**CHAPTER** **16**

*It is better to have none than many wicked children. Of the justice and mercy of God. His ways are unsearchable.*

**1** Rejoice not in ungodly children, if they be multiplied: neither be delighted in them, if the fear of God be not with them.

**2** Trust not to their life, and respect not their labours.

**3** For better is one that feareth God, than a thousand ungodly children.

**4** And it is better to die without children, than to leave ungodly children.

**5** By one that is wise a country shall be inhabited, the tribe of the ungodly shall become desolate.

**6** Many such things hath my eyes seen, and greater things than these my ear hath heard.

**7** In the congregation of sinners a fire shall be kindled, and in an unbelieving nation wrath shall flame out.

**8** The ancient giants did not obtain pardon for their sins, who were destroyed trusting to their own strength:

**9** And he spared not the place where Lot sojourned, but abhorred them for the pride of their word.

**10** He had not pity on them, destroying the whole nation that extolled themselves in their sins.

**11** So did he with the six hundred thousand footmen, who were gathered together in the hardness of their heart: and if one had been stiffnecked, it is a wonder if he had escaped unpunished:

**12** For mercy and wrath are with him. He is mighty to forgive, and to pour out indignation:

**13** According as his mercy is, so his correction judgeth a man according to his works.

**14** The sinner shall not escape in his rapines, and the patience of him that sheweth mercy shall not be put off.

**15** All mercy shall make a place for every man according to the merit of his works, and according to the wisdom of his sojournment.

**16** Say not: I shall be hidden from God, and who shall remember me from on high?

**17** In such a multitude I shall not be known: for what is my soul in such an immense creation?

**18** Behold the heaven, and the heavens of heavens, the deep, and all the earth, and the things that are in them, shall be moved in his sight,

**19** The mountains also, and the hills, and the foundations of the earth: when God shall look upon them, they shall be shaken with trembling.

**20** And in all these things the heart is senseless: and every heart is understood by him.

**21** And his ways who shall understand, and the storm, which no eye of man shall see?

**22** For many of his works are hidden: but the works of his justice who shall declare? or who shall endure? for the testament is far from some, and the examination of all is in the end.

**23** He that wanteth understanding thinketh vain things: and the foolish, and erring man, thinketh foolish things.

**24** Hearken to me, my son, and learn the discipline of understanding, and attend to my words in thy heart.

**25** And I will shew forth good doctrine in equity, and will seek to declare wisdom: and attend to my words in thy heart, whilst with equity of spirit I tell thee the virtues that God hath put upon his works from the beginning, and I shew forth in truth his knowledge.

**26** The works of God are done in judgment from the beginning, and from the making of them he distinguished their parts, and their beginnings in their generations.

**27** He beautified their works for ever, they have neither hungered, nor laboured, and they have not ceased from their works.

**28** Nor shall any of them straiten his neighbour at any time.

**29** Be not thou incredulous to his word.

**30** After this God looked upon the earth, and filled it with his goods.

**31** The soul of every living thing hath shewn forth before the face thereof, and into it they return again.