

The Book of
Ecclesiastes
 or, *The Preacher*

2 All things on earth declared vain. 12 Solomon's experience. 3:1 A time for everything.

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

2 Vanity of vanities, saith *the Preacher*; vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity. 3 What profit hath man of all his labor wherein he laboreth under the sun? 4 *One* generation goeth, and *another* generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever. 5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to its place where it ariseth. 6 The wind goeth toward *the* south, and turneth about unto *the* north; it turneth about continually in its course, and the wind returneth again to its circuits. 7 All the ²rivers run into the sea, yet the sea *is* not full; unto *the* place whither the rivers go, thither they go again. 8 ³All things *are* full of weariness; man cannot utter *it*: *the* eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor *the* ear filled with hearing. 9 That which hath been *is that* which shall be; and that which hath been done *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun. 10 Is there a thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been long ago, in *the* ages which were before us. 11 *There is* no remembrance of the former *generations*; neither shall there be *any* remembrance of the latter *generations* that are to come, among *those* that shall come after.

12 *I the Preacher* was king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven: it is a sore travail that God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith. 14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and ⁴a striving after wind. 15 *That which is* crooked cannot be made straight; and ⁵that which is wanting cannot be numbered. 16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I have gotten me great wisdom ⁶above all that were before me ⁷in Jerusalem; yes, my heart ⁸hath had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. 17 And I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also was a striving after wind. 18 For in much

wisdom *is* much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

2 I said in my heart, Come now, I will prove thee with mirth; ⁹therefore enjoy ¹⁰pleasure: and behold, this also *was* vanity. 2 I said of laughter, *It is* mad; and of mirth, What doeth it? 3 I searched in my heart how to cheer my flesh with wine, my heart yet ¹¹guiding *me* with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what it *was* good for the sons of men that they should do under heaven ¹²all *the* days of their life. 4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; 5 I made me gardens and parks, and I planted trees in them of all *kinds of* fruit; 6 I made me pools of water, to water therefrom *the* forest where trees were reared; 7 I bought men-servants and maid-servants, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of herds and flocks, above all that were before me in Jerusalem; 8 I gathered me also silver and gold, and *the* treasure of kings and of the provinces; I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and *the* delights of the sons of men, ¹³musical instruments, and that of all sorts. 9 So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom ¹⁴remained with me. 10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced because of all my labor; and this was my portion from all my labor. 11 Then I looked on all *the* works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and, behold, all *was* vanity and a striving after wind, and *there was* no profit under the sun.

12 And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness and folly: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh ¹⁵after the king? *even* that which hath been done long ago. 13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness. 14 The wise man's eyes *are* in his head and the fool walketh in darkness: and yet I perceived that one event happeneth

¹ *Hb.* Qoheleth [*The Hebrew name for this book.*]

² *Or,* torrents

³ *Or,* All words are feeble;

⁴ *Or,* a feeding on wind (*see* Hos 12:1) *or,* vexation of spirit *And so elsewhere.*

⁵ *Hb.* defect

⁶ *Or,* yes, more than all that were before me

⁷ *Hb.* over

⁸ *Hb.* hath seen abundantly wisdom and knowledge.

⁹ *Or,* and thou shalt enjoy

¹⁰ *Or,* good:

¹¹ *Or,* holding its course with wisdom,

¹² *Hb.* the number of days of their life.

¹³ *Or,* concubines very many, *ASV says* The meaning of the Hebrew is very uncertain.

¹⁴ *Or,* stood by me.

¹⁵ *Or,* after the king, *even* him whom they made *king* long ago? *or,* after the king, in those things which have been already done?

to them all. 15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so will it happen even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then said I in my heart, that this also is vanity. 16 For of the wise man, even as of the fool, *there is* no remembrance for ever; seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. And how doth the wise *man* die even as the fool! 17 So I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun *was* grievous unto me; for all *is* vanity and a striving after wind.

18 And I hated all my labor wherein I labored under the sun, seeing that I must leave it unto the man that shall be after me. 19 And who knoweth whether he will be a wise *man* or a fool? yet will he have rule over all my labor wherein I have labored, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun. This also *is* vanity. 20 Therefore I turned about to cause my heart to despair concerning all the labor wherein I had labored under the sun. 21 For there is a man whose labor *is* with wisdom, and with knowledge, and with ¹⁶skilfulness; yet to a man that hath not labored therein shall he ¹⁷leave it *for* his portion. This also *is* vanity and a great evil. 22 For what hath *a* man of all his labor, and of *the* ¹⁸striving of his heart, wherein he laboreth under the sun? 23 For all his days *are but* sorrows, and his travail is grief; yes, even in the night his heart taketh no rest. This also *is* vanity.

24 *There is* nothing better for *a* man *than* that he should eat and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it *is* from the hand of God. 25 For who can eat, or who can ¹⁹have enjoyment, ²⁰more than I? 26 For to *the* man that pleaseth him *God* giveth 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* pleaseth God. This also *is* vanity and a striving *after* wind.

3 For every *thing there is* a season, and a time for every ²¹purpose under heaven: 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 seek, 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 for war, and a time for peace.

¹⁶ *Or*, success;

¹⁷ *Hb.* give

¹⁸ *Or*, vexation

¹⁹ *Or*, hasten *thereto*,

²⁰ Sept., Aram. *read* apart from him

²¹ *Or*, matter

9 What profit hath he *that* worketh in that wherein he laboreth? 10 I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith. 11 He hath made every *thing* beautiful in its time: also he hath set ²²eternity in their heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work that God hath done from *the* beginning even to *the* end. 12 I know that *there is* nothing better for them, than to rejoice, and ²³to do good *so long as* they live. 13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy good in all his labor, *is the* gift of God. 14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God hath done *it*, that *men* should fear before him. 15 ²⁴That which is hath been long ago; and that which is to be hath long ago been: and God seeketh again that which is ²⁵passed away.

16 And moreover I saw under the sun in the place of justice, *that* wickedness *was* there; and in the place of righteousness, *that* wickedness *was* there. 17 I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked; for *there is* a time there for every ²⁶purpose and for every work. 18 ²⁷I said in my heart, *It is* because of the sons of men that God may prove them, and that they may see that they themselves are *but as* beasts. 19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as *the* one dieth, so dieth *the* other; yes, they all have one ²⁸breath; and man hath no preeminence above the beasts: for all *is* vanity. 20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. 21 Who knoweth *the* spirit ²⁹of man, ³⁰whether it goeth upward, and *the* spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth? 22 Wherefore I saw that *there is* nothing better, than that man should rejoice in his works; for that *is* his portion: for who shall bring him *back* to see what shall be after him?

4 Then I returned and saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and, behold, 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 I praised the dead that have been long dead more than the living that are yet alive; 3 yes, ³¹better than them both *did I esteem* him that hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

²² *Or*, the world

²³ *Or*, to get good

²⁴ *Or*, That which hath been is now;

²⁵ *Hb.* driven away

²⁶ *Or*, matter

²⁷ *Or*, I said in my heart concerning the sons of men,
It is that God may prove them,

²⁸ *Or*, spirit;

²⁹ *Hb.* of the sons of Adam, *or*, of the sons of men,

³⁰ Sopherim *changed to* that goeth (*both times*)

³¹ *Or*, better than they both *is* he that hath not yet been,

4 Then I saw all labor and every ³²skilful work, that ³³for this a man is envied of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind. 5 The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. 6 Better is a handful, ³⁴with quietness, than two handfuls with labor and striving after wind.

7 Then I returned and saw vanity under the sun. 8 There is one *that is alone*, and *he hath* not a second; yes, he hath neither son nor brother; yet *is there* no end of all his labor, neither are his eyes satisfied with riches. For whom then, *saieth he*, do I labor, and deprive my soul of good? This also is vanity, yes, it is a sore travail. 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him *that is alone* when he falleth, and *hath* not another to lift him up. 11 Again, if two lie together, then they have warmth; but how can one be warm *alone*? 12 And if a man prevail against him *that is alone*, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king, who knoweth not how to receive admonition any more. 14 For out of prison he came forth to be king; yes, even in his kingdom *he was* born poor. 15 I saw all the living *that walk* under the sun, that they were with the youth, the second, that stood up in his stead. 16 ³⁵*There was* no end of all the people, *even* of all them over whom he was: yet they *that come* after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

5 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God; for to draw nigh to hear is better than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they know not that they do evil. 2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter ³⁶*any* thing before God; for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. 3 For a dream cometh with a multitude of ³⁷business, and a fool's voice with a multitude of words. 4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou vowest. 5 Better is *it* that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay. 6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the ³⁸angel, that it *was* an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands? 7 For in *the* multitude of dreams *there are* vanities, and in many words: but fear thou God.

³² Or, successful

³³ Or, it cometh of a man's rivalry with his neighbor.

³⁴ Or, of (both times)

³⁵ Or, There is no end, in the mind of all the people, to all that hath been before them; they also that come

³⁶ Or, a word before God;

³⁷ Or, travail

³⁸ Or, messenger of God, See Mal 2:7.

8 If thou seest *the* oppression of *the* poor, and *the* violent taking away of justice and righteousness in ³⁹a province, marvel not at the matter: for *one* higher than *the* high regardeth; and *there are* higher than they. 9 ⁴⁰Moreover *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 also is vanity. 11 When goods increase, they are increased that eat them; and what advantage is *there* to *the* owner thereof, save *the* beholding of *them* with his eyes? 12 *The* sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the fulness of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 There is a grievous evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept by *the* owner thereof to his hurt: 14 and those riches perish by evil adventure; and if he hath begotten a son, *there is* nothing in his hand. 15 As he came forth from his mother's womb, naked shall he go again as he came, and shall take nothing for his labor, which he may carry away in his hand. 16 And this also is a grievous evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that he laboreth for the wind? 17 All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he is sore vexed, and *hath* sickness and wrath.

18 Behold, ⁴¹*that* which I have seen *to be* good and *to be* comely is for *one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy good in all his labor, wherein he laboreth under the sun, ⁴²all *the* days of his life which God hath given him: for this is his portion. 19 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 labor; this is *the* gift of God. 20 For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth *him* in *the* joy of his heart.

6 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is heavy upon men: 2 a man to whom God giveth riches, wealth, and honor, so that he lacketh nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but an alien eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil disease. 3 If a man beget a hundred *children*, and live many years, so that *the* days of his years are many, but his soul be not filled with good, and moreover he have no burial; I say, *that* an untimely birth is better than he: 4 for it cometh in vanity, and departeth in darkness, and *the* name thereof is covered with darkness; 5 moreover it hath not seen

³⁹ Or, the state,

⁴⁰ Or, But *the* profit of a land every way is a king *that* maketh himself servant to *the* field (*or*, is a king over *the* cultivated field).

⁴¹ Or, *that* which I have seen: *it is* good and comely for *one* to eat and to drink,

⁴² *Hb.* the number of *the* days of his life etc.

the sun ⁴³nor known it; ⁴⁴this hath rest rather than the other: 6 yes, though he live a thousand years twice told, and yet enjoy no good, do not all go to one place?

7 All the labor of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the ⁴⁵soul is not filled. 8 For what advantage hath the wise more than the fool? ⁴⁶or what hath the poor man, that knoweth how to walk before the living? 9 Better *is* the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul: this also *is* vanity and a striving after wind.

10 ⁴⁷Whatsoever hath been, the name thereof was given long ago; and it is known what ⁴⁸man *is*; neither can he contend with him that is mightier than he. 11 Seeing there are many ⁴⁹things that increase vanity, what *is* man the better? 12 For who knoweth what *is* good for man in *his* life, ⁵⁰all 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 oil; and the day of death, than the day of one's birth. 2 *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* better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart *is* made ⁵¹glad. 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 ⁵²Surely extortion maketh a wise man foolish; and a bribe destroyeth the understanding.

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof; and the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit. 9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be ⁵³angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. 10 Say not thou, What *is* the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire ⁵⁴wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom ⁵⁵*is* as good as an inheritance; yes, more excellent *is* it for them that see the sun. 12 For wisdom

⁴³ Or, neither had any knowledge;

⁴⁴ Or, it is better with this than with the other:

⁴⁵ Or, appetite or, desire And in vs. 9.

⁴⁶ Or, or the poor man that hath understanding, in walking before the living

⁴⁷ Or, Whatsoever he be, his name was given him long ago, and it is known that he *is* man;

⁴⁸ Hb. Adam See Ge 2:7.

⁴⁹ Or, words

⁵⁰ Hb. the number of the days of etc.

⁵¹ Or, better.

⁵² Or, For

⁵³ Or, vexed; for vexation etc.

⁵⁴ Hb. out of wisdom concerning this.

⁵⁵ Or, *is* good together with an inheritance, and profitable unto them that see the sun.

is a defence, even as money *is* ⁵⁶a defence; but the excellency of knowledge *is*, that wisdom preserveth the life of him that hath 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, and in the day of adversity consider; yes, God hath made the one side by side with the other, to the end that man should not find out any thing *that shall be* after him.

15 All *this* have I seen in my days of vanity: there is a righteous man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth *his* life in his evil-doing. 16 Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself? 17 Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time? 18 *It is* good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yes, also from that withdraw not thy hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth from them all.

19 Wisdom *is* a ⁵⁷strength to the wise man more than ten rulers that are in a city. 20 Surely *there is* not a righteous man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not. 21 Also ⁵⁸take not 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 ⁵⁹proved in wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it *was* far from me. 24 That which ⁶⁰*is*, is far off and exceeding deep; who can find it out? 25 I turned about, and my heart *was set* to know and to search out, and to seek wisdom and the reason of things, and to know ⁶¹that wickedness *is* folly, and that foolishness *is* madness: 26 and I find more bitter than death the woman ⁶²whose heart *is* snares and nets, and whose hands *are* bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. 27 Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher, ⁶³laying one thing to another, to find out the account; 28 which my soul still seeketh, but I have not found: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found. 29 Behold, this only have I found: that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

8 Who *is* as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? A man's wisdom maketh his

⁵⁶ So Massoretic, Vg. Sept., Targ. read as a shadow;

⁵⁷ So Massoretic, Aram., Vg. 4QQoh^a Sept. read help

⁵⁸ Hb. give not thy heart unto all the words

⁵⁹ Or, tried by wisdom:

⁶⁰ Or, hath been,

⁶¹ Or, the wickedness of folly, and foolishness which *is* madness:

⁶² Or, who *is* a snare, and her heart *is* as nets,

⁶³ Or, weighing one thing after another, to find out the reason;

face to shine, and *the*⁶⁴ hardness of his face is changed. 2 I *counsel thee*, Keep the king's command, and *that* in regard of *the* oath of God. 3 Be not hasty to go out of his presence; persist not in an evil thing: for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. 4 For *the* king's word *hath* power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou? 5 Whoso keepeth *the* commandment shall know no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth time and judgment: 6 for to every⁶⁵ purpose there is a time and judgment; because the⁶⁶ misery of man *is* great upon him: 7 for he knoweth not that which shall be; ⁶⁷for who can tell him how it shall be? 8 *There is* no man that hath power over the⁶⁸ breath to retain *his* breath; neither *hath he* power over the day of death; and *there is* no discharge⁶⁹ in war: neither shall wickedness deliver him that is given to it.

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: ⁷⁰*there is* a time wherein *one* man hath power over another⁷¹ to his hurt. 10 So I saw *the* wicked buried,⁷² and they came to *the* grave; and they that had done right went away from *the* holy place, and were forgotten in the city: this also *is* vanity. 11 Because sentence against *an* evil work is not executed speedily, therefore *the* heart of *the* sons of men is⁷³ fully set in them to do evil. 12 Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and prolong his *days* yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him: 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 are righteous *men* unto whom it happeneth according to *the* work of the wicked; again, there are 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 joyful: ⁷⁴for that shall abide with him in his labor *all the* days of his life which God hath given him under the sun.

⁶⁴ *Hb.* strength Sept. Aram. *read* impudent is hated.

⁶⁵ *Or*, matter

⁶⁶ *Or*, evil

⁶⁷ *Or*, for *even* when it cometh to pass, who shall declare it unto him?

⁶⁸ *Or*, spirit *or*, wind (*both times*)

⁶⁹ *Or*, in the battle:

⁷⁰ *Or*, what time one man had power *etc.*

⁷¹ *Or*, to his *own* hurt.

⁷² *Or*, who had come and gone away from *the* holy place; and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: *or*, and men came and went...

⁷³ *Or*, emboldened

⁷⁴ *Or*, and *that* this should accompany him

16 When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the⁷⁵ business that is done upon the earth, (⁷⁶for also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes,) 17 then I beheld all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because however much a man labor to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it*; yes moreover, though *a* wise *man* think to know *it*, yet shall he not be able to find *it*.

9 For all this I laid to my heart, ⁷⁷even to explore all this: that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God; whether *it be* love or hatred, man knoweth it not; all *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 to⁷⁸ 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* an evil in all that is done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yes 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 ⁷⁹For to him that is joined with 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 anything, neither have they any more a reward; for *the* memory of them is forgotten. 6 As well their love, as their hatred and their envy, is perished long ago; 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 hath already accepted thy works. 8 Let thy garments be always white; and let not thy head lack oil. 9 ⁸⁰Live joyfully with *the* wife whom thou lovest all *the* days of thy life of vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all thy days of vanity: for that *is* thy portion in life, and in thy labor wherein thou laborest under the sun. 10 Whatsoever thy hand⁸¹ findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, whither thou goest.

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 favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. 12 For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an

⁷⁵ *Or*, travail

⁷⁶ *Or*, how *that* neither by day nor by night do men see sleep with their eyes,

⁷⁷ Sept., Aram. *read* and my heart saw all this:

⁷⁸ *So* Massoretic. Sept., Aram, Vg. *insert* the evil; to

⁷⁹ *Hb*^{mg} *reads* For who is exempted? With all *etc.*
or, For who can choose? With all *etc.*

⁸⁰ *Or*, Enjoy life *Hb.* See life

⁸¹ *Or*, attaineth to do by thy strength, *that* do;

evil net, and as the birds *that* are caught in the snare, *even* so will the sons of men be snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

13 I have also seen wisdom under the sun on this wise, 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 he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. 16 Then said I, Wisdom *is* better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

17 *The* words of *the* wise heard in quiet *are* better than *the* cry of him that ruleth among fools. 18 Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroyeth much good.

10 Dead flies cause *the* oil of *the* perfumer ⁸²to send forth an evil odor; *so doth* a little folly ⁸³outweigh wisdom *and* honor. 2 A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left. 3 Yes also, when *the* fool walketh by the way, his ⁸⁴understanding faileth *him*, and he saith ⁸⁵to every one *that* he *is* a fool. 4 If *the* spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for ⁸⁶gentleness allayeth great offences.

5 There is an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, as it were an error *which* proceedeth from the ruler: 6 folly is set in great ⁸⁷dignity, and *the* rich sit in a low place. 7 I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking like servants upon the earth.

8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh through a wall a serpent shall bite him. 9 Whoso ⁸⁸heweth out stones shall be hurt therewith; *and* he that cleaveth wood is endangered thereby. 10 If the iron be blunt, and one do not whet *the* edge, then must he use more strength: but wisdom *is* profitable to direct. 11 ⁸⁹If the serpent bite ⁹⁰before *it is* charmed, then *is* there no advantage in the charmer.

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 multiplieth words: *yet* man knoweth not what shall be; and that which shall be after him, who can tell him?

⁸² *Or*, to stink and putrefy;

⁸³ *Or*, *him that is* valued for wisdom *and* honor.

⁸⁴ *Hb.* heart

⁸⁵ *Or*, of

⁸⁶ *Or*, calmness leaveth great sins undone.

⁸⁷ *Hb.* heights,

⁸⁸ *Or*, moveth stones shall be hurt therewith;

⁸⁹ *Or*, Surely the serpent will bite where *there is* no enchantment; and the slanderer *is* no better.

⁹⁰ *Hb.* without enchantment,

15 The labor of fools wearierth every one of them; for he knoweth not how to go to *the* city.

16 Woe to thee, O land, when thy king *is* a ⁹¹child, and thy princes eat in the morning! 17 Happy *art* thou, O land, when thy king *is* ⁹²*the* son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness! 18 By slothfulness the ⁹³roof sinketh in; and through idleness of *the* hands the house leaketh. 19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh glad *the* life; ⁹⁴and money answereth all *things*. 20 Revile not *the* king, no, not in thy thought; and revile not *the* rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the heavens shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell *the* matter.

11 ⁹⁵Cast thy bread ⁹⁶upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days. 2 ⁹⁷Give a portion to seven, yes, even unto 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 a tree fall ⁹⁸toward the south, or toward the north, *in the* place where the tree falleth, there shall it 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 ⁹⁹wind, *nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the work of God who doeth all. 6 In the morning sow thy seed, and towards the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether 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 ¹⁰⁰Yes, if a man live many years, let him rejoice in them all; ¹⁰¹but *let him* remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity.

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 thy heart, and in *the* sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment. 10 Therefore remove ¹⁰²sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh; for youth and the dawn of life *are* vanity.

⁹¹ *Or*, servant,

⁹² *Or*, a free man,

⁹³ *Or*, rafters sink;

⁹⁴ Lamsa *says*, money brings one low and causes him to go astray in all things.

⁹⁵ *Or*, Send forth thy bread

⁹⁶ *Hb.* upon *the* face of the waters;

⁹⁷ *Or*, Divide a portion into seven, yes, even into eight;

⁹⁸ *Lit.* in (*both times*)

⁹⁹ *Or*, breath, *or*, spirit,

¹⁰⁰ *Or*, For

¹⁰¹ *Or*, and remember the days of darkness,

¹⁰² *Or*, vexation *or*, provocation

12 Remember also thy Creator in *the* days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and *the* years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; 2 before the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars, are darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; 3 in the day when *the* keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the ¹⁰³grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows shall be darkened, 4 and *the* double gates shall be shut in the street; when *the* sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at *the* voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; 5 yes, they shall be afraid ¹⁰⁴of *that* which is high, and terrors *shall be* in the way; and the almond-tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper ¹⁰⁵shall be a burden, and ¹⁰⁶desire shall ¹⁰⁷fail; because man goeth to his ¹⁰⁸lasting home, and the mourners go about the streets: 6 before the silver cord is ¹⁰⁹loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or *the* pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, 7 and the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the ¹¹⁰breath returneth unto God who gave it. 8 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all *is* vanity.

9 And further, because *the* Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he ¹¹¹pondered, and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs. 10 *The* Preacher sought to find out ¹¹²acceptable words, and *that* which was written uprightly, *even* words of truth.

11 *The* words of *the* wise *are* as goads; and as nails well fastened *are the word of the* ¹¹³masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd. 12 ¹¹⁴And furthermore, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much study *is* a weariness of *the* flesh.

13 ¹¹⁵*This is the* end of *the* matter; all hath been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for ¹¹⁶*this is the* whole *duty* of man. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, ¹¹⁷with every hidden thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

¹⁰³ *Or*, grinding women *or*, teeth

¹⁰⁴ *Or*, of danger from on high,

¹⁰⁵ *Or*, shall drag itself along,

¹⁰⁶ *Or*, the caperberry

¹⁰⁷ *Or*, burst;

¹⁰⁸ *Or*, everlasting

¹⁰⁹ *Or*, snapped asunder,

¹¹⁰ *Or*, spirit *or*, wind *Hb.* ruach

¹¹¹ *Or*, gave ear,

¹¹² *Hb.* words of delight,

¹¹³ *Or*, collectors of sentences,

¹¹⁴ *Or*, And *as for* more than these, my son, be warned:

¹¹⁵ *Or*, Let us hear *the* conclusion of the whole matter:

¹¹⁶ *Or*, *this is the duty* of all men.

¹¹⁷ *Or*, concerning

End of the Book of Ecclesiastes