ECCLESIASTES;
OR,
THE PREACHER.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

(Introversion.)

A | 1, 1. INTRODUCTION.
B | 1, 2—8, 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. I. 20; 8, 1, and always with masculine verbs). Cp. Matt. 11. 19. Luke 7. 35; 11. 45, 50. KOHELETH is from הָעַלְּתָה— 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 Ḥoheleih occurs seven times in the book (Ap. 10): three times at the beginning (1. 1, 2, 11); three times at the end (12, 1, 5, 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. 37; 2 Tim. 3. 16, &c.). It is given in the list of canonical books by Josephus (A. D. 37), 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. 21 giving His own Divine pronouncement. They strain out the gnat 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. 3, 17), as Luke's was (see note on Luke 1. 2). Moreover, Solomon did not lose it, for it "remained with" him (Ecc. 2, 2).
ECCLESIASTES;
OR, THE PREACHER.

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

2. "Vanity of vanities, " saith the 1 Preacher, "all is vanity.

3. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

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

5. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

6. 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.

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

8. There is nothing new under the sun: it hath been already of old, which is now.

9. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are come to pass.

10. The Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

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

12. Solomon knew that the kingdom was to be rent (1 Kings 11.11) and the People scattered; therefore he sought to kill Jeroboam (1 Kings 11.39-40). The Chal. Targum says, on v. 1: "These are the words of the prophecy which Koheleth delivered when Solomon was king, by the Spirit of prophecy, that the kingdom of Behoboam his son would be divided by Jeroboam the son of Nebat."

13. Solomon was the only king of which this was wholly true. See note on Prov. 1.2.

1. 2-6. 9 (B, p. 908). THE CHIEF GOOD.

WHAT IT IS NOT.

(Division and Revised Introduction.)

B

A | B | C | D

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

VANITY. (Alternation.)

E | D | C | B | A

2. Vanities of vanities. Fig. Polyptoton Ap. 6. Note also the Fig. Epanadiptosis (Ap. 6), by which o. 2 begins and ends with the same word. These Figures are used for the greatest emphasis, and denote utter vanity.

3. All the work of the hands, or the sum total. Nothing everything in the universe, but all the human labours of o. 2, 4, 6, vanity. Heb. had, used of that which soon vanishes.


under the sun. This expression is peculiar to this book, and occurs twenty-nine times: (1. 3; 3. 14; 4. 16; 5. 17; 6. 12; 7. 12; 8. 2, 4, 6; 9. 11; 11. 13; 10. 1). It is equivalent to "unto the earth" (6. 2; 8. 14, 16; 10. 7; 11. 2, 5). 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 these latter must be dealt with and reconciled and harmonised as other supposed "discrepancies" usually are; not cast aside as uninspired. It may be that it is man's theology which has yet to be conformed to these inspired statements.

5. Abideth = standeth still, as in first occurrence (Gen. 18. 8; 19. 27; Josh. 18. 5; Ps. 119. 90). For ever. Heb. 'adam = ages; 'adam occurs in Eoc. seven times: (1. 4, 16; 2. 11; 17; 18. 19, 20; 21; 2. 16; 3. 1, 12; 2. 13; 12; 3. 12; 13; 7. 8, 15, 16, 17; 9. 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 10. 4). It is equivalent to "unto the earth" (6. 2; 8. 14, 16; 10. 7; 11. 2, 5). 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 these latter must be dealt with and reconciled and harmonised as other supposed "discrepancies" usually are; not cast aside as uninspired. It may be that it is man's theology which has yet to be conformed to these inspired statements.

6. Wind. Heb. rech. Ap. 9. The first part of o. 6 continues the motion of the sun, going to the south (in winter) and turning about to the north (in summer).

7. Whirleth. I.e. the wind whirleth. This is the subject of o. 5.

8. They return again. This is the point of the illustration. Ap. 30. 27. 8. Labour = weariness.


10. 12-26 [For Structure see next page].
13. **ECCLESIASTES.**

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 Guz, the greatest of the Sumerian rulers of Chaldea (3500 B.C.), and Tiglath-pileser I, king of Assyria (1120 B.C.), describing what could be only a botanical and zoological park. Assur-nazir-bal, king of Assyria (885 B.C.), founded such a public paradise, and describes how he stook it; what he brought, 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; 22:2, 3, refers to the future paradise, which will be as literal and not figurative. 6 wood-forest. 7 got me servants—bought me servants. Heh bondage has nothing in common with Greek, Roman, or African slavery. There is no word for such slavery in Hebrew; "labourer, the name of all Jehovah's servants. 8 gathered=assassured. Heb. kūnas, said to be a later Hebrew word (see Ap. 76.1). 9. the provinces. Hebrew, nō'nah, from dām=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 a later word, and it is found in 1 Kings 20:14, 15, 17, 19. Lam. 1.1. Ezek. 16.1. See Ap. 76. Note on "event" in v. 11 remained. The Divine wisdom given by God (1 Kings 3:5-11) 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.)

1. 12-2. 26 (C1, p. 907). PERSONAL SEARCH. (Division and Extended and Repeated Alternation.)


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

God. Heb. Elohim. Ap. 4.1. 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. iddām for "man" in this book.

exercised=humiliated. 14. vanity. See note on 1. 2.


my heart=I say, had-saw.

16. wisdom=the opposite of wisdom, as displayed in the loss of self-control; raving with self-conceit. So elsewhere in this book.

17. folly=infatuation. Heb. šā'at. See note on "wisdom," Prov. 1. 2.


19. sorrow=marting. See note on 1. 2. 2. 1. enjoy=look thou into. beheld. Fig. Asterias. Ap. 6.

laughter=to laughter. 2. 2. 3. it is mad. See note on "madness", 1. 17, of mirth=to mirth.

What doeth it?—What doeth she do?—in mine heart: i.e. resolved.

to give myself unto: or, how to enlist, by wine, my very flesh [in the work]: i.e. the work of proving the heart with mirth—"get thee a name of wisdom", wine. Heb. yā'yin. Ap. 27.1. wisdom. See note on v. 16.


for the heaven. 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. Metonymy (of Cause). Ap. 6, for the results and effects gained by work. Op. Ex. 23.12, 1 Sam. 25. 2. Is. 26. 12.

9. I was great, and increased more than all I was in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.
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.

12 And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and vanity, 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 was I then more wise?’ Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.

16 For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days of cometh shall be forgotten. And how dith the wise man die as the fool?

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 laboured with my soul: it was but a travail, and an evil vexation.

19 And I saw that all is vanity: under the sun: for a man that hath not laboured therein shall be left for it his portion. This also is vanity.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I laboured with my soul 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.

22 For what hath a man that is more than the man that hath laboured therein?

23 All this I saw also, saith the preacher: that the hand of God it is good before God; for man that it is good before God.

24 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 I saw, that it was from the hand of God.

25 For who can eat, or who can have a desire to have more than I? 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. portion = share, as in 8.22. 
11 Then = But when. looked = turned in order to look, as in v. 12. vanity. See note on 1.2. 
12 Then = But when. looked = turned in order to look, as in v. 12. vanity. See note on 1.2. 
13 fool. Heb. Ktul = fat, inert. Same word as in vv. 15, 16; not the same word as in v. 19. 
14 life. Put by Fig. Meteorony (of the Subject) for the pleasure enjoyed in it.

15 labour. Put by Fig. Meteorony (of Cause), Ap. 6, for all that is produced by toil. 
16 have rule. Heb. shalat. Supposed to be a later Heb. word, but it occurs in Ps. 119.133. Gen. 42.8. 
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. This is also vanity.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took 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.

22 For what hath a man that is more than the man that hath laboured therein?

23 For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24 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 I saw, that it was from the hand of God.

25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I? 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.

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This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.
2 to be born = to bear, Gen. 17, 17, 21; 18, 14; 21, 2.
10 to die. Ps. 51, 5, 15. Hezek. 22, 14.
1 a time = a period in which.
2 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 wherein he laboureth?

10 I have seen the travail of which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.
11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also He hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

12 I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.
13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.
14 I know that whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doth it, that men should fear before Him.
15 That which hath been is now; and that which is to come hath already been; and God requireth that which is past away.
which is to be bath already been; and 10 God requireth that which is past.

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

17 3 said in mine heart, 10 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 10 men, that "God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are "beasts.

For that which befalleth the sons of 10 men befalleth 18 beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a 10 man hath no preeminence above a 18 beast:

19 for all is vanity.

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

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

22 Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a 10 man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

3 3 returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done "under the sun;

and beheld the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

8 There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither "child nor brother:

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

10 If they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for 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. 'rāšā'. Ap. 44. x.
iniquity. Same word as "wickedness" above. Fig. 
Episcopius (Ap. 6).

17 the righteous = a righteous one.

the wicked = a lawless one. Heb. rāšā'. Ap. 44. x.

18 God. Cp. n. 11, and note 1. 

God might manifest them = God hath chosen them
to show them that even they are beasts.

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

19 that which befalleth. See note on "event", 2. 14; and Ap. 70. iii.

one thing: i.e. death.

Gen. 2. 7 with 1. 20, 21, 24, 30; and Ap. 13.

20 no preeminence, &c. Cp. Ps. 43. 17, 20; 146. 4.

21 one place: i.e. "Sheol, or the grave.

of the dust. See Gen. 1. 24; 2. 7, 19; 5. 10.

22 turn to dust again. See Gen. 3. 19. Ps. 22. 15;
104. 27; 146. 4. Job 10. 2; 18. 13. Cp. ch. 12. 7.


of man. Heb. "of the sons of Adam". See notes on 
12. 13; 1. 12.

that goeth, &c. This is mentioned as one of the emendations of the Sopherim, though it is not included in the official lists (see Ap. 35). The primitive Text read the letter 'He (י=Ḥ) as an interrogative, "whether it go"(cp. 2. 19; 6. 12). The Chalde, Sept., Syr, Vulg, Luther, Geneva, and R.V. follow this reading. Another school took the 'He (י=Ḥ) as the article pronoun and read "that goeth", &c., thus avoiding a supposed objection to its public reading. This was followed by the Targum, the Rabbis' Bible, and the A.V. It is therefore the Fig. Eras (Ap. 6), leaving the question to be answered at the end of the book (12. 7).


portian is 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. Nōmmony (of Cause), Ap. 6, for the violence proceeding from it.

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

3 better. See note on 2. 24.

evil. Heb. 'rāšā'. Ap. 44. viii.

4 travails = toil, as connected with trouble, sorrow. Not the same word as in 1. 12; 2. 3, 22; 3. 18; 4. 8, 4. 14. every work = every work as laboriously as the rest.


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


3 fool. Heb. 'lāf, fat, inert. See note on Prov. 1. 7.

3 child = son.

labour = toil.


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

12 prevail against = overpower. Heb. ṣēḇḥ, supposed to belong to later Hebrew, but it is found in Job 16. 10 and 15. 24 (the only three occurrences). See Ap. 76. vii.


12 poor = straitened in means, not able to profit others. Heb. ṣâph. Not the same as in v. 14. Supposed to be the later Hebrew word, but a derivative of it is found in Dent. 8. s. See Ap. 46. vii.

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

13 Better is a "poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.
4. 14. ECCLESIASTES. 5. 16.

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh 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.

B3 K1 (p. 912)

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 God 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 owest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

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

6 Suffer not thy mouth 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.

K3 (p. 915)

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

Lp for He That is higher than the highest regardest; and there be higher than they.

K4

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 is 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.

C3 M g1

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

Jp l

14 But those riches perish by evil travail: 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.

g2

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

5. 1-12 (B3, p. 907). MAN. HIS WORKS.

(Repeated Alternation.)

B3 K1 | 1. 2. Works.
K3 | 1-4. Vows.
Lp | 5. Reason.
K3 | 5. Perverting of judgment.
K1 | 9-12. Riches.


hear = obey.


2 thing = word.

upon earth. Same idea as “under the sun.” See note on 1. 3.


Better. See note on 2. 24.

8 to cause, &c. : by vows made concerning the flesh, such as eating and drinking, marrying, &c.

sin. Heb. chattat. Ap. 44. i.


wherefore ? Fig. Erotetics. Ap. 6.

voice. Put by Fig. Melonymy (of Cause). Ap. 6, for the vain words uttered by it: referring to v. 1.

destroy = confute.

work. Aram. Seph. and Vulg. read “works” (pl.).

7 divers vanities. Plural of emphasis = great vanity: I.o. in many dreams and many words, also [there is] great vanity: referring to v. 2 above.

8 poor = needy, in want. Heb. rash. See note on 2. 22.

matter. Heb. purpose or desire, put by Fig. Melonymy (of Cause), Ap. 6, for the effect of it. Heb. hapheq, one of the words supposed to be later Hebrew. See note on 3. 1. and Ap. 76. v.

9 He That is higher, &c. = the high One above the high one regardeht, even the Most High is over them.

is = “it is,” for all = [consists] in the whole, i.e. not confined to one day.

10 nor he that loveth, &c. = And who is [ever] content with abundance without increase (capital without interest). No socialism or “corruption” of text here.

11 good = advantage.

12 to sleep = to sleep soundly.

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

14 travail = fatigue from till. See note on 2. 22. and 4.


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

11 Tim. 6. 7.
points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?

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

18 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.

10 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.

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

6 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 for his soul of all that he desireth,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?

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

10 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.

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

12 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?

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

8 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.

1. 10-12, 19 (B. p. 908). THE CHIEF GOOD, WHAT IT IS. (Repeated Alternation.)

B O1 Q (p. 913)

14 (O1 above). MAN. IN HIMSELF.

B O1 Q (p. 913)

(p. 913)

10 Which that hath been is named already, &c.:

What is he who hath been? (cp. 1. 9).

Long ago his name was given;

And it is understood what [that name was]—

It was—Adam: which means vegetable mould, made in the likeness of Elohim, Gen. 1. 31; 2. 7; 6. 1. 2. Made of “earth” he returns to earth (1 Cor. 15: 45): i.e. “vain.” This book is a commentary on Ps. 144. 4; Ps. 39; 49; 89.

12 All the days of his vain life is the numbered days of his vain life. for as to which.

7. 11 good. Note the Fig. Epanadiplôsis (Ap. 6), by which the sentence begins and ends with the same word “good” (rendered “precious”).

name . . . ointment. Note the Fig. Paronomasia (Ap. 6), “šām mishšemen.”

better. See note on 2. 24.

12 all the days of his vain life is the numbered days of his vain life.

10. That which hath been is named already, &c.:

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12 all the days of his vain life is the numbered days of his vain life. for as to which.
3 Sorrow is 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 fools is in the
house of mirth.
5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise,
than for a man to hear the song of fools.
6 For as the "crackling" of thorns under a
pot, so is the laughter of the 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-

(p. 913)

10 Wisdom is good with an inheritance:
and by it thou profiteth to them that see the
sun.
12 For wisdom is a defence, and money is a
defence: but the excellency of knowledge is,
that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.
13 Consider the work of 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 God also has
set the one over against the other, to the end
that man should find nothing after him.

(p. 914)

7. 15-29 (P1, p. 913). PERSONAL PROVING.
(Division and Repeated Alternation.)

15 All things have I seen in the days of my
vanity: there is a jost man that perisheth in
his righteousness, and there is a wicked man
that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.
16 Be not righteous over much; neither
make thyself over wise:
17 Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?
19 Be not over much wicked, neither be
thou foolish:
20 For there is not a just man upon earth,
that doeth good, and sinneth not.
21 Also take 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.

(p. 915)

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

11 Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?
19 Be not over much wicked, neither be
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16 over much: i.e. depending on the merit of good
works.
over wise: i.e. beyond what is necessary
destroy thyself = make thyself lonely: i.e. forsaken.
17 Be not over much wicked = Be not very wicked:
i.e. Be not wicked at all. For violation of nature's laws
surely end in premature death.
foolish = stupid: Heb. sopher; not the same word as
in vv. 4, 5, 6, 9, 22 ("foolish"). See note on Prov. 1. 7.
why ... ? Fig. Erotesis. Ap. 6.
18 Be come forth of them all = make His way with both.
19 the wise = a wise man.
21 curse = revile.
25 the reason ... madness = in order to know the
reason (or cause) of folly's wickedness, and the madness
of folly.
"wickedness = lawlessness. Heb. thab. Ap. 44. x.
27 Behold. Fig. Asterismos. Ap. 6.
28 counting, &c. Or, supply the Ellipsis thus: 
[considering women] one by one, &c.
account = result.

28 And 3 find more bitter than death the
woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and
her hands as bands: whose pleaseth 15 God
shall escape from her; but the 30 sinner shall
be taken by her.
27 "Behold, this have I found," saith the
preacher, "account one by one, to find out the

account:

15 just = righteous.
"wickedness. Heb. riša' ... riša'.
Ap. 44. x. viii.
16 over much: i.e. depending on the merit of good
works.
over wise: i.e. beyond what is necessary
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27 "Behold, this have I found," saith the
preacher, "account one by one, to find out the

account:
28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: but a woman among all those have I not found; 48 Lo, this only have I found, that hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

8. 1-8 (O'S., p. 913). MAN. IN HIS WISDOM.

(Alternation)

Who is as wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? In regard of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in evil things; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

Where the word of a king, is power: and who may say unto him, What dost thou? To keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.

Who is as man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed. Counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.

Because to every purpose there is time and judgment; therefore the misery of a man is great upon him.

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

All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.

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.

Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before Him:

But it shall not be well with him that is wick'd, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.

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
whom it happeneth according to the work 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; for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

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:

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.

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 saint, and to the sinner, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.

3 This is an 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 madness is 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: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

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.

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

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

Live joyfully with the wise whom thou lov-est 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 thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

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Live joyfully with the wise whom thou lov-est 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 thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.
10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, 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 man also knoweth not his time:

13 This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me:

14 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:

19 One that scorneth another, lacketh understanding.

20 Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour:

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

22 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him,

23 And he saith to every one that is a fool.

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

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

26 Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low places.

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

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

yielding, &c. = gentleness preventeth greater outrages.

5. evil. Heb. ra 'ah. Ap. 44. viii. under the sun. See note on 1. 2. 6 Folly = great dullard. Heb. tikhal, as in v. 1, 2, 3, 14. in great dignity = in many high positions.

8 horses. No evidence of a late origin of this book, for we read of them in 1 Kings 4. 25, 26; 10. 24, 25; 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. 23.) upon the earth. See note on 5. 2. 8 hedge = a wall built of loose stones without mortar. Heb. gedurer, used especially of sheep-folds (Num. 22. 15, 24, 16; 1 Sam. 23. 7; Zeph. 2. 6); also of fencing pathways between the vineyards (Num. 22. 24. Ps. 62. 3; 80. 12). The crevices between the loose stones form hiding-places for lizards and other creeping things.
9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.
10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength:
but wisdom is profitable to direct.

11 Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babber 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 as theendl 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 a foolish weigheth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.
16 Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! a 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!
18 By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.
19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.
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.

11 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.
2 Give a portion to seven, and also to 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 they both shall be alike good.

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, 2 and rejoice in them all;
yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many.
9 All that cometh is vanity.
11. 9.

J3 12. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,

u3 w while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, ‘I have no pleasure in them’;

x y1 | 2 When the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

y2 | 3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

2 v 4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way,

v y3 and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden,

2 w 6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

w | 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it.

v3 | 8 "Vanity of vanities," saith the preacher; "all is vanity."

P5 K a 9 And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the People knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

b 10 The preacher sought to find out acceptable words:

L and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

and then (2) the condiment is put for the appetite produced by it. And further, since, because of its shape, as well as from the notion that it was supposed to create sexual desire, all that is intended by the figure is included in the rendering "desire shall fail".

O Or, &c. Now figures now (in e.) introduced, referring to the arrested (p. above) of death itself.

the silver cord: i.e. the spinal cord.

the golden bowl: i.e. the head, or skull.

pitcher: the failure of the heart.

the wheel. On which the bucket is brought up by a rope from the cistern, or well.

7 dust. Fig. Metonymy (of Cause). Ap. 6, put for the body which is made of dust as it was. Note the reference to Adam's creation.


9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes:

u2 but know thou, that all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

v2 10 Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.

12. 1 now also. Creator. Plural of Majesty = the great Creator, or a reference to the Trinity.

12. -1-7 (a2, p. 918). KNOWLEDGE. DAYS OF EVIL. (Introversion and Repeated Alternation.)

u w | 1. Evil days. Approach. (Fig.), x y1 | 2-4. Figures. Luminaries, &c.


w | 7. Evil days. (Literal.)

evil days = days of the misfortune: i.e. affliction and death. Heb. nāā'ā'. Ap. 44. viii: i. p. the days described in following verses.

pleasure. See note on 3. 1. 9 keepers of the house: i.e. the arms of the body. The human body is often compared to a house (Isa. 38. 12. Job 4. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 1. 13). tremble. Occurs only here. Est. 5. 9 ("move"), and Hab. 2. 7 ("vex"). See Ap. 76. xii.


cess = fall, or become unfit for use. Heb. bā'ēl = a passage; prob. = the ear-passage. Occurs only in Solomon's writings. Here, v. 5. Prov. 7. 8. and Song 3. 2 (pl.), those that look out of the windows: i.e. eyes ("those" is feminine, agreeing with Heb. "eyes").

windows = lattices = the eyelids.

darkened = dimmed.

4 the doors = the openings: i.e. the mouth and ears.

streets = street (sing.).

sound of the grinding is low: i.e. the mastication

high = lofty, elevated.

ears shall be in the way: i.e. apprehensions

danger in journeying.

8 Or, &c. Now figures now (in e.) introduced, referring to the arrested (p. above) of death itself.

the silver cord: i.e. the spinal cord.

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THE SONG OF SOLOMON*
THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE†

(Introversion and Alternation.)

A  1.1-11. THE INTRODUCTION. THE SHULAMITE SEPARATED. TAKEN BY SOLOMON FROM HER HOME AND HER BELOVED (SHEPHERD) INTO THE ROYAL TENTS, PITCHED NEAR THEM.

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, lish\'lomoh is not the Genitive case, meaning "of Solomon", or "Solomon's" (v.1). The Preposition ל (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. 72, where we have the same word (lish\'lomoh) rendered "for Solomon". It may well mean concerning or relating to Solomon "the king's son". Moreover, the Relative Pronoun "which" (which = 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, 22, 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.