3, 7, 15; 5. 13, 18; 6. 11, 12; 8. 9, 14, 15, 17; 9. 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13; 10. 5). It is equivalent to “upon the earth” (5. 7; 8. 14, 16, 10. 7; 7. 11, 23). It refers to all that is connected with earthly things as such, and with man apart from God, but what is stated is inspired truth. If what is stated here seems to be a “discrepancy” when compared with other scriptures, then

12-26 [For Structure see next page].

12 3. Solomon knew that the kingdom was to be rent (1 Kings 11: 11, 12) and the People scattered; therefore he sought to kill Jeroboam (1 Kings 11: 39-40). The Chaldean Turjum says, on v. 1: “These are the words of the prophecy which Rehoboam delivered when Solomon foresaw, by the Spirit of prophecy, that the kingdom of Rehoboam his son would be divided by Jeroboam the son of Nebat”;

13 wisdom. Heb. chokmah.

See note on Prov. 1: 7.
ECCLESIASTES.

1. 13.

I. 13. done ° under heaven: this sore travail hath ° God given to the sons of ° man to be ° exercised therewith.

14 I have seen all the works that are done ° under the sun; and, behold, all is ° vanity and ° vexation of ° spirit.

15 That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more ° wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yet, my heart ° had great experience of ° wisdom and knowledge.

17 And I gave my heart to know ° wisdom, and to know ° madness and ° folly: I perceived that this ° is ° vexation of ° spirit.

18 For in much ° wisdom is much ° grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth ° sorrow.

1. 12—2. 26 (C), p. 907. PERSONAL SEARCH.

(Division and Extended and Repeated Alternation.)

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under heaven—under the heavens. Some codices, with one early printed edition, Aram., Syr., and Vulg., read "under the sun".

God. Heb. Elohim. Ap. 4 I. The title "Jehovah" is not used in Ecclesiastes, as this book refers to man in relation to his Creator only; not to man in covenant with Him as "Jehovah". Hence the frequent use of Heb. 'Adom for "man" in this book.

exercised—humbled.

14 vanity. See note on 1. 2.

15 vexation of spirit—feeling of heart.

16 my heart—myself.

17 madness—opposite of wisdom, as displayed in the loss of self-control; raving with self-conceit. See elsewhere in this book.


18 grief—mortification. sorrow—smarting.

2. 1 enjoy—look thou into.

beheld. Fig. Asterismos. Ap. 6.

2 of laughter—laughter.

It is said. See note on ° madness", 1. 17.

3 in mine heart—i.e. resolved.

to give myself unto wine, etc.—to gratify the sensual tendencies.

to Prove my heart with mirth—"yet retaining wisdom".


wisdom. See note on 1. 12.


under the heavens. See note on 1. 3. Some codices, with Sept., Syr., and Vulg., read "sun", to which it is equivalent.

all the days—the numbered days.

4 made me great works—increased or multiplied my possessions.

works. Put by Fig. Melonymy (of Cause). Ap. 6, for the results and effects gained by work. Cp. Ex. 23. 12; 1 Sam. 25. 2; Isa. 26. 12.

5 orchards. Heb. parzirim—paradises, parks, or pleasure grounds. Different from "gardens", which were cultivated (Deut. 11. 10; 1 Kings 21. 2). Paradises were formed by eastern monarchs. In the British Museum may be seen the inscriptions of Gudea, the greatest of the Sumerian rulers of Chaldea (2500 n.c.), and Tiglath-pileser I, king of Assyria (1120 n.c.), describing what could be said of his plantations and zoological park. Assur-nazir-pal, king of Assyria (885 n.c.), founded such a public paradise, and describes how he stocked it; what he bought, and whence he brought the natural history collection. The British Museum contains a portion of a similar catalogue of Sennacherib. The Paradise in Rev. 2. 7; 22. 1, 2 refers to the future paradise, which will be as literal and real, not figurative.

6 wood—forest.

7 got me servants—bought me servants.

8 gathered—amassed. Heb. kamas, said to be a later Hebrew word (see Ap. 76. i). the provinces. Heb. 'Adom, from 'a'nam to rule, hence a country. There is no article before "kings", because they constantly change, whereas countries do not change. This is another word which is said to be of later date, but it is found in 1 Kings 20. 14, 15, 17, 19. Lam. 1. 1. Ezek. 19. 8. See Ap. 76. Cp. note on "event" in v. 14. remained. The Divine wisdom given by God (1 Kings 3. 13) had not been taken away. See note at foot of p. 906. This must be remembered in reading this book. Like Luke's "understanding" it came "from above". See note on "very first" (Luke 1. 3).
10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on all the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

12 And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and razon, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.

13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14 The wise man’s eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness:

15 Then said I in my heart, ‘As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me: and why should I be wise?’

16 And I said, ‘As well the fool as the wise man is under both heaven’s ways: also man’s heart is deep in him.’

17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I had taken under the sun.

21 For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.

22 For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23 For all his days are sorrow, and his work is vexation: yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This also is vanity.

24 For there is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also is the gift of God.

25 For who can eat, or who can fill his soul with good in the body?

26 For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God.

This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

10 labour = toil. was = came to be.

11 Then = But when.

looked = turned in order to look, as in v. 12.

portion = share, as in 8. 22.

12 Then = But when.

under the sun = under the sun.

13 fool. Heb. kaphal = fat, unct. Same word as in 15. 16; not the same word as in v. 19.

and I myself perceived = and I too knew: i.e. as well as they.

event = a happening. Heb. mishakh. Said to be a later word, but it occurs in 1 Sam. 6. 9; 20. 26. Ruth 2. 3. See note on v. 8.

15 said I = in my heart = speak with myself.

16 remembrance = memorial, as in 1. 11. 11. of = for. for ever. See note on 1. 4.

17 We = Put by Fig. Metonymy (of the Subject) for the pleasure enjoyed in it.

labour = Put by Fig. Metonymy (of Cause), Ap. 6.

18 labour. Put by Fig. Metonymy (of Cause), Ap. 6.


have ruled. Heb. halash. Supposed to be a later Hebrew word, but it occurs in Ps. 119. 1. Gen. 42. 6. See Ap. 75. 5.

20 took = toiled. Some codices, with two early printed editions, add and wherein I had acted wisely.

21 there = here. leave it = leave it to [another]

22 vexation = feeling, or delight. Same word as in 1. 17: 4. 16. Not the same as in 11. 17. 26.

travail = toil that brings about fatigue. The same word as in 1. 11; 2. 26; 3. 6; 4. 5; 5. 14. Not the same word as in 4. 4, 6. Occurs only in Ecclesiastes.

24 nothing better = no goodness (emphatic).

25 who else can hasten hereunto = who can enjoy more than I? Some codices, with Sept., Syr., and Arabic, read minimem, instead of minimem, “without Him” (i.e. without His favour).


gather = gather in. Not the same word as v. 8.

1. 3-9 (B2, p. 907). MAN. TIMES FOR HIS LABOUR. (Introduction.)


H | 2-8. Seasons.


1 a season = an appointed time. Heb. zaman. Cp. Ezra 10. 14. Neh. 2. 6. Est. 9. 27. A word is not necessarily a “later” word, because there has not been occasion for it to be used, or needed before. See Ap. 76. a time = a season. Note the 28 “seasons” (= 4 x 7). See Ap. 10. In Heb. MSS. these are set out in 14 lines: 2 in a line, with a space between each pair.


under the heaven. See note on 1. 3.

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
ECCLESIASTES.

3. 2.

H

2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;
4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

9 What profit hath he that worketh in that which he laboureth?

C3 J3 d1

2 to plant = to plant. Ex. 19. 12, 15. to pluck up = to pluck up that which is planted. Gen. 4. 4, 5; 41. 30, 31.
2 to break down = to break down. Is. 10. 27, 28; 15. 10.
2 to build up = to build up. Ps. 44. 11, 12; 66. 11.
2 to weep = to weep. Jer. 31. 5, 6; Ezek. 33. 21.
2 to laugh = to laugh. Mal. 1. 4, 14; 4. 3.
2 to mourn = to mourn. Is. 38. 15; 62. 10.
2 to dance = to dance. Ezek. 17. 10; Dan. 2. 9.
2 to cast away stones = to cast away stones. Ps. 63. 10.
2 to gather stones together = to gather stones together. Ex. 16. 15.
2 to refrain from embracing = to refrain from embracing. Prov. 7. 26.
2 to get = to get. Gen. 47. 7, 20.
2 to lose = to lose. Gen. 31. 19, 20.
2 to keep = to keep. Is. 24. 20.
2 to cast away = to cast away. Is. 25. 10, 11.
2 to rend = to rend. Prov. 15. 33.
2 to sew = to sew. Is. 21. 10.
2 to keep silence = to keep silence. Ezek. 33. 21.
2 to speak = to speak. Ex. 7. 2; Num. 22. 1; 2 Sam. 12. 17; Ps. 2. 5; 55. 1; Jer. 31. 21; Ezek. 4. 28; Is. 38. 19; 60. 15. Prov. 19. 17; Is. 9. 22; 12. 6.
2 to love = to love. Jer. 2. 2.
2 to hate = to hate. 2 Thess. 1. 12, 13; 2 Tim. 3. 4, 8.
2 to work = to work. Ex. 14. 11.
2 to be a father of war = to be a father of war. Ps. 31. 7, 8.
2 to work = to work. Ex. 20. 13.
9 labourest = toil. 1 Cor. 15. 18, 19.

3. 10–14. 18 (C3 p. 907). PERSONAL OBSERVATION. (Repeated and Extended Alternation.)

C3 J1 d1


10 seen the travail = considered the business. Job 14. 3; 31. 12; 32. 12.

11 his time = its proper season. Set = to be a father of war. Ps. 105. 12.

12 in them = i.e. in God's works. Gen. 1. 16.
which is to be hath already been; and 10 God requireth that which is past.

16 And moreover I saw 8 under the sun the place of judgment, that 9 wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that 9 iniquity was there.

17 3 said in mine heart. 10:1 God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

18 3 said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that 9 God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are 9 beasts.

19 For 9 that which bealleth the sons of 10 men bealleth 18 beasts; even 9 one thing bealleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all 9 one breath; so that a 11 man hath no preeminence above a 18 beast: for all is vanity.

20 All go unto 9 one place; all are 9 of the dust, and all 9 turn to dust again.

21 Who knoweth the 9 spirit of 10 man that goeth upward, and 9 the spirit of the 18 beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22 Wherefore I perceived that there is nothing 9 better, that than 9 a man should rejoice in his own works; for 9 that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

4 So 3 returned, and considered all the mischiefs that be done under the sun: and beheld the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the 9 side of their oppressors there was power; but 9 they had no comforter.

2 Wherefore 3 9 praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

3 Yea, 9 better is he than both they, which hast not yet been, who hast not seen 9 evil work that is done under the sun.

4 Again, 3 considered all 9 travail, and 9 every right work, that for this 9 a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and 9 vexation of spirit.

5 The 9 fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

6 9 Better is an handfull with quietness, than both the hands full with 9 travail and 9 vexation of spirit.

7 Then 3 returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is one 9 alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither 9 child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, 9 For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? 9 This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore 9 travail.

9 Two are 9 better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow out of the pit, whereof he himself is fallen; for 9 he hath not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

16 under the sun. See note on 1. 3.

wickedness=lawlessness. Heb. רעיה'.' Ap. 44. x. iniquity. Same word as "wickedness" above. Fig. Epitaxis (Ap. 6).

17 the righteous=righteous one. the wicked=lawless one. Heb. רעיה'. Ap. 44. x.

18 God. Cp. v. 11, and note on 1. 11. God might manifest them: God hath chosen them to show them that even they are beasts.

beasts=liveth creatures. As opposed to man=mammals: as opposed to creeping things=quadrupeds: as opposed to wild beasts=cattle.

19 that which bealleth. See note on "event", 2. 14; and Ap. 76. iii.

one thing: i.e. death.


no preeminence, &c. (Cp. Ps. 49. 12, 20; 146. 4.

20 one place: i.e. Sheol, or the grave.

of the dust. See Gen. 1. 24; 2. 7, 19; 3. 19.

turn to dust again. See Gen. 3. 19. Ps. 22. 13; 104. 22; 146. 4. Job 10. 2; 34. 13. Cp. ch. 12. 7.


that goeth, &c. This is mentioned as one of the expressions of the Sopherim, though it is not included in the official lists (see Ap. 29). The primitive Text read the letter ה or ח as an interrogative, "whether it go" (cp. 2. 19; 6. 12). The Chal. Sept., Syr., Vulg., Luther, Geneva, and R. V. follow this reading. Another school took the ה as the article, pronoun and read "that goeth", &c., thus avoiding a supposed objection to its public reading. This was followed by Coverdale, the Bishops' Bible, and the A.V. It is therefore the Fig. Epitaxis (Ap. 6), leaving the question to be answered at the end of the book (12. 7).


portion=share, as in 2. 10: i.e. in the present life.

4. 1 under the sun. See note on 1. 3.

side. Heb. "hand": put by Fig. Metonymy (of Cause), Ap. 6, for the violence proceeding from it.

they: i.e. the oppressed. The phrase repeated for emphasis. Fig. Epitaxis. Ap. 6.

2 praised=commended, or pronounced happy. Heb. שביחד, used only by David and Solomon.

3 better. See note on 2. 24.

evil. Heb. רעה'. Ap. 44. viii.

4 travail=toil, as connected with trouble, sorrow. Not the same word as in 1. 17; 2. 23, 26; 3. 10; 4. 8; 5. 14.

evry right work=all the dexterity in work.


vexation, &c.=feeling on wind. See note on 1. 14.


5 fool. Heb. בֵּשָׁל, fat, inert. See note on Prov. 1. 7.

6 child=son.

labour=toil.


travail=fatigue from toil. See note on 2. 23, 24.

12 prevail against=overpower. Heb. תָּקָדָם, supposed to belong to later Hebrew, but it is found in Job 14. 29 and 15. 24 (the only three occurrences). See Ap. 70. vii.

3 threefold cord. Cp. Num. 6. 24-25; Mic. 6. 8. Titus 2. 12, 13. 1 Thess. 1. 3 with 1. 9, 10.

13 poor=straithened in means, not able to profit others. Heb. מִיטָן. Not the same as in p. 14. Supposed to be a later Hebrew word, but a derivative of it is found in Deut. 1. 9. See Ap. 56. viii.

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and 9 a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 9 Better is a 9 poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.
14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom cometh poor.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

5 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for he is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool’s voice is known by multitude of words.

4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in the multitudes of thy vows: pay that thou hast vowed.

5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error; wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.

8 If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter:

9 Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field.

10 He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.

11 When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?

12 The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owner thereof to 13 their hurt.

14 But those riches perish by evil: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.

15 As he came forth of his mother’s womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

16 And this also is a sore evil, that in all

5. 1-12 (B6, p. 907). MAN. HIS WORKS.

(Repealed Alternation.)

B6 K1 | 1, 2. Works.
L1 | 3. Reason.
K2 | 4-6. Vows.
L2 | 7. Reason.
K3 | 8. Perverting of judgment.
K4 | 9-12. Riches.

1 God. Heb. Eloahim (with Art.) = the [true] God, or the Deity. See note on 1. 1.
2 hear = obey. fool = fat, inert. Heb. כֹּלֶל. See note on Prov. 1. 7.
3 thing = word. upon earth. Same idea as “under the sun”. See note on 1. 3.
4 vow = make a solemn vow. Fig. Polyp.’toton (Ap. 6).
6 Better. See note on 2. 24.
7 to cause, &c. by vows made concerning the flesh, such as eating and drinking, marrying, &c.
8 sin. Heb. בְּאֵל. Ap. 44. i.
10 error. Heb. שָׂרָה. Ap. 44. xii.
11 wherefore . . . ? Fig. Erot Refuge. Ap. 6.
12 voice. Put by Fig. Metonomy (of Cause). Ap. 6, for the vain words uttered by it; referring to v. 1.
13 destroy = confiscate.
14 work. 1. 7. 15 Sept. and Vulg. read “works” (pl.).
16 divers vanities. Plural of emphasis = great vanity; i.e. in many dreams and many words, also there is great vanity: referring to 1. 3 above.
18 matter. Heb. purpose or desire, put by Fig. Metonomy (of Cause). Ap. 6, for the effect of it. Heb. בַּעַל, one of the words supposed to be later Hebrew. See note on 3. 1, and Ap. 76. v.
19 He that is higher, &c. = the high One above the high one regarded, even the Most High is over them.
20 is “it is,” for all = consists in the whole, i.e. not confined to one day.
21 nor he that loveth, &c. = And who is [ever] content with abundance without increase (capital without interest). No socialism or “corruption” of text here.
22 good = advantage, their = his.
23 to sleep = to sleep soundly.

5. 13-6. 9 (C6, p. 907). PERSONAL OBSERVA-

TION. (Alternations.)

C6 M | g1 | 5. 12. Self. Labour for.
| g2 | 5. 13. Self. Labour for.
| h2 | 5. 17. Profits.
| h3 | 6. 2. Profits.
| g4 | 6. 3. - 5. Self. Children.
| h4 | 6. 3. - 5. Profits.
| N | 6. 4-9. Long life.

13 under the sun. See note on 1. 3.
14 travail = fatigue from toil. See note on 2. 23, and 4. 4.
points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?

All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: 2 A man to whom God hath given riches, and wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing of his soul of all that he desreth,

yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many,

his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.

For he cometh with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than other.

Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

All the labour of one man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.

What hath the wise more than the fool? What hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?

Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with Him That is mightier than he.

Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?

For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.
3. • Sorrow is 1 better than laughter: for by the
sadness of the countenance the heart is made
better.
4. The heart of the wise is in the house of
mourning: but the heart of 2 fools is in the
house of mirth.
5. It is 1 better to hear the rebuke of the wise,
than for a man to hear the song of 2 fools.
6. For as the • craking of thorns under a
pot, so is the laughter of the 2 fool: this also
is • vanity.
7. Surely • oppression maketh a wise man
mad; and • a gift destroyeth the heart.
8. • Better is the end of a thing than the be-
ingning thereof: • and the patient in • spirit
is better than the proud in • spirit.
9. • Be not hasty in thy • spirit to be angry:
for anger resteth in the bosom of 2 fools.
10. • Say not thou, • What is the cause that the
former days were 1 better than these? • for thou
dost not enquire wisely concerning this.

Wisdom is good 1 with an inheritance: and
by it there is profit to them that • see the sun.
12. For 1 wisdom is a defence, and money is a
defence: but the excellency of knowledge is,
that 2 wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

Consider the work of 2 God: for who can
make that straight, which He hath made
crooked?
14. In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in
the day of adversity consider 2 God also hath
set the one over against the other, to the end
that 2 man should 3 find nothing after him.

All things have I seen in the days of my
vainity: there is a • just man that perisheth in
his righteousness, and there is a • wicked
man that protracteth his life in his • wickedness.
16. • Be not righteous • over much; neither
make thyself • over wise:

why shouldest thou • destroy thyself?
17. • Be not over much 3 wicked, neither be
thou • foolish:

why shouldest thou die before thy time?
18. It is • good that thou shouldst take hold of
this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine
hand: for he that feareth 2 God shall 3 come
forth of them all.

Wisdom strengtheneth • the wise more
than ten mighty men which are in the city.

20. • For there is not a • just 2 man upon earth,
that doth good, and • sinneth not.
21. Also take no heed unto all words that are
spoken; lest thou hear thy servant • curse thee:

22. For oftentimes also thine own heart
knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast
cursed others.

23 All this have I proved by 2 wisdom: I said,
"I will be wise:" but it was far from me.
24. That which is far off, and • exceeding deep,
who can find it out?
25. • Applied mine heart to know, and to
search, and to seek out 2 wisdom, and • the
reason of things, and to know the • wicked-
ness of • folly, even of • foolishness and • mad-
ness:

vanity. See note on 1. 2
7. • oppression • oppressing: i.e. the act of oppressing.
8. • maketh • mad. Referring to the madness of folly.
9. • beyond control. See note on 1. 17
10. • a gift • a bribe.
12. Wisdom. Hebr. • châlôm. See note on Prov. 1. 2
13. • and, • like, or as. See 2. 16; 8. 1. Gen. 18. 22, 23.
Job 3. 14, 15; 9. 20; 21. 8; 40. 15. Ps. 73. 5, 25; 149. 7.
14. • the idiom for "are alive".
15. • life • future life. See note on Lev. 18. 5.
16. • the Deity. Ap. 4. 1
17. • discover.

PERSONAL PROVFING.
(Division and Repeated Alternation.)
18. • over much: i.e. depending on the merit of good
works. • over wise: i.e. beyond what is necessary.
19. destroy thyself • make thyself lonely: i.e. forsaken.
20. • is a wise man.
23. • exceeding deep. Hsb. • "deep, deep". Fig.
24. • the reason ... • madness: in order to know the
reason (or cause) of folly's wickedness, and the madness
of folly.
25. • wickedness • lawlessness. Hebr. • râhôn. Ap. 44. x.
27. • counting. Or, supply the Ellipsis thus: "[consider-
ing women] one by one", &c.
28. • And 3 find more bitter than death the
woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and
her hands as bands: whose pleaseth 13 God
shall escape from her; but the 20 sinner shall
be taken by her.
29. • Behold, this have I found," saith the
preacher. • "counting" one by one, to find out the
"account:
7. 28.  


28 Which yet my soul seekoth, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.

29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made two man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

8 Who is as wise as man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.

2 Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

4 Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, 'What doest thou?'

5 Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

6 Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of one man is great among many.

7 For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

8 There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun:

10 And that which is done is done when as one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

12 Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged,

13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow;

because he feareth not before God.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to

8. 1-8 (O3, p. 913). MAN. IN HIS WISDOM.

(Interpretation and Alternation.)

O3 T = n 1. Wisdom. Happiness of it.
      o = -1. Reason.
      U 2, 3. King's commandment.
      U 4. King's word.

T = n 5. Wisdom. Strength of it.

1 as=like, who . . . Supply the Ellipsis (Ap. 6), from the preceding line: “Who [is like him that] knoweth?”

2 3 counsel thee: or I say, then, in regard of—on account of.

8 evil. Heb. násá‘. Ap. 44. viii.

P1 V 9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun:

W there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

P V 9 Observation.

P V 10 Observation.

9 under the sun. See note on 1. 3.

there is a time wherein=sometimes.

10 I saw=I have seen.

the wicked=lawless men (pl.). Heb. râšha‘. Ap. 44. x.

P2 A (p. 916)

12 sinner. Heb. čišté‘. Ap. 44. I.


13 the wicked=

8. 14—9. 1 [For Structure see next page].

Just=righteous.

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8. 14—9. 9

(916)

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whom it happeneth according to the will of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity.

15 Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry:

16 When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth:

17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun:

18 because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea farther: though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

9 For all this I considered in my heart, even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.

2 All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.

3 This is evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and there is madness in their heart, while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

4 For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know that they shall die:

6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

9 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which He hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is portion in this life, and in thy labour which God taketh under the sun.

8. 14—9. 1

PERSONAL OBSERVATION.

Introduction and Alternation.

3 Contrariness. Man’s happenings.

15 Mirth commended.

q. 8—15. Reason.

Wisdom. Man’s work on earth.

q. 8—15. Reason.

Wisdom. God’s work on earth.

q. 8—17. Reason.

1 Contrariness. God’s dealings.

15 See note on 2. 24.

16 Business=toil.

For also there is, w.c. how that one doth not see sleep with his eyes by day or by night. Fig. Ophtharesis (Ap. 6).

17 Yet he shall not find it. The A.V. of 1611 omitted these words. Inserted in a subsequent edition.

9. 1 I considered— I have taken to heart, even to declare. Sept. and Syr. read, “and my heart proved”;

the righteous=just one.


hatred by all that is before them=hatred. All lies before them (i.e. in the future).

them: i.e. the righteous and the lawless.

9. 2-10 (916). MAN IN HIS END.

(Repeated Alternation.)

O C1 C2 C3 C4 C5

D1 D2 D3 D4 D5

A. The dead.

The living.

The dead.

The living.

The dead.

2 All things come alike to all=just as before all others. Reading on from v. 1.

one event= i.e. death. See note on 2. 14.

the wicked=a lawless one. Heb.,rish. Ap. 44. x.

Rinner. Heb. chad. Ap. 44. i. All the nouns in this verse are sing.

3 an evil. The Proposition (2—3) in idbol, gives the force of the superlative: i.e. the greatest or worst calamity of all, &c.


under the sun. See note on 1. 3.

madness. Pl. as elsewhere. See note on 1. 17.

they go. Omit these words and note the Fig.

Apostrophe (Ap. 6), “and after that—to the dead!” See the following note.

4 For to him that is joined. Connect this with the end of preceding verse and render “For who is excpected? To all the living”, &c.


69. i. Occurs only here, 2 Kings 18. 19, and Isa. 56. 6.

a living dog, &c. Fig. Paronom. Ap. 6. Same proverb in Arabic.

Living dog. Regarded by the Jews as the most unclean and despisable creature (1 Sam. 17. 43; 21. 14; 2 Sam. 9. 8; 15. 9. 2 Kings 15. 13, Matt. 7. 6; 15. 26. Rev. 22. 15). Hence Gentiles so called.

is=nis [is]: i.e. even he.

better. See note on 2. 24.

lion. Regarded as the noblest of animals (Gen. 40. 19.

Job 10. 16. Isa. 38. 13. Lam. 3. 16. Hos. 15. 7. Rev. 5. 5).

5 the dead know not any thing. See and cp. v. 10.

Ps. 6. 5; 30. 9; 31. 17; 88. 11. Isa. 38. 18, 19.

a reward=any advantage [to them].

memory=the faculty of remembrance. See note on “them”, below.

them. The Heb. suffix “them” must be taken as the subject in all the four nouns alike. As in v. 6, the possessive pronoun “their” is, and must be, taken alike in Ps. 72. 8, where it is parallel with “clean gone for ever”, “perished” and “for memory of v. 5.

10 Whatever thy hand findeth to do, so do it with thy might;

11 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill: but time and chance happeneth to them all.

12 For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

13 This wisdom have I seen also, and it seemed great unto me:
14 That there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:
15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and by his wisdom delivered the city;

16 Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength;

17 The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.

19 Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth an stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.

20 A wise man’s heart is at his right hand; but a fool’s heart at his left.

21 Yea also, because that he is a fool walketh by the way, his heart faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.

22 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences:

23 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler:

24 Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.

25 I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

26 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and he that breaketh a hedge shall a serpent shall bite him.

yielding, &c. = gentleness preventeth greater outrages.


6 Folly = great dullness. Heb. pekel, as in 1. 3, 14, in great dignity = in many high positions.

7 horses. No evidence of a late origin of this book, for we read of them in 1 Kings 4. 26, 28; 10. 26, 28; 22. 4. 2 Kings 9. 33; 14. 20. If not in common use, it was because of the Law (Deut. 17. 16); and because of Solomon’s disobedience (1 Kings 10. 28). 2 Chron. 1. 16, 17; 9. 28.) upon the earth. See note on 5. 2. 8 hedge = a wall built of loose stones without mortar. Heb. sidhr, used especially of sheep-folds (Num. 33. 16, 24, 34; Is. 24. 3.) zeph. 2. 6; also for fencing pathways between the vineyards (Num. 22. 24; Ps. 62. 3; 80. 12). The crovers between the loose stones form hiding-places for lizards and other creeping things.

917

10 thy hand findeth to do. Hand put by Fig. Metonymy of Cause, Ap. 6, for the strength put forth by it (Lev. 12. 8; 25. 28), do it with thy might = do it while thou art able, and have time to do it.

11 knowledge. See note on v. 5, above.

wisdom. Heb. chokmah. See note on 1. 9.

10. 9. ECCLESIASTES. 11. 8.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.
10 If the iron be blunt, and lack not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength:
but wisdom is profitable to direct.

Ecclesiastes (p. 917)

11 Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbleth is no better.
12 The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious:
but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.
13 The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.
14 A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?
15 The labour of the foolish weareth every man weary because he knoweth not how to go to the city.

Oecumenicon (p. 918)

16 Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!
17 Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

G 18 By much slothfulness the building decays; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

H 19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry; but money answereth all things.

F 20 Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

G 11 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.
2 Give to a portion: i.e. a portion of the bread of v. 1.
three and seven, and eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.
3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.
4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.
5 As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God Who maketh all.
6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether both shall be alike good.

H 11. 1 bread. Put by Fig. Metonymy (of Effect), Ap. 6, for the seed from which it is produced.
upon upon the surface of the earth.
2 Give: i.e. in charity. A portion: i.e. a portion of the bread of v. 1.
seven and eight. An idiomatic phrase denoting several or many, like the idiom "once...twice"=several times (Job 33. 14. Ps. 62. 11); "twice...thrice"=often (Job 38. 29. Isa. 17. 6); "three and four"=frequently, or many (Ex. 20. 6; Ps. 37. Prov. 30. 18. 18. 31. Amos 1. 3. 4. 9. 11. 13; 2. 1. 4. 6); "four and five" (Isa. 17. 6); "six and seven"=many (Job 5. 19); "seven and eight" (Mic. 5. 6).
what evil. As the verb is Mase. but "evil" is Fem., render "what will prove a misfortune".
evil = misfortune. Heb. ra‘ach.
4 wind. Heb. ra‘ach. Ap. 9, shall not sow... shall not reap. The plowing must be done when the early rains have come, even in the face of storm and tempest; otherwise there will be no reaping after the latter rains.

6 prosper. Heb. kasher: supposed to be a later Hebrew word, but a kindred form seems to be found in Ps. 8. 5, where "with chains" should be rendered "into prosperity". See Ap. 75. xi.

11. 7—12. 8 (H, above). YOUTH. (Repeated Alternations.)

H 7 Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:
8 But if a man live many years, and rejoiced in them all;
yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many.
All that cometh is vanity.
9 Rejoice, &c. A positive command, not irony; qualified by the solemn fact: 9 but know thou " 
young man a chosen youth, implying beauty and strength.

youth = childhood.

thine youth. Same word as "young man".

judgment = the judgment.

10 evil = sadness.


12. 1 now = also.

Creator. Plural of Majesty = the [great] Creator, or a reference to the Trinity.

12. -1-7 (u', p. 918). KNOWLEDGE. DAYS OF EVIL. (Introversion and Repeated Alternation.)

11. 9. 12. 10.

ECCLESIASTES.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON*

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE†

(Intercession and Alternation.)


B | C  | 1.12-2.7. THE SHULAMITE AND HER BELOVED TOGETHER.

D | 2.8-3.5. THE SHULAMITE AND HER BELOVED APART.

B | C  | 3.6-5.1. THE SHULAMITE AND HER BELOVED TOGETHER.

D | 5.2-8.4. THE SHULAMITE AND HER BELOVED APART.

A | 8.5-14. THE CONCLUSION. THE SHULAMITE RESTORED. RETURN FROM SOLOMON TO HER HOME WITH HER BELOVED (SHEPHERD).

* In the Hebrew, Nish'elomoh is not the Genitive case, meaning "of Solomon", or "Solomon's" (v.1). The Preposition "(Lamed = l) means "to", or "for", as in the Psalm-Titles, and in the expression "for the chief Musician". It is therefore not necessarily limited to authorship, as may be further seen from the title of Ps. 73, where we have the same word (lish'elomoh) rendered "for Solomon". It may well mean "concerning or relating to Solomon the king's son". Moreover, the Relative Pronoun "asher (=which)") takes it out of the category of ordinary authorship, and may rightly require the rendering "which [is] concerning Solomon". The Preposition has a wide range of meaning (divided into some twenty-two classes) according to the Verbs used; but, when used without a Verb (as it is here), it may refer to the subject, and be well rendered "concerning", as it is in Jer. 49, 1, 7, 24, 28, &c. The question of authorship therefore does not, of necessity, arise, and need not be discussed.

† For further notes on the book as a whole, see p. 921.