

Book of Ecclesiastes

Chapter 2

Douay-Rheims Bible

Ecclesiastes Chapter 2

The vanity of pleasures, riches, and worldly labours.

2:1. I said in my heart: I will go, and abound with delights, and enjoy good things. And I saw that this also was vanity.

2:2. Laughter I counted error: and to mirth I said: Why art thou vainly deceived?

2:3. I thought in my heart, to withdraw my flesh from wine, that I might turn my mind to wisdom, and might avoid folly, till I might see what was profitable for the children of men: and what they ought to do under the sun, all the days of their life.

2:4. I made me great works, I built me houses, and planted vineyards,

2:5. I made gardens, and orchards, and set them with trees of all kinds,

2:6. And I made me ponds of water, to water therewith the wood of the young trees,

2:7. I got me menservants, and maidservants, and had a great family: and herds of oxen, and great flocks of sheep, above all that were before me in Jerusalem:

2:8. I heaped together for myself silver and gold, and the wealth of kings, and provinces: I made me singing men, and singing women, and the delights of the sons of men, cups and vessels to serve to pour out wine:

2:9. And I surpassed in riches all that were before me in Jerusalem: my wisdom also remained with me.

2:10. And whatsoever my eyes desired, I refused them not: and I withheld not my heart from enjoying every pleasure, and delighting itself in the things which I had prepared: and esteemed this my portion, to make use of my own labour.

2:11. And when I turned myself to all the works which my hands had wrought, and to the labours wherein I had laboured in vain, I saw in all things vanity, and vexation of mind, and that nothing was lasting under the sun.

2:12. I passed further to behold wisdom, and errors and folly, (What is man, said I that he can follow the King his maker?)

2:13. And I saw that wisdom excelled folly, as much as light differeth from darkness.

2:14. The eyes of a wise man are in his head: the fool walketh in darkness: and I learned that they were to die both alike.

2:15. And I said in my heart: If the death of the fool and mine shall be one, what doth it avail me, that I have applied myself more to the study of wisdom? And speaking with my own mind, I perceived that this also was vanity.

2:16. For there shall be no remembrance of the wise no more than of the fool forever, and the times to come shall cover all things together with oblivion: the learned dieth in like manner as the unlearned.

2:17. And therefore I was weary of my life, when I saw that all things under the sun are evil, and all vanity and vexation of spirit.

2:18. Again I hated all my application wherewith I had earnestly laboured under the sun, being like to have an heir after me,

2:19. Whom I know not whether he will be a wise man or a fool, and he shall have rule over all my labours with which I have laboured and been solicitous: and is there anything so vain?

2:20. Wherefore I left off and my heart renounced labouring anymore under the sun.

2:21. For when a man laboureth in wisdom, and knowledge, and carefulness, he leaveth what he hath gotten to an idle man: so this also is vanity, and a great evil.

2:22. For what profit shall a man have of all his labour, and vexation of spirit, with which he hath been tormented under the sun?

2:23. All his days are full of sorrows and miseries, even in the night he doth not rest in mind: and is not this vanity?

2:24. Is it not better to eat and drink, and to shew his soul good things of his labours? and this is from the hand of God.

2:25. Who shall so feast and abound with delights as I?

2:26. God hath given to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he hath given vexation, and superfluous care, to heap up and to gather together, and to give it to him that hath pleased God: but this also is vanity, and a fruitless solicitude of the mind.