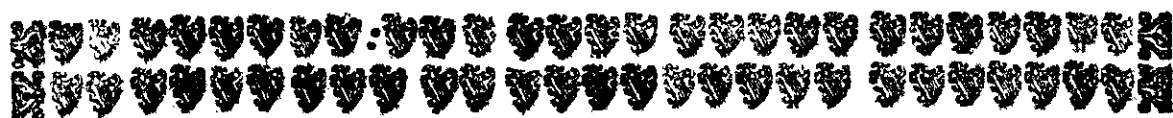


have done virtue, or, gathered riches] but thou excellest them all. [these and the former words of the verse, are the words of the husband and his sons.]

30 Schin. *Favour*, [Meaning, outward comeliness, and grace, or handsomness, which some women-kind might have in or about them. See, *Nahum* 3. 4.] *is deceit*, [Hebr. *a lie*, or *falsehood*, to wit, because they are deceived that rely upon it, as upon a sure and lasting estate; and because oftentimes great and grosse vices are hidden under it] *and beauty (is) vanity*; [that is, fading, and soon or easily vanishing, see *Job* 15. on verse 31.] (but) *a woman that feareth the LORD*, [or *a woman of the fear of the Lord*; that is, a woman that

is indued with the fear of the Lord] *she shall be praised*.

31 Tau. *Give her of the fruit* [Of the word, *fruit*, see above, chap. 1. on verse 31.] *of her hands*: [that is, works. To give something in words, is to praise, or commend, *Jerem.* 13. 16. he intimateth by the fore-mentioned words, that others should from the work of her hands take matter for to praise and commend her] *and let her works praise her in the gates*. [that is, in the publick Congregations and Assemblies of the people, which were wont to be in the gates, where Judgment was kept, and Justice administered.]



THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES, OR, OF THE PREACHER: CALLED in HEBREW KOHLETH.

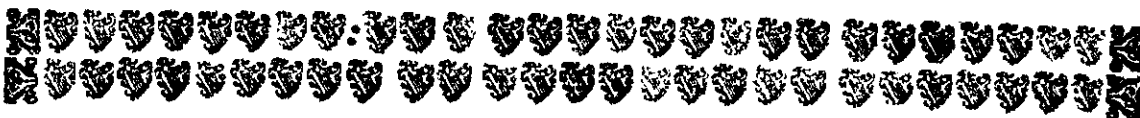
The Argument of this B o o k.

MAny among the Learned are of opinion, that Salomon wrote this Book in his old age, after that he had for many years together turned away from the right path of true godlines; but was now again converted unto God. (See the annotat. 2 Chron. 11. on v. 17.) Wherein he by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, before the whole Congregation of God, testifieth his earnest sorrow and repentance for the former part of his life, loathing and abhorring it, as being vanity of vanities, whereby a man is not able to attain unto temporal rest, and satisfaction or contentment of mind, much less unto the highest and chiefeſt good, which is everlasting ſalvation. In like manner his intent and purpose is, by his own example and pattern to lead all men to vertue and piety. To this end and purpose he doth in the first place make a ſhort recital of the whole course of his life, and wherein he had chiefly taken his delight and recreation. Then in the ſecond place he relateth alſo, that he heeded and obſerved the praſtiſe and courſe, about which many men did moſt buſie and trouble themſelves in this life, being for the moſt part vanities, yea alſo wicked and ungodly deviſes, he teſtifying that the All-wiſe and Almighty God diſreſteth and governeth all things according to his will and pleaſure, and that things do not fall out in the world by fortune or chance, as many men do imagine. Laſtly, Salomon exhorteth all men to fear and ſerve God uprightly, and to praſtiſe and perform all good works and duties, rejoycing in an honeſt and godly manner in the things which they do enjoy, and have received at the bountifull hand of God, eſpecially while they are yet young, ſtrong and of perfect memory and underſtanding; having at all times the ſevere and righteous judgement of God before their eyes.

As for the Title of this Book, the ſame is in the Hebrew Kohleth, in the Greek Eccleſiaſtes. Kohleth cometh from Kohal, that is, to gather, and it ſignifieth as much as gathering; to wit, a gathering ſoul; that is, perſon. All men by nature are like ſcattered ſheep; but God ſendeth his Miniſters forth as ſhepherds, for to gather them. Some are of opinion, that Kohleth is one of King Salomons proper names, which they conclude from thence, becauſe ever and anon in this Book it is ſaid in the maſculine gender, amar Kohleth. This is likewiſe the opinion of many among the Jewiſh Rabbins.

Now as concerning the Greek Title of this Book Eccleſiaſtes, that is, the Preacher, the ſame muſt not be ſo underſtood here, as if Salomon did give his mind that way, namely, to preach conſtantly before the Congregation of Gods people, (this was properly the office and duty of Prophets, Priests and Levites) but in that reſpect it is called Eccleſiaſtes or the Preacher, becauſe he doth as it were make a Sermon here in this Book, full of good and profitable doctrines and inſtructions. And it may very well be, that either he himſelf read the ſame, or cauſed and procured it to be read in a full meeting or aſſembly of the Church and people of God; Others underſtand by the word Eccleſiaſtes, one that maketh a ſpeech in the Congregation; as they are wont to do, who do publickly before the Congregation of the Faithfull openly confeſs the ſins they have committed.

ECCLE.



ECCLESIASTES.

CHAP. I.

Every thing is vanity and disquietnesse, both in respect of men themselves, and in respect of things that are done in the world, being altogether unconstant, transitory, and full of vexation; v. 1, &c. This the Preacher proveth by his own example, 12.

THe words of the Preacher, the son of David the King, at Jerusalem, [At Jerusalem was the Royal seat: but Solomon was King over the twelve tribes of the people of Israel, see below, v. 12.]

2 *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, [That is, the greatest vanity; as we say, King of Kings; that is, the greatest King; song of songs, that is, the highest song. See the Annotat. Gen. 9. on vers. 25. and Levit. 2. on v. 3. And understand these words so, that Solomon thereby signifieth, that all earthly things can no way help or benefit us, for to attain unto true happinesse or blessednesse] it is all vanity. [to wit, all that is done under the Sun, verse 3. Compare Psal. 62. 9. and 144. 4.]*

3 *What advantage [Or, surplussage, remainder, profit, gain; to wit, to attain unto quietnesse of mind, wherein every ones happinesse consisteth] hath a man of all his labour, [Or, troublesome labour; to wit, as well of the mind as of the body] which he laboureth under the Sun? [that is, about the transitory things of this world. As if he had said, none, no profit at all, so below, chap. 2. 22. and 3. 9.]*

4 *One generation goeth, and another generation cometh, [The meaning of these words is, the multitude of men or people that are now alive, they die and perish; so shall they likewise perish and die, that shall succeed and come after them from one age to another, and from one generation to another. See Psal. 12. 6. yea, all that is in the world, it is transitory and changeable; therefore can it not bring unto a man any true, real, substantial, or abiding happinesse] but the earth abideth for ever. [Or, is abiding, it perisheth not. It is as if he had said, The earth or the world perisheth not so, as the things do perish, that are alive and move in it. Otherwise, it is most certain, that the world shall also perish at last, see Psal. 102. 27. and 104. 5. and 119. 90. and 2 Pet. 3. on v. 10.]*

5 *The Sun also riseth, and the Sun goeth down, and he panteth after his place where he arose. [This is spoken by way of similitude, taken from a man that runneth apace (so that he gapeth for breath) to come to the place where he would be. See Psal. 56. on vers. 2. The*

meaning of this, and the next following verses seemeth to be this; All labour, both of the mind and body, in and about worldly affairs, maketh a man full of care and anxiety, so that he is in a continual motion, like the Sun, the air, and the rivers; therefore it cannot make a man happy.]

6 *He goeth toward the South, [To wit, from such time as he entereth into the celestial sign of Cancer, until he entereth into the sign of Capricorn; to wit, in Summer and Autumn] and he goeth about unto the North, [to wit, the other half year, from that day that he entereth into Capricorn, until he entereth into Cancer, namely, in Winter and the Spring] the wind goeth continually compassing about, [Heb. wheeling about, wheeling about] and the wind returneth again to his circuits, [blowing sometimes out of one, sometimes out of another Climate or part of the world.]*

7 *All the brooks [Understand under these, yea especially, the Rivers and water-streams] go into the Sea, yet the Sea waxeth not full; [to wit, so full, as that it should overflow the earth, but it continueth all in one condition, see Job 38. 10, 11. Psal. 104. 9.] unto the place whither the brooks go, thither going do they return again. [to wit, by or through the veins that run under the earth. The Preacher doth intimate hereby, that the Rivers are in a continual flux and reflux, or motion to and fro.]*

8 *All these things grow (so) weary, [Or, are (so) full of labour, or, toil,] that no man is able to utter it; [yea, neither able to comprehend it with his minde or understanding. And consequently, cannot the things that are seen and heard in the world, bring any true contentment or quietnesse of mind unto a man] the eye is not satisfied with seeing, neither is the ear filled with hearing.*

9 *That which hath been, the same shall be; and that which is done, the same shall be done: [So below, chap. 3. 15.] so that there is no new thing under the Sun. [To wit, as touching those things that are done in the world according to the common course of nature: but the case is otherwise concerning the extraordinary works of God.]*

10 *Is there any thing, whereof it may be said, See that it is new? it hath been already in the ages which were before us. [The meaning is, there is nothing new (though it may seem to be new) but it hath been also heretofore at one time or another.]*

11 *There is no remembrance of former things; [As if he had said, If so be there be any thing found which*

men call a new thing, it is from hence, because they do not well know all that is past, and that happened in former times and ages, because there is no remembrance of it; and of the following things which shall be, of them shall there be neither any remembrance with those that shall be after.

12 *I, the Preacher, was King over Israel at Jerusalem.* [As if he had said, I, being a great and mighty King, have had leisure and fit opportunity to do that, which its right way followeth, much more than any man else, who have not had that ability, wealth, opportunity, or knowledge to search and dive into all things, as I have had, see below, chap. 2. 5, 6, 7, 8, &c.]

13 *And I gave my heart to search and inquire with wisdom, into all things that are done under heaven:* [As well those that came forth according to the order of nature, 1 Kings 3, and 4. as those that happened against the common course of nature] *this business* [Heb. *evil business*, or trouble, or anxiety, which is called *evil* or *troublesome*, because a man busieth himself therewith, and enjoyeth not the right benefit thereof, because he can never attain to a full and perfect knowledge of all things, nor of the causes from whence they issue, as also because the putting in practice of humane knowledge is a very hard and difficult thing] *hath God given to the children of men, to perplex themselves therewith.* [or, to be busied therein, or therewith, or to vex themselves therein, or to trouble themselves thereby.]

14 *I beheld all the works that are done under the Sun, and behold, it was all vanity and vexation of spirit.* [That is, not a slight head-aching or head-breaking, but a vexation, gnawing, bickering, or consumption of the heart or mind. Oth. *feeding* or *nourishing* of mind, that is, a thing whereby a man is no more comforted and strengthened in his mind, then if he should feed and nourish his body with wind, see the like phrase, Jer. 22. 22. Hos. 12. 2.]

15 *That which is crooked cannot be made straight:* [To wit, by a mans own skill and understanding, or by humane industry, but God is able to do all things; therefore David prayeth, Lord, create in me a new spirit, see below, chap. 7. 13.] *and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.* [that is, there be so many defects and imperfections in the things of this world, as that they in no wise can be numbered or told.]

16 *I communed with mine (own) heart, saying, I have increased in wisdom, [Or, I am grown great and more abounding in wisdom; to wit, in the knowledge of natural things, and of the things that are done, and come to pass in the world, see 1 Kings 3. 12. and 4. 29 and 10 7, 23. Eccles. 2. 9.] above all those that have been before me at Jerusalem: and mine heart hath seen* [that is, experienced and found out, see Job 7. on v. 7.] *much wisdom and knowledge.*

17 *And I gave my heart to know wisdom and knowledge, madnesses and folly.* [That is, I was diligent and industrious, to know somewhat better, what the excellency of wisdom meant, by opposing thereunto, and as it were ballancing against it folly, which is contrary to wisdom, see Exod. 2. 12.] *I perceived that this also is a vexation of spirit.* [see above, on v. 14.]

18 *For in much wisdom is much grief:* [Or anger, or anguish, or dejection of mind; to wit, because those that excel in wisdom and understanding, do perceive many things which are repugnant and clean contrary to wisdom, and therefore do sore displease them: or also because the spirit of man (even of the wisest) cannot execute and accomplish his thoughts or intentions] *and he that increaseth* [Heb. *aljoyneth*, or *addeth*] *knowledge, the same increaseth pain.* [or painfulness, ache, grief, perplexity, that is, he that desireth to know much, he hath also much trouble and perplexity.]

CHAP. II.

Solomon sheweth by his own example, that true happiness consisteth not in the things that are pleasing to the flesh, as stately buildings, planting of trees, vineyards, gardens, v. 1, 2, &c. but in a quiet cheerful enjoyment of the mercies which God hath given unto man, verse 24, &c.

I said in mine heart, Go to now, [Heb. *go now*] I will prove thee with joy, therefore look on the thing that is good: [Heb. *look into the thing that is good*, that is, satisfy thy self with the thing that is good, which in this place is as much as, satisfy thy self with bodily delights, compare Luke 12. 19. Here Solomon speaketh to his own heart, as if he had said, I will once try, whether pleasures and worldly delights be the true and highest; whether they are able to bring true contentment of mind; and true real happiness, unto those that bathe themselves in them] *but behold, that also was vanity.* [to wit, as well as that which was related before, chap. 1. namely, the searching out of worldly things.]

2 *I said unto laughter, Thou art mad; and unto mirth,* [Meaning, carnal or worldly mirth] *thou art maddest this?* [or, why dost thou this? the meaning is, what benefit or advantage doth this worldly mirth bring? However it is not profitable, or available to reach true happiness. Understand this thus, that much and immoderate laughing, singing, skipping or dancing, is more seemly for a fool and a fantastick person, then for a wise and understanding man, Prov. 20. 1. but to laugh moderately at some times, and for some causes, is a thing not to be reproved.]

3 *I inquired* [Or, searched, or sought, or advised] *in mine heart,* [that is, with my self] *to sustain my flesh* [that is, my body] *in wine,* [or to draw wine, that is, to accustom and inure my self to drink wine. Oth. to give my flesh over unto wine] *(yet leading mine heart in wisdom) and to retain folly,* [as if he should say, I have purposed so to keep the wisdom (which God hath given me) in mine heart, as that notwithstanding I was also minded to give way unto folly, (to wit, by feeding deliciously, and by living in pleasures and delights) laying hold thereon, and retaining it. The meaning is, I have striven and endeavoured to live both in bodily pleasures and delights, and also in wisdom, uniting both wisdom and pleasure together; for here under the name of wine, all kind of dainty food, meat, and drink, yea, all manner of pleasures and delights must be understood] *till I should see what would be best for the children of men, which they should do under the heaven, (during the number of the days of their life.)*

4 *I made me great works,* [That is, structures, buildings, as immediately followeth, and also verse 5, 6. Heb. *I made my works great*; to wit, not onely for necessity, but also to shew my glory, and for delight] *I builded me houses, I planted me vineyards.* [to wit, in Bash, Hamon, Cant. 8. 11.]

5 *I made me gardens,* [To wit, wherein all sorts of herbs and flowers grew] *and gardens of pleasure,* [Heb. *Paradisim*; that is, *paradises*, which signify not ordinary common gardens, but gardens of pleasure and delight, especially Orchards] *and I planted trees in them, of all kind* [Heb. *of all*] *fruit.*

6 *I made me pools of waters,* [Understand such kind of pools, wherein there was alwayes water, both rain-water and spring-water] *to water therewith the wood that flourisheth with trees.*

7 *I got* [Or, I possessed, or gained, recovered] *servants and maidens, and I had children of (my) house:* [that is, children born in my house; to wit, of my servants

vants and maidens, compare, *Gen. 12. 5. and Gen. 14. 14. and 15. 3. and 17. 12.* also I had a great possession of oxen and sheep, [under these kinds are also other beasts understood, both great and small] more than all that had been at Jerusalem before me.

8 I gathered me also silver and gold [See 1 Kings 9. 28. and 10. 14, 21, 22, 26.] and the jewels of Kings, and of the Provinces: [that is, which might be found with some Kings, and in strange Provinces: or, that which with Kings, and in every Province was esteemed to be most precious] and I appointed [Heb. I made] me men-ingers and women-singers, and the delights of the children of men, musick-instruments, [or, musical harmony, or divers tunes of musical Instruments, or Caroches, or choice, very beautiful women taken captive in war; to wit, to minister unto me in all things whereunto women are fit. The Hebrew word is found no where else but here, therefore it is so variously rendered] yea, all sorts of Musick-Instruments.

9 And I became great, and increased more then any man, that had been before me at Jerusalem: also my wisdom [That is, the wisdom wherewith God had indued me above all others] remained with me. [Heb. stood, that is, consisted, or remained constant, or stedfast with me. The meaning is, although I had all the afore-mentioned riches and power, yet did I not therefore let wisdom go, but continued notwithstanding still in my wise and discreet government, compare above, v. 3.]

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired, I withdrew it not from them: I withheld not mine heart from any joy, but mine heart rejoiced because of all my labour: [That is, because of the goods or things which I had effected and produced by my labour] and this was my portion of all my labour. [That is, all that I enjoyed of all my travel, was a transitory, and without joy soon gone, see below, chap. 5. on v. 17.]

11 Then I turned me to all my works, which mine hands had made, and to the labour which I working had laboured: behold, it was all vanity and vexation of spirit, [see above, chap. 1. 14.] and there was no advantage therein under the Sun. [that is, in any visible and transitory things.]

12 After that I turned my self to behold [That is, exactly to observe] wisdom, also madneses and folly: [that is, I gave my self to the consideration of wisdom and folly, which I had tried, and had had experience of, to judge with my self which was the most excellent] for how should a man that should come after the King, [that is, me] (do) that which is already done? [as if he should say, How should he be able to do that, which I, who am a great and mighty King, have done? Oth. for what (should) the man (do,) that shall come after the King? (even) that which hath been already done. The meaning is, if there be any man that thinketh that I, who am so mighty and wise a King, have not understood or experienced all things aright, and that in that regard there may yet be another way and means to attain unto true happiness, he erreth greatly; he shall finde nothing, else then what I have already delivered concerning it: every one may herein safely rely upon my word.]

13 Then I saw, that wisdom hath excellency above folly, as light hath excellency above darkness. [The meaning is, though all that we do is meer vanity, yet wisdom is to be esteemed so much more then folly, as light is to be esteemed above darkness.]

14 The eyes of the wise man are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness: [That is, he knoweth not, how he shall order his affairs. The meaning is, that a wise man is well advised, and goeth prudently about his business; but a foolish man is unadvised and imprudent in all his affairs, see Prov 8. 1. and 17. 24.] then I perceived also that one kind of chance happeneth to them all. [That is, to them both, as well to the wise man, as

to the fool; to wit, as much as concerneth that which befalleth them in this present life: as there are divers calamities, sicknesses, diseases, and aches or pains of the body, as also death it self. Compare herewith, Psal. 49. 11.]

15 Therefore said I in mine heart, [To wit, judging according to the nature and condition of things, which men see daily happen before their eyes] As it happeneth to the fool, (so) shall it also happen to my self: [That is, I am as well subject to all kind of miseries and calamities, and shall as well die as the fool, yea as all other men] Why therefore do I seek more after wisdom? [that is, why then did I labour and endeavour more to get wisdom then other men have done? Or, Why should I then seek more after wisdom? As if he should say, seeing death will seize upon me, as well as upon all others, what will humane wisdom avail me? what benefit shall I have by it?] then spake I in mine heart, that the same also is vanity.

16 For there will be no more remembrance of a wise man than of a fool for ever. [Heb. There is no remembrance of the wise with the fool for ever. This serveth to confirm that which was even now asserted. The meaning is, As all men are mortal, so doth also, in time, the remembrance of one man perish, as well as of another, yea of all men in general. Although the memory of those, whose names and acts are upon Record in the Word of God and in Histories, still remaineth and abideth with many] seeing that which now is, in the days to come is quite forgotten: and how dieth the wise man with the fool? [that is, as well as the fool, see Psal. 49. 11, 12. It is a question with admiration, as if he had said, It is a lamentable thing, that a brave wise man must die as well, and as soon, (and oftentimes (according to the judgment of the world) hath the like issue) as a fool. Oth. and how the wise dieth with the fool.]

17 Therefore I hated this life, [That is, it grieved me to live] for this work that is done under the Sun [that is, all the works and actions of men] seemed evil unto me: [Heb. was evil in, by, with, or upon me] for it is all vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 I hate likewise all my labour, which I had laboured under the Sun, [That is, my wealth or estate which I had gotten and gathered together by my labour] that I should leave it behind to a man that shall be after me. [that is, that shall succeed me in the Throne or Kingdom. As if he should say, I loathed and abhorred it; to wit, considering the vanity of riches, and the gathering of goods, which are gotten with so much trouble and care. And especially, in respect of the uncertainty, what heir a man shall have to inherit his goods after his death.]

19 For who knoweth, whether he shall be a wise man, or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour which I have laboured, and which I have managed wisely under the Sun. [That is, over all the goods, and excellent great commodities which I have purchased and gathered with much labour and travel. Rehabeam, the son and successor of Solomon, by his folly and imprudence lost the greatest part of his Kingdom, 1 King: 12. It may in some measure be gathered from this verse, that Solomon perceived well, that Rehabeam would not behave himself wisely, managing the government of the Kingdom] That is also vanity.

20 Therefore I turned my self about, to cause mine heart to despair of all the labour, which I have laboured under the Sun. [As if he had said, I am in my thoughts at last come to this, that I have not had in the least any contentment in all that I have gotten by my slow labour and travel. See v. 18.]

21 For there is a man, whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in aptness: yet to a man that hath not laboured therein, shall he deliver it: [to wit, his labour]

that is, all the estate that he hath gotten and gained by his labour] for his portion: [the meaning is, it is no wonder, that this thing grieveeth me, seeing there is no man of never so poor and mean an estate, but would be grieved to think that his means and estate should fall into the hands of strangers] *that is also vanity, and a great evil.* [that is, grief or vexation, as *Matth. 6. 34.*]

22 *What I pray, hath that man* [To wit, of whom is spoken *v. 21.*] *now of his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, which he is labouring under the Sun?* [compare above chap. 1. 3. and below chap. 3. 9.]

23 *For all his dayes are sorrowes,* [That is, full of grief and heaviness. See *Job 14.* the annotat. on *v. 1.*] *and his travail is grief: even in the night his heart resteth not: this is also vanity.*

24 *Is it not (then) good for a man* [To wit, as much as concerneth the temporal good, and this transitory life] *that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul [that is, himself] enjoy good in his labour?* [or if his labour; that is, if his goods or estate gotten by his labour. Hebr. *that he should make his soul see good*, &c. that is, that he should fare well, and enjoy some good of his labour. The meaning is, that setting all superfluous and unprofitable care and anxiety aside, he should enjoy and make use of those things that God hath given him. Compare below chap. 3. 12, 22. and 5. 18. and 8. 15. Oth. *there is (then) nothing better for man, (then) that he should eat and drink*, &c. Oth. *It is not good for a man, that he should eat and drink*; that is, that he should take his whole delight and contentment in eating and drinking and the like] *I have also seen, that this thing is from the hand of God.* [that is, that it is a special and peculiar gift of God, which every man hath not; to wit, that a man is well contented and cheerfull with such things, as he hath received at the bountifull hand of God.]

25 *(For who should eat thereof, or who should hasten (thereunto) [To wit, to eat thereof, or to have the use and enjoyment thereof; namely, with mirth and rejoycing] more then my self?)* [as if he had said, if there were any other enjoyment to be had or obtained by or from those temporal things, (why) who could do it easier and better then I?]

26 *For he [To wit, God] giveth to a man that is good before his face, [that is, to one that is vertuous and pious] wisdom, and knowledge and joy: but to the sinner [that is, to the wicked, in whom he hath no delight. See *Psa. 1. 1.* concerning the word *sinner*] he giveth travel, to gather, and to heap up, [to wit, temporal goods and riches] *that he may give it to him that is good before the face of God:* [that is, before his face. Compare *Job 27. 16, 17.* *Prov. 28. 8.*] *this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.* [to wit, to vex and trouble thy self about getting wealth or riches, which thou maiest not enjoy thy self, neither leave them to whom thou wilt, and whom thou conceivest, that he will not know how to use them aright.]*

C H A P. III.

The Preacher teacheth here, how that all things in the world have their time and season, so as God hath ordained, *v. 1, 2, &c.* concluding thence, that a man cannot do better then to enjoy the gifts of God in this life with a quiet and merry heart, doing good unto his neighbour, *12.* Then he maketh mention of the iniquity, which is seen practised in Courts of Justice, *16. &c.* he also sheweth that men must die, as well as the brute beasts, *18, 19.* as also that by the common condition of them that die, they cannot know whether their soul be immortal, *19. &c.* concluding, *v. 22.* as above.

ALL (or every) thing hath an appointed time: and all (or every) purpose [Hebr. *pleasure, or will, desire*; to wit of men. See *Psa. 27.* on *v. 12.*] under the heaven hath its time. [that is, all affairs and transactions of this world are variable and subject to divers changes and alterations over and again, which God alone ruleth and governeth, and cannot be hastened by any man whatsoever. By this mutability it appeareth plainly, that true happiness is not to be sought (much less to be found) in this wavering and transitory life.]

2 *There is 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,* [Whether it be done by the will and appointment of God, *Exod. 21. 13.* or by the authority and command of the Magistrate. Oth. *to hurt, or wound*] *and a time to heal:* [to wit, him that is wounded or hurt] *a time to break down,* [Hebr. *to break in, or to tear, or rent*] *and a time to build up.*

4 *A time to weep, and a time to laugh:* [See above chap. 2. 2.] *a time to lament,* [or to mourn, or to make great moan] *and a time to leap up.* [or skip, or to daunce; to wit, for joy and for gladness. See *1 Chro. 15. 29.* and *Acts 13. 8.*]

5 *A time to cast away stones,* [To wit, when a garden or field is cleansed, or any house plucked down] *and a time to gather stones:* [to wit, when they intend, or go about to build an house, or to raise some other structure] *a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embracing.* [compare *1 Cor. 7. 5.*]

6 *A time to seek,* [That is, to provide, or to keep. Oth. *to seek, to wit, wildome, or wealths, or somewhat that a man hath lost. Understand withall, and to find, as *Isa. 65. 1.*] *and a time to let (a thing) perish:* [Oth. *to lose*; to wit, when a man should thereby come in danger of soul, or of life] *a time to keep, and a time to cast away.* [as for example, when a man is in danger of shipwrack at sea, *Jonas 1. 5.* *Acts 27. 18, 19.*]*

7 *A time to rent* [To wit, garments, as was very usual and customary among the Jews, to shew their sorrow of heart] *and a time to sow up: 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 advantage hath he that worketh, of that which he laboreth?* [Understand withall, none. The meaning is, when the hour and time is not come, let a man do what he will, he shall not be able to effect any thing. Compare above chap. 1. 3.]

10 *I have seen the travels which God hath given to the children of men, to trouble themselves therewith.*

11 *He [To wit, God] hath made every thing beautiful [or fair, comely, decent] in his time:* [that is, God maketh every thing so, as that it is beautiful and excellent, and every thing cometh to pass in due time and season, though with men great changes and alterations do happen] *also he hath put the age in their [mens] heart:* [that is, hath put a natural inclination and proneness to search out the ages and times, and whatsoever is, or hath been done in them. Oth. *the eternity*; that is, an inclination or proneness tending to the searching and inquiring into those things that are eternal and infinite: or an inclination and proneness tending to eternity] *so that a man cannot find out* [to wit, perfectly, and by his own wits and understanding] *the work that God hath made from the beginning to the end.* [Hebr. *from the head to the end.*]

12 *I perceived that there is nothing better for them,* [To wit, men: or in them; to wit, things] *then for (a man) to rejoyce, and to do good in his life.* [that is, to live vertuously and godly. See below chap. 12. 13.]

13 *Tea also that every man should eat and drink,* [To wit, with delight and joy] *and enjoy* [Hebr. *see*] *the good*

good of all his labour : (this) is a gift of God.

14 I know that whatsoever God doth, it shall be [That is, stand or continue] for ever; there is nothing to be put to it, neither is there any thing to be taken from it: and God doth (it) that men should fear before his face. [that is, it shall alwaies come to pass as he hath decreed and ordained: for the decree of God is unchangeable. If the creature were able to make the least change in that which God intendeth to do: If the creature were able to diminish or increase the blessing; to ease, or aggravate the cross; then men would honour and stand in awe of the creature and not of the Creatour. Therefore God hath so limited all that he intendeth to bring upon us, or that he intendeth to remove and keep off from us, whether it be good or evill, as that the creature is not able to make the least change or alteration therein, to the end that we might only fear the face of the Creatour, and in all humility wholly and solely depend upon his providence.]

15 That which hath been, the same is now, and that which is to be, the same hath already been: and God seeketh that which is driven away. [Understand withall, and he bringeth again to light, that which is past or gone, renewing by his Almighty power and All-wise providence the sundry kinds of beasts and other creatures: He causeth the Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, each to return again in their season: In like manner the Flowers, Herbes and Fruits both of the Trees and of the Earth: When men and beasts die and perish, then he causeth others to be born, and to grow up in their stead, &c.]

16 Moreover, I saw also under the Sun, [To wit, another vanity] in the place of judgement, there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, there was impiety. [that is, in the court of Justice, or in the place of Judicature, where justice and judgement should be pleaded and maintained, there the clean contrary was practised.]

17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: [That is, the innocent and the guilty. The meaning is, when I beheld the iniquity and injustice that reigned among men in the producing of sentence or judgement, then I comforted my self with this, that I called to mind, that God the supreme and most righteous Judge shall and will in his own due time judge all men righteously, rendering to every man according to his works] for [oth. but] the time for all (or every) purpose, and for all (or every) work is there. [to wit, where God shall at the last day set up his judgement-seat, where all mens deeds and actions shall be judged. It is as if he had said; the wicked they have a time here, but God shall also have a time there.]

18 I said in mine heart of the condition of the children of men, [That is, concerning or belonging or appertaining to the being, the estate or condition, the dealing and conversation of men; to wit, when I duly considered it, and searched into it] that God shall declare unto them [or shall give them cleareness] and that they shall see, that they are in themselves (as) the beasts. [As if he should say: forasmuch as the vanities of men are so many, and so great, and that there are such swarms and such varieties of troubles and cares, whereinto they plunge themselves so deeply, and with such delight and complacency, as if they should for ever abide here: therefore I have thought with my self, that God will make it out clear unto them, and will give them visibly and apparently to see and apprehend, what they are in themselves, and according to the nature and condition of this lower world, to wit, as the beasts or brute creatures, Psal. 49. 13. 21.]

19 For that which befalleth the children of men, the same befalleth the beasts also, and one manner of (condition) befalleth them (both): [To wit, when we look

on nothing else, then on that which outwardly befalleth both men and beasts. For men draw breath, they eat, drink, sleep: they are also subject to sicknesses, diseases, aches, pines, yea also finally to death it self, no otherwise than the brute creatures, or beasts are, as followeth in the text. But else the excellency of men above beasts is exceeding great] as that [to wit, the beast] dieth, so dieth this, [to wit, man] and they [that is, they both] to wit, both men and beasts] all have one manner of breath, [understand here by breath the spirit of life] and the excellency of men above beasts, is none: [to wit, as much as may be perceived in their outward condition, or as much as concerneth their dying] for they are all vanity. [to wit, as well men as beasts. Oth. it is all vanity.]

20 They go unto one place: [To wit, into the Earth. This is to be understood concerning the body, as may appear by that which followeth. Hebr. every one, or all, (or every) thing goeth, &c.] they are all of the dust [see Gen. 1. 24. and 2. 7] and they all turn to dust again. [compare Gen. 3. 19.]

21 Who perceiveth that the breath of the children of men, [That is to say in this place, the soul, as Luke 22. 46.] ascendeth upward, [and consequently remaineth in being, after that it is departed out of the body. See hereof further below chap. 12. 7. Where Salomon saith in plain terms, that the soul returneth unto God that gave it. So that it cannot be imputed unto Salomon, as if he taught there that the soul was mortall: the meaning is, who can perceive or know this, by the common outward accidental conditions, of them that die] and (that) the breath of beasts goeth downward to the Earth. [where it vanisheth to nothing; having no more a being, after it is gone out of the body.]

22 Therefore I saw, that there is nothing better, then that a man should rejoyce in his (own) works, [That is, in those things which he earneth by his labour] for that is his part [that is, his portion, which he shall enjoy, see above chap. 2. 24. and 3. 12, and below 5. 18. As if he said: a man when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away with him, neither shall he know after he is dead what is done here upon Earth: therefore it is best that he do not vex and torment himself with unprofitable care, how things shall go after his decease, what heir he shall leave behinde, or how they shall dispose of his goods, or how they shall demean themselves when he is gone: but that he with a quiet and merry heart (in the fear of God) use and enjoy those things which he possesseth; for he shall have nothing else of the same, see above chap. 2. 3.] for who shall bring him thither, to see that which shall be done after him? [as if he had said, no body.]

CHAP. IV.

Salomon sheweth in this chapter, how the poor are wronged and oppressed by the great ones of the world, v. 1. &c. how excellent and vertuous men are envied, 4. The ill condition of the sluggard, 5. That some men have not an heart to enjoy their own labour, 6. He commendeth those above them that keep company with others, 7. Here some glory in their power, but that wisdom is to be more esteemed, 13. The favour of subjects to their Magistrate is unconstant.

Then I turned my self and considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sun: and behold, there were the tears of the oppressed, and of those that had no comfort; [or and they had no comforter] and on that side [Hebr. on the hand] of their oppressors (there) was power. [the meaning is, they have a strong party against them that is able to overpower and oppress them]

they on the contrary had no comforter.

2 Therefore I praised the dead, [To wit, because they are freed from all these miseries and troubles. See Job. 3. 17, &c.] which were already dead, above the living, which are yet alive.

3 Yea he is better then them both, which hath not yet been, [That is, he that was never born. Salomon speaketh this in respect of the miseries of this life. See Job 9. 11, 12, 13, 16, and 21.] who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the Sun?

4 Moreover, I saw [That is, I considered] all the labour, and all sinews of work, that it procureth envy to a man from his neighbour: That also is vanity and vexation of Spirit. [the meaning is, that those that acquit themselves diligently in their callings, and are painfull and industrious in all their works and dealings, they are subject to the envy of those that are wicked and slow or careless in their business: which often troubleth or grieveth the godly exceedingly.]

5 The fool foldeth his hands together, [The Scripture attributeth the name of folly, or foolishness, to all that is contrary or repugnant to the word of God. Here a fool is as much to say as a sluggard, or slothfull man. And here the nature and disposition of sluggards, and of careless negligent persons, that will not put forth their hands to labour, and to take paines for their living, is opposed by the Preacher to the nature and disposition of diligent and industrious persons, of whom he had spoken, v. 4. And he will hereby intimate, that notwithstanding it is a very grievous thing for a man to be subject and liable to the envy and hatred of wicked and ungodly wretches, for ones diligence and industry, yet it is therefore no less great folly and madness, to spend and consume ones life idly and slothfully. Compare Prov. 6. 10. and 24. 33.] and eateth his (own) flesh. [that is, (as we use to say) the fool devoureth himself; that is, he devoureth and consumeth all that he hath, and he falleth at length into such extreame poverty, that in grief of heart and penny he wasteth and consumeth his own flesh and blood.]

6 Better is an handful [Hebr. a palm full] with quietness, then both the fists full with labour and vexation of spirit. [Some take these to be as it were the words of the fool to excuse his idleness, whereof see v. 5. As if he should say, to what purpose should I toil, and take such paines, as many men do? A little will suffice my turn, I will therefore go on softly and easily. The words are good: it is better to live in quietness with moderate riches, then to possess great riches with much care and trouble. See Prov. chap. 15. v. 16, 17, and 17. 1. but idle persons abuse the same for a coverture of their slothfulness. See Eph. 4. 28. Others understand these words to be the words of the Preacher tending to the admonition of the sluggard, that he ought to labour diligently, though he should get but a little, that he might live in a fair and honest way.]

7 I turned me again, and I saw a vanity under the Sun.

8 There is one (alone) and not a second, he hath neither child nor brethren: [By children, are meant, descendants (as they are called) in a direct or straight line: and by brethren, all collaterals or friends that come sideways, and stand in a side or collateral line] yet there is no end of all his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, [that is, though he should possesse all that he seeth, yet he would not be contented and satisfied] neither saith (he) For whom do I now labour, and cause my soul [that is, my self] to want the thing that is good! [As if he had said, Why dare I not take my relief of mine own estate? or, why do I live in such a base, fardid and comberlome condition? The meaning is, he considereth not with himself, Is it not great folly, that I do my self no good, nor bear good will to my self, but do no-

nothing but rape and scrape, and toil for strangers? see Psal. 39. 7, &c. This is spoken of covetous misers and muck-worms, that are never contented and satisfied, but are alwayes gathering and hoarding up, although they know not who shall be the heirs of their goods or estates] This is also vanity, and it is a troublesome travail.

9 Two are better then one: [That is, the condition of two that live together, is better then of one alone. It seemeth that covetous misers are reprov'd in these words, who are for no body but for themselves alone, and desire to keep company with none, for fear that familiarity and friendship would cost them somewhat, whereas indeed good friendship and familiarity, is better then temporal riches] for they have a good reward of their labour, [to wit, forasmuch as they can sooner and easier accomplish their desire and purpose, then if they were alone by themselves without any ones help. For whilst they help one another, their labour goeth on the faster, and they have the better success, and the more gain and profit comes in.]

10 For if they [That is, one of them, or one of them both. See Judg. 12. on v. 7.] fall, [to wit, into sickness, or misery, or sin] the one lifeth up his fellow: but woe to the one (alone) that is fallen: for there is no second to help him up.

11 Also if two lie [Or sleep] together, then they have warmth, but how should one be warm (alone)?

12 And if any man should prevail against one, then two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not soon broken. [The meaning is, if they be yet more in company then two, yea if they be many united and linked together in one society, then they shall be the better able to resist and oppose their Enemy, that comes to assault them.]

13 Better is a poor and wise young man, then an old and foolish King, who knoweth not of being more admonished. [As if he should say, the royal dignity is indeed highly and greatly esteemed in this world, and they that attain unto it count themselves exceeding happy above other men: But there is no happiness to be found therein; however a King (when he is come to age) hath not such wisdom as is necessary and requisite for to govern both himself and his subjects well, and moreover will not be directed or admonished by others, that are wiser then himself. Therefore a poor man that hath understanding (though he be young in years) is to be more accounted and esteemed, then such a King. Of the word young man, see Gen. 44. on v. 20.]

14 For one [To wit, one poor young man, ver. 13.] cometh out of prison, [Hebr. out of the house of those that are bound, or of bound ones] to be King, [it seemeth that the Preacher here hath respect to that which befell Joseph, Gen. 41. 14, 39, 43. and Psal. 105. 18, 20, 21. The like is also seen in Mordechai, Est. chap. 6. and in many others more] whereas also one that is born in his Kingdome, [that is, one that is born and an hereditary King, and not an elected or chosen King] becometh poor. [this befell King Zedekia, 2 Kings 25. and Nabuchadnezzar King of Babel, Dan. 4. 30. and others besides. So that it is vanity for any man to be proud of Royal dignity and power, or to rely thereupon, in regard of the instability and uncertainty thereof.]

15 I saw all the living [Understand here by all, all those that dwell in one Kingdome or Land] walking under the Sun, with the young man, [that is, openly conversing, or keeping company with him; to wit, that they might gain his good will and favour betimes, or in time] the second, [that is, who is the second; to wit, counting from the Father, the Father being the first, the eldest Son the second] that shall stand up [that is, reign] in this (mans) stead. [to wit, in the stead of the King that now reigneth. Intimating that in all ages of the world

world there have been found more, that have revered and worshipped the Sun-rising, then the Sun setting. The meaning of the whole verse, in brief, is this, I observed in general, the whole world fideth with the young man, that is, with the King that is to succeed his father in the Kingdom, and that the King which is grown old is not much more esteemed. This is also vanity, and a toilsome trouble in the Royal dignity.]

16 *There is no end of all the people,* [That is, the people are infinite in number, they are past numbering] *of all that have been before them;* [to wit, before the King that now is, and his son the King that shall be, or that is to come, spoken of before, ver. 15.] *the posterity also shall not rejoyce over him:* [Heb. in him; that is, over the same; as if he should say, they will neither be contented or satisfied with the government of the Kings successor, when he shall be grown old] *surely that also is vanity and vexation of spirit.* [the meaning seemeth to be this; The inconstant multitude they will alwayes be eager and desirous of a change, and when he once cometh to reign, whom they have so eagerly longed after, then they will not rejoyce in him long, but soon grow weary of him, and desire and wish for another again in his room. This is a grievous and a sad thing in the heart of Kings: And consequently, true happinesse cannot be found in the Royal dignity.]

17 *Keep thy foot* [Or feet, for the Hebrew word is read two wayes] *when thou enterest into the house of God,* [the meaning is, consider whither thou goest; when thou goest to the Temple, thou goest not to a common or ordinary place, but to a place that is holy, and dedicated to holy things; so that a man must appear there with humility and reverence, as before the face and presence of God. This 17th. verse some do adde to the fifth Chapter, as speaking of one and the same matter] *and be rather nigh to hear,* [to wit, the holy Word of God, to be thereby instructed in the holy knowledge of him] *then to give the stay-offering of fools:* [that is, then to give that which fools give; to wit, an outward sacrifice without faith or repentance. The godly and truly religious people offered sacrifices, to did also fools; that is, hypocrites, and those that made onely an outward shew of holinesse; the godly did it not, as thinking to appease God by that outward work done, and thereby to make satisfaction for their sins; but fools thought so, see Sam. 15. 22. Psal. 50. 8. Pro. 15. 8. and 21. 27.] *for they know not that they do evil,* [to wit, when they offer sacrifices with such an heart and minde. Oth. surely they know not to do anything (but) evil. Oth. they know not what evil they do.]

CHAP. V.

Salomon teacheth the Congregation, how they shall behave themselves in the exercise of outward worship, ver. 1, &c. Next, how they shall behave themselves, when they see that Rulers and such as are in authority do not administer justice, 7. which is the best way of thriving, 8. the vanity of riches, and of covetousnesse, 9. then he sheweth that mans happinesse consisteth in a cheerful enjoyment of the gifts of God, 17. which is to be able to do, as likewise a gift of God, 18.

BE not too rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart hasten to utter a word, [Or any thing] before the face of God: [the meaning is, when thou comest into the house of the Lord, to call upon God, make not too great hast, that thou maiest not pray unto him without reverence and attention. Oth. be not too quick, &c. to wit, to make any vow unto the Lord unadvisedly, or undiscernly] *for God is in heaven, and thou art upon*

earth; [therefore (as if he should say) we must not speak unto that great and high God, as if we had to do with our equals; but we ought to come before his high and glorious Majesty with all humility and lowliness of heart, remembering that we are poor vile earth-wormes] *therefore let thy words be few.* [to wit, which thou useth in prayer. The rule of praying aright, in few words, is prescribed unto us by our blessed Saviour, Matthew 6. 7.]

2 *For (as) a dream cometh through much businesse: so a fools voice, by the multitude of words.* [That is, as much dreaming issueth from the multitude of affairs, wherewith a man is troubled and busied in the day-time: so doth the babbling and prating of fools issue and proceed from the desire and custome of speaking much.]

3 *When thou shalt have vowed a vow unto God;* [See Numb. 30. 3. Deut. 23. 21.] *defer not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in fools;* [that is, in hypocritical and vain men, who being in straights, make great and large vowes, but when they are delivered out of trouble, they soon forget what they have vowed] *whatsoever thou shalt have vowed, pay it.*

4 *Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow, and not pay.* [Compare, Deut. 23. 21, 22.]

5 *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh* [That is, thy self, or thy body, thy corrupt flesh] *to sin;* [by refusing to pay thy vow] *neither say before the face of the Angel,* [to wit, when he cometh to requite at thy hand the thing that thou hast vowed. Some do understand here by the Angel, our Saviour Christ, who is called, the Angel of the Covenant, Malah. 3. 1. see Exod. 23. on v. 20. Oth. the Priest or Teacher, who is an Angel, or Messenger of God, Mal. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 11. 10. Revel. 2. 1, &c.] *that it was an error:* [Or, mistake, fault, ignorance, that is, a fault of ignorance. As if he would say, I did not mean so, or I vowed inconsiderately, not thinking of it afore-hand, and therefore I desire to be excused and freed from that vow] *wherefore should God be very wrath, because of thy voice,* [that is, at thy sayings, by reason of such rash vowes, and idle and unprofitable excuses] *and destroy the work of thine hands?* [that is, that God should cause the things to prosper ill, which thou takest in hand. The meaning is, wilt thou make it so, that God shall be exceedingly provoked to anger against thee; for such kind of speeches and actions of thine? It shall indeed go very ill with thee, if touching this matter thou lookest not well to thy self in time, Exo. 23. 21.]

6 *For, as in the multitude of dreams (there) are vanities: so likewise (in) many words:* [Or, in many matters, in many things. The meaning is, dreams have oftentimes no signification at all, neither doth any thing follow upon them, therefore they are meer vanity. Oth. for (as) when dreams are multiplied, vanities (are) also (multiplied,) so is it likewise with many words. Compare, Prov. 10. 19.] *but fear thou God.* [As if he should say: To use many words is but vain. A man must have deeds as well as words: he must have the true fear of God in him, when he cometh before the face of his Majesty. Oth. Therefore fear God: that is, in regard he hath power to punish thee, therefore fear his wrath.]

7 *If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the spoiling of judgment and justice in a Province, marvel not* [To wit, not too much, so as thou shouldest not despair and grow out of heart, or doubt of Gods Providence, as if he suffered all things in the world to run at random, without any guiding or governing by him at all] *at such a purpose:* [Oth. pretence, intent, thing, matter, dealing; that is, at such kind of dealing. It may be applied either to the evil intention and practice of wicked men, or to Gods wise and righteous providence] *for he that is*

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higher

higher then the high ones, [that is, God, who is the most high, much higher and mightier, then the highest and mightiest of this world, be they Emperors, Kings, Princes, or Potentates; or what they may be. Oth. for the highest takes notice of the height] *regardeth it*: [to wit, the oppressions of the poor, &c. and he fore-gardeth them, as that he shall certainly punish them in his own due time] *and there are high ones* [to wit, the holy Angels, who are under the command of none but God alone: they likewise regard and heed the doings of wicked Judges] *above them*. [to wit, above those that violate judgement and justice, and do oppress the poor. See Dan. 10. 20. and 11. 1. The meaning of the words of this verse seemeth in brief to be this; it is as if he had said, if there be any one that thinketh that it is in vain to fear and serve God uprightly, because wicked men do almost whatsoever they list, without being punished for it: the answer thereunto is, that there is a God in heaven, that diligently and narrowly heedeth all unrighteous dealings, to punish them in wicked men, how highly soever they may be exalted here in this world.]

8 *The profit of the Earth, that is for all*, [Or is in all; that is, it is every where in use and usefull] *the King himself is saved by the field*. [the meaning is, a King himself is subject to the necessity of tillage or husbandry, without which he can maintain neither himself, nor his Court, nor his Army, nor his Subjects. See herof examples in Pharo, Gen. 41. and 47. and in Saul, 1 Sam. 9. 11. Oth. *becometh a servant of the field*. That is, Kings, Princes, or the great ones of this world, do sometimes give themselves to husbandry or tillage. So that in this verse is lively represented unto us the praise and commendation of tillage, above all other trades and occupation, whereunto men do give and apply themselves in this life.]

9 *He that loveth money, is not satisfied with money; and who so loveth abundance, is not (satisfied) with increase: This is also vanity*. [This verse speaketh of the insatiableness of covetous misers; according to the common proverb, Much treasure keepeth not a misers mouth. Oth. *he that loveth money, shall have no increase*; that is, he that exceedeth in costly apparel and household-stuff. He that keepeth a great retinue both of men and maid-servants, and lavisheth out his money about other necessary things; his rents and revenues cannot maintain him. Compare this with Psal. 37. 16.]

10 *Where goods are multiplied, there are also multiplied those that eat the same; what use* [Oth. *what enjoyment, benefit, profit*] *have then the possessors thereof* [Heb. *Lords, Masters, or Owners*; to wit, of the goods] *but sight of their eyes?* [that is, more then the beholding of them with their eyes. Meaning, that those that have great and vast estates, they have no more profit or benefit by them, then only to serve their own necessities, to take of them what may serve to suffice nature: they have no more profit by them over and above, then only to see and behold them with their eyes; that is, no more then a man hath of a painted map. Others take it in this sense, that rich men must daily see before their eyes, that their riches are eaten up and devoured by others. The whole meaning of the verse amounteth unto this. The more goods any man hath, the more he standeth in need of other mens help and service, whom to maintain he must needs be at great costs and charges. Therefore riches cannot in any wise tend to the quietness and happiness of him, that possesseth them in great abundance.]

11 *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet*, [Or *who so laboureth, to him sleep is sweet*, oth. *who so doth husbandry-work, to him sleep is sweet*: for the Hebrew word is properly used of husbandry-work, or tilling the ground, as Gen. 2. 5. and 2 Sam. 9. 10.] *whether he hath eaten little or much; but the fulness of the rich suffereth him not to sleep*. [to wit, not only in regard that the rich is not weary with labouring, but also in regard that he o-

ver-chargeth his stomach with good cheer. Likewise the rich and wealthy of this world are subject to more danger then poor men are. Besides rich misers have an untatiable desire to increase and augment their estates, and are alwaies in fear that they shall lose them, which often breaketh and hindereth their sleep.]

12 *There is an evil that bringeth sickness* [Hebr. *a sick evil*, see below on v. 15.] *(which) I saw under the Sun: riches kept by the possessors thereof* [as above ver. 10.] *to their own evil*. [that is, to the hurt of those that have them. Hebr. *to his evil*; that is, to the evil or hurt of every one that have or possess them. Riches are kept with care, oftentimes to the owners, or possessors own mischief: for oftentimes rich men fall into great troubles by reason of their riches: or riches perish & are wasted by evil and wicked practices, whether by leading a voluptuous and prodigal kind of life, or otherwise: therefore they tend to vexation and disquietness of mind. See below 6. 2.]

13 *Or riches themselves perish, by toilsome trouble*: [Or *troublesome travel*, see above chap. 1. on v. 13.] *and he* [to wit, the rich man, whose goods are vanished and come to nothing] *begetteth a son, and there is nothing at all in his hand*. [to wit, that he may give to his son; or that he shall get into his hands; to wit, after his Fathers death.]

14 *According as he* [To wit, the rich man, or the rich mans son, being now become poor] *came forth out of his mothers womb, (so) shall he return naked, going as he came: and he shall take nothing with (him) of his labour* [that is, of the goods that he hath gotten and gathered together by his labour, as v. 18, 19.] *which he might carry away with his hand*. [this is spoken here of the rich man, or of the rich mans son, now grown poor: But this speech or saying is true of all men in general, how rich or wealthy soever they be: for let man be never so rich, or never so wealthy, yet when they die, they carry nothing away with them. See Job 1. 21. and 1 Tim. 6. 7. and Psal. 49. 18.]

15 *Therefore this is also an evil that bringeth sickness: that every manner of way as he came* [To wit, naked] *(so) goeth he away*: [to wit, out of this world] *and what is it to him, that he hath laboured in the wind?* [or, *for the wind*; that is, in vain, or for an empty transitory thing, being no more the better for all his labour, then if the wind had driven and blown it away. See Job 6. on v. 26.]

16 *That he hath also his daies eaten in darkness*, [That is, in sorrow and misery, shunning the society and company of men] *and that he hath had much grief, also his sickness*, [this is not so much to be understood of a corporal or bodily sickness, as of an inward distemper or sickness of the mind, hearts-grief and displeasure] *and raging anger?* [Heb. properly *for by anger*.]

17 *Behold what I have seen, a good thing which is beautifull; to eat, and to drink, and to enjoy*, [Hebr. *to see*] *the good of all his labour, which he hath laboured under the Sun, (during) the number of the daies of his life, which God giveth him*: [it is both good and comely, or beautifull, for a man to eat, and to drink; to wit, with joy or rejoycing, not troubling himself too much, or being too anxious and careful about future things, or things that shall come to pass hereafter: yet so, as that we never forget to have and set God before our eyes in the enjoyment of his blessings; for *seeing* signifieth here *enjoying*. See the annotat. Job 7. on v. 7.] *for that is his portion*, [to wit, which is allotted to him in this life of his temporal goods, he can look to have no more of them. But the children of God have a further and better portion then this; for God himself is their portion, Psal. 16. 5. and 73. 26. and Lamen. 3. 24. Yea they are joint heires with Christ of an inheritance incorruptible, Rom. 8. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 8.]

18 Every man also to whom God hath given riches and goods, and he giveth him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion; and to rejoyce in his labour, that is a gift of God. [That is, he moveth and inclineth his heart thereunto, that he should take his share and portion of such things as God hath given him, and should with comfort and cheerfulness use and enjoy the same.]

19 For he shall not much remember the daies of his life: [That is, he shall vex and torment himself with thinking often of the grief and sorrow which he hath had in his life-time, nor with the care and fear of the suffering which yet may befall him] because God beareth him in the joy of his heart. [that is, because God causeth him to have that joy and gladness in his heart, which he so eagerly wished and longed for in his heart. There is a threefold joy or gladness of heart. First a natural joy of the heart, arising from a sense and apprehension of temporal happiness and prosperity. Secondly, a civil or political joy of the heart, issuing from the practise and exercise of some excellent virtues: as in the heathen, who acquitted themselves most excellently in prudence, justice, valour, &c. Thirdly, there is also a spiritual joy or gladness of the heart, proceeding from a sense and apprehension of our peace and reconciliation made with God. This is the chiefest and the most excellent joy of all, Rom. 5. 1, 2. P[sa]. 4. 7, 8.]

CHAP. VI.

In this Chapter the Preacher relateth the misery of niggardly and covetous men, to whom God giveth not an heart to use their goods, judging that riches are no wayes advantageous or beneficial unto them, to help them to the attainment of temporal felicity; but on the contrary that they hinder &c. are hurtfull unto them.

There is an evil which I have seen under the Sun, and it is much among them.

2 A man, to whom God hath given riches, and goods, and honour; and he wanteth nothing for his soul; of all that he desireth: [that is, of all that his heart desireth] and God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but that a strange man [whether he be an Enemy, that taketh them violently away from him, or a far remote kinsman: or some body else, that is no kin to him at all] eateth it up: [that is, his riches, or his estate. The meaning is, God granted him not, that he may freely and peaceably enjoy his wealth, because he taketh him out of this world, before he hath gotten that contentment and satisfaction to himself; which he imagined he should have: Or because while he is yet alive, he is thrust out of possession of his own goods or estate, and is constrained to see a stranger to be in possession of them: Or though he live long, and keep his wealth or riches, yet he hath not an heart to use them with joy and delight. Compare above chap. 5. 18.] This is (also) vanity, and an evil pain.

3 If a man beget an hundred (children), [That is, many children. A certain number for an uncertain] and lived many years, so that the daies of his years are many, but his soul were not satisfied with good, [see Job 21. on v. 13.] and he also had no burial: [that is, if the case were so with him, that he might have no honourable or decent burial bestowed upon him: but that he (who formerly lived in great state and dignity) was now thrown away unburied upon some dung-hill, or into some other filthy noisome place, as Saul, Jessebel, 2 Kin. 9. 35. Fojakim, Jerem. 22. 19. and others more besides] I say that an untimely birth is better then he, [to wit, in the judgement of flesh, and in respect of outward accidents. Because an untimely birth, or a mischance (as we call him) is free from all those miseries, which such a man is liable unto. See Job. 3. 16.]

4 For it [To wit, the mischance, or the untimely birth] cometh (in) [to wit, into this world out of his

mother's womb] with vanity, [that is, in vain; for he enjoyeth not this life, nor this world] and it departeth in darkness, [that is, without being talked of, or without any notice being taken of him; as that which is done in darkness, is not seen or regarded by men] and his name is covered with darkness. [to wit, in the grave, under the Earth. The meaning is, he is no more remembered or thought of.]

5 Likewise he hath not seen, nor known the Sun: [And consequently it is not grievous to him to want the light of the Sun] he hath more rest then he. [to wit, that covetous worldling, of whom mention is made, v. 2, 3.]

6 Yea though he lived [To wit, the covetous worldling] twice a thousand years, and saw [that is, enjoyed] no good: do they not all go to one place? [to wit, into the grave, or under the Earth, where they again are turned into Earth, as much as concerneth the body. As if he had said, what shall his long life then profit him? For he must at length be put under the ground, as well as the untimely birth, that hath not lived one day in the world: Or as well as other men, that have lived but a small time.]

7 All the labour of man is for his mouth; [That is, therefore, and for that end, that the mouth might have something to eat] and yet the appetite is not filled. [the meaning is, though a man have enough for his mouth, as concerning necessity, yet notwithstanding he is never fully satisfied; he is alwaies coveting and desiring still more.]

8 For what hath the wise more then the fool? [That is, a further confirmation of that which was said, v. 7. to wit, that all the labour of man is for his mouth: Herein saith the Preacher, all men are like one another, no man enjoyeth more then what is necessary for the body. Otherwise he acknowledged above chap. 2. v. 13, 14. that there is a great and wide difference between a wise man and a fool] what hath the poor (more), [oth. what (advantage) hath the poor, &c. as if he had said, one man hath no more advantage then another, no man enjoyeth more then his necessary food. The word rendered here poor, is likewise so taken, Exod. 22. 25. Lev. 19. 10. Deu. 24. 12. Otherwise it signifieth properly miserable, or afflicted] that knoweth to walk before the living, [that is, that is wise and skilfull to converse among men, and to earn his own living. The Preacher concludes from hence, that likewise true happiness doth not consist therein, that any one is a diligent and nimble earner of his own bread; seeing that a foolish man maketh a shift to live as well as he.]

9 Better is the beholding of the eyes, then the desire of the appetite: [As if he had said, it is better to be contented with a little that a man hath for the present, then alwaies with an unsatiabie desire to rake for more, and still to be greedy and coveting after more: Others understand it thus, that in these words is an objection of the flesh against that which the wise man had uttered or delivered against covetous misers; as if he had said, yet it is better to have something then nothing at all: Therefore some do render the words thus, the beholding of the eyes (say they) is better then the walking of the appetite] This [to wit, this unsatiabie and greedy desire] is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

10 Whatever also any man is, [That is, of what state or condition soever any man is, be he high or low, rich or poor] his name is already named, [to wit, man, as is exprest in the following words: and that which he should be, is already before ordained and decreed by God in his most wise and secret counsel: Therefore it is in vain for any man to strive to be rich, and of an high estate, whom God will have to be poor and of a low estate: And therefore it is vanity to be carefull and troubled about future things] and it is known, that he is man: [that is, a weak and frail creature; to wit, made of dust and earth, as the Hebrew word *Adam* (hunc mem-

tioned and exprest in the text) signifieth] *and that he cannot plead with him, that is stronger then he,* [to wit, with or against God, as complaining of him, because he hath placed him in this, or in that condition. How I pray should dust and ashes dare to contend, or be able to enter into judgement with the Judge of all the Earth. See Job 4. 17, &c. and 9. 2, 3. and 14. 1. and chap. 25. and 34. 23.]

11 *Verily, there are many things that increase vanity : what hath man more (of them) [The meaning is, it ought to suffice a man that he himself is vanity, though he did not adde unto vanity many other things that increase vanity. Oth, when a man hath many vanities, that is, possesseth much goods, and many great places or offices] then he increaseth vanity.*

12 *For who knoweth [To wit of himself] what is good for a man in this life, (curing) the number of the daies of the life of his vanity, [understand this to, namely, what is truly and really good for him, such as might be able to bring him true rest and contentment] which he spendeth as a shadow? [oth, which he, (to wit, God) hath made (or appointed) as a shadow. Compare Psa. 144. 4. Jerem. 4. 13.] for who can tell [or certify, shew, make known] a man what shall be after him under the Sun? [compare below chap. 8. 7.]*

CHAP. VII.

The wise man teacheth in this chapter, how among so many vain things that are in the world, we should study and endeavour to get and keep a good name, v. 1. That we should often set before our eyes our mortality, 2. Next, he giveth certain good lessons, how men should suffer themselves to be instructed of those that are wise, 5. to patience and perseverance, 7. and other vertues, 8. The praise of wisdom, 11. and of other vertues, 14. The praise of moderation, 16. of wisdom, 19. All men are sinners, 20. All things are not to be too narrowly searched out, 21. An evill woman ought to be avoided, 26. God hath created man good, 29.

A *Good name [To wit (with God and honest men) praised by reason of their vertue and piety. See Ecc. chap. ver. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, &c.] is better then good oil :* [understand here pleasant sweet smelling ointment or oil, which the Jews held in great esteem : Or precious ointment, to heal wounds and sores. See Psa. 133. 2. Some understand by good oil or ointment all manner of pleasant or delightful things. Compare Prov. 22. 1.] *and the day of death then the day that a man is born (on.) [to wit, when a man dieth godly and piously. Compare Rom. 7. 24. Phil. 1. 23. For then a man attaineth to everlasting happiness, in stead of his wretched transitory life.]*

2 *It is better to go into the house of mourning, then to go into the house of the feasts : (For) in it [To wit, in the house of mourning] is the end of all men ; [that is, there we may behold examples and spectacles of the transitoriness of mans life, and the power of death over all men, who, or of what condition soever they be] and the living layeth it in his heart. [to wit, that which he there seeketh before his eyes, having well observed what the end of mans life is, and how men ought to prepare themselves for death.]*

3 *Mourning is better then laughing : [Or vexing, &c. that is, it is better to have godly sorrow, and to mourn over ones sins, then to have worldly joy ; for godly sorrow is good for the soul ; it worketh amendment to salvation not to be repented of, 2 Cor. 7. 10. Oth, anger is better then laughing, for a stern countenance makes the heart cheerfull ; that is, it is better to reprove sinners sharply, and with a stern countenance, then to flatter*

them with laughing words ; for reproofs are good to bring sinners to amendment] *for by the sadness of the countenance [Hebr. the illness, or disturbance of the countenance. See Gen. 40. on v. 7.] the heart is made better. [to wit, when by prosperity it being departed out of the way, it is humbled and brought unto the right way again by grief and heaviness.]*

4 *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning : but the heart of fools (is) in the house of mirth. [The meaning is, that the wise were to go into the house of mourning. And though they be not with their bodies as bodily presence in the house of mourning, yet they are sorrowfull with the sorrowfull, and compassionate with the afflicted. In the house of mourners a man learneth to be humble and lowly, but in the house of mirth a man learneth to be unruly and wanton.]*

5 *It is better to hear the reproof of the wise, then for a man to hear the song of fools. [That is, the vain mirth and commendation, or praise, the flattering, sooth-saying, or coggings, which many do more love to hear then a pleasant song. He intimateth, that this is also a kind of happiness in this life, for a man to endure reproof willingly at the hand of pious and virtuous men, whensoever he hath sinned, that he might thereby escape damnation : And for a man to loath and abhor the vain delights and flatteries of those that fear not God. Compare Prov. 13. 18. and 15. 31, 32.]*

6 *For as the sound of thornes under a pot [To wit, that hangeth and boileth on the fire] so is the laughter of a fool : [whereby he bewrayeth, that he taketh delight in him that doth evill. The loud crackling of thornes under a pot, is no pleasant musick to the ear, and the fire of thornes lasteth not long. So the Godly take no delight in hearing the flattery and loud laughter of fools, which kind of mirth and jollity also soon vanisheth and decayeth. Compare Psa. 58. 10.] this is also vanity.*

7 *Verily, the oppression would make a man mad, [That is, when a wise man himself is extremely afflicted with sorrowes and miseries, it will make him sometimes do or speak that which becometh a fool rather then a wise man. Examples see in Job and David. Oth, when a man is deceived, that maketh a wise man to lose his senses : Or oppression ; that is, wealth or estate taken from a man by oppression, &c.] and the gift destroyeth the heart, [it corrupteth the understanding of man : to wit, when the Judge taketh gifts or bribes of those that have causes to be tryed before him. See Exod. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 19.]*

8 *Better is the end of a thing then the beginning thereof : [To wit, the end of a good thing is better then the beginning thereof. Therefore a wise man alwaies hath an eye upon the end of the things, which he taketh in hand ; and though the means whereby a good business is performed, be hard and bitter, yet (eyeing the end which a man intendeth) he ought to go on and persevere therein with patience and forbearance : the event or issue is sometimes better then it appeareth at first, or in the beginning] the long-suffering (person) [Hebr. one that is long of spirit. Compare Num. 14. 18. So in the following words, high-spirit] is better then the high-minded (person.)*

9 *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry : for anger resteth in the bosome of fools. [He speaketh of an unjust and unlawful anger which continueth long, and taking place in the heart of man, turneth into hatred. Otherwise, there is also a lawful and commendable anger, namely, in wise men, who are sometimes angry upon good grounds and for just causes, but bear not evil anger long in their bosomes, or in their hearts. Of the word, bosome or lap, see Job 19. on v. 27.]*

10 *Say not, what is (the cause) that the former dayes [The years or times past] were better than these? for thou*

thou shouldest not inquire wisely after this. [say not, &c. to wit, as murmuring against Gods Providence, and as if you would say, Why doth God govern the world so? what is the cause hereof? Otherwise, it is lawful to lament the wickedness and misery of the times, being heartily sorrowful, that the world the longer it continueth, the wickeder it groweth, and that therefore also plagues and judgements are multiplied.]

11 *Wisdom is good with an inheritance*; [That is, with riches, which a man inheriteth, or getteth by an inheritance. As if he should say, It is an excellent thing for a man to have both wisdom and wealth together in this life] *and those that behold the sun, have benefit (by it).* [that is, those that live in this world, have profit by it, for riches avail not those that are gone out of the world.]

12 *For wisdom is for a shadow, (and) money is for a shadow*; [The meaning is, that wisdom and temporal wealth serve a man for a defence against hurt or mischief, that may befall him, as a shadow serveth a man for a covering or shelter against the scorching heat of the Sun. Oth. *for they are in the shadow of wisdom, and in the shadow of money*] *but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to the possessors thereof.* [that is, herein exceedeth wisdom, and her excellency is far beyond that of money and wealth, in that she giveth life to those that enjoy her. By wisdom here is to be meant true wisdom, which is the true knowledge of God, and of his lawes or commandments; this (to wit, this wisdom) giveth life, to wit, everlasting life. But others understand here by *life*, rest, peace, contentment of minde or heart, which is true life indeed.]

13 *Consider the work of God, for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?* [As if he had said, Wilt thou have rest and peace in thy heart and minde, then be therewith contented, that thou knowest, that it is the work of God, even that which daily happeneth, and that it is Gods pleasure it should be so: no man can hinder or alter that which God hath once decreed or done, *Job 12. 14.* Therefore we ought not to vex and trouble our selves about those things which we daily see and hear, seeing they cannot be altered or changed by any counsel or act of man. See *Job 12. 14.* and above, *ch. 1. 15.*]

14 *In the day of prosperity* [Heb. of good; that is, when it goeth well with thee, when God blesteth thee with much goods or riches] *enjoy the thing that is good,* [Heb. *be in the thing that is good*; that is, be contented and cheerful] *but in the day of adversity,* [Heb. of evil] *look to;* [to wit, so as that thou rememberest, that evil also cometh from God, and that thou oughtest therefore to bear it patiently. Oth. *consider*, to wit, the work of God, whereof is spoken, *v. 13.* Oth. *heed*; to wit, the cause, which is the righteousness and wise providence of God, who oftentimes chastiseth and trieth the godly for their good. Oth. *consider the day of adversity*; that is, in prosperity think of adversity, which may befall thee from the hand of God] *(for) God marketh the one over against the other,* [Heb. *this over against*, or *next to that*; to wit, day. The meaning is, the day of prosperity and the day of adversity are both from God, and these two contrary times hath he set and appointed one against the other, so that a man is not alwayes in prosperity, neither alwayes in adversity; therefore he ought alwayes, both in prosperity, and also in adversity to think of a change, enjoying prosperity cheerfully (yet nor without looking about him) and bearing adversity patiently, with expectation of better] *because man shall not find any thing that shall be after him.* [to wit, after God; that is, to the end, that man might onely look up to Gods providence and disposing, without desiring to search or inquire into this or that thing, without God, or out of God. Oth. *after him*, to wit, that shall be after that

man. Oth. *in such a manner that man should be able to find nothing after him*; that is, God hath ordained all things so wisely, as that no man after him is able to invent or devise any thing better.]

15 *All this have I seen in the dayes of my vanity*; [That is, during my vain and transitory life] *there is a righteous man that perisheth in his righteousness*; [that is, when he gave himself to vertue, and therein daily proceeded. Such an one *perisheth* in his righteousness; to wit, whether he be oppressed by wicked men that cannot indure the godly, or whether God take him soon out of this world into a better life, as happened to *Josiah, 2 Chron. 35. 23, 24.*] *on the contrary, there is a wicked man, that prolongeth (his dayes) in his wickedness.*

16 *Be not too righteous,* [That is, be not too strict to search too narrowly into thy neighbours words and actions, and to punish them too severely. Others take it in this sense; Do that which thou art commanded to do, and do it faithfully, but do not more then thou art commanded, or then thy calling requireth] *neither count thy self too wise*; [this is spoken against curious spirits, that think by their own wisdom to search and find out the deep secrets of God, *Rom. 12. 3.* or that desire to know more then God hath revealed to us in his word] *why shouldest thou bring desolation upon thy self?* [that is, why shouldest thou bring thy self into danger and disgrace, desiring to appear more godly, more vertuous and more wise and understanding then others, by searching and diving too deep into the secret mysteries of God, *Prov. 3. 7. Rom. 12. 3. 16.*]

17 *Be not too wicked,* [That is, give not thy self over to grosse sins, or let not sin reign in thy mortal body, as the Apostle exhorteth, *Rom. 6. 12.*] *neither be (too) foolish: why shouldest thou die out of thy time?* [As if he should say, thou shouldest else be punished by the Magistrate, and before the natural time of death cometh, be snatched and taken away from the earth. Compare, *Job 15. 32. Psal. 37. v. 13.*]

18 *It is good that thou shouldest take hold thereon*; [To wit, on that, whereof mention is made, *v. 16.*] *neither with-draw thine hand from this*; [to wit, from that which is, verse 17. or from that which I shall further say. Some apply both exhortations to that which was spoken in the former verses in general] *for be that feareth God, he escapeth all that.* [that is, he departeth from both extreames, to wit, from being too righteous, and from being too unrighteous or wicked, (escaping thereby the miseries that are wont to follow thereon) and keeping the mid-way, wherein all vertue consisteth.]

19 *Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more then ten* [That is, many, see *Gen. 31. 7.* and *Prov. 21. 22.* and *24. 5.* and below, chap. 9. 16.] *Rulers that are in one city.*

20 *Verily, there is not a righteous man upon earth, that doth good, and sinneth not.* [Compare, *1 Kings 8. verse 46, 47.* *2 Chron. 6. 36.* *Prov. 20. 9.* *1 John 1. 8.*]

21 *Also give not thine heart unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee.* [That is, examine not too narrowly, to know what men say of thee, neither regard it over-much: for if thou shouldest do so, it might easily be, that thou shouldest hear some against thy will, that thine own servants speak ill of thee. Many things that are spoken, thou must let passe unregarded.]

22 *For thine (own) heart* [That is, thine own conscience] *hath also oftentimes confessed, that thou hast cursed others.* [that have wronged thee, or, which thou thoughtest (through false information of others) that they had done thee wrong.]

23 *All this have I proved by wisdom*; *I said,* [To wit, with my self] *I will get wisdom,* [that is, I thought, I imagined, I perswaded my self, that I should get

get or obtain perfect wisdom] but it was (yet) far from me. [for a man can never attain to a perfect knowledge of all things, and the causes thereof.]

24 *That which is far off, and exceeding deep,* [Hebr. deep, deep, see Gen. 25. on v. 30.] *who shall find it* (out?) [oth. thus; *It is far that which hath been*; that is, that which was long ago, men have no great knowledge thereof: And what knowledge (I pray) can they have of things that are altogether deep and hidden? as how God governeth the world, and all things that are therein, and especially what shall come to passe in future times, see in the Book of Job, chapters 38, 39, 40, 41. and Rom. 11. 33, 34.]

25 *I turned me about, and my heart* [To wit, with my thoughts] *to know, and to search, and to seek* (out) *wisdom, and a conclusion*; [the Hebrew word signifieth the shutting up of a speech, which from certain premises is infer'd and summ'd up by the conclusion] *and to know the wickedness of folly, and the foolishness of mad-nesses.* [oth. and foolishness (and) madnesses.]

26 *And I found a thing more bitter than death, a woman, whose heart* (is) *nets and snares, and her hands are bonds*: [Heb. snares and nets; such as are wont to be spread for wild beasts, to catch them in. He speaketh of an unchaste and immodest woman, who by her crafty and sweet deceitful words, seeketh to insnare men in uncleanness, to catch them in her nets, and to hold them fast, when she hath got them, see Prov. 2. 16, 17. and 5. 3, 6. and 6. 34. and 7. 6, &c. and ch. 9. 13. Such a woman is more to be shunned and avoided than death itself] *whose is good before the face of God shall escape from her*; [As if he had said, No man can escape the deceit of such a wicked woman, unless God by his special grace and aid deliver him from her, as he delivered Joseph from the unchaste wife of Potiphar, see ch. 2. 26.] *on the contrary, the sinner* [that is, such a one as doth daily give up himself to the committing of grosse sins. See Psal. 1. on verse 1.] *shall be taken by her.* [see Prov. 6. 26. and 7. 23. and 22. 14.]

27 *Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher, the one by the other, to find* (out) *the conclusion.* [That is, to come to the result and close of all.]

28 *Which my soul* [That is, I] *yet seeketh, but I have not found it*: [the meaning of these words seemeth to be this; After I had sought a long while, to know the true ground of all, I found nothing else but this, that as yet I had found nothing; that is, I find and perceive by certain and grounded experience, that I want the knowledge of very many things. Oth. *that which my soul yet seeketh, I have not found the same*] *one man* [Hebr. Adam; that is, one man. The opposition sheweth, that Adam signifieth here a man] *have I found of a thousand,* [to wit, of a thousand men:] *but a woman among all those have I not found.* [Oth. *but a woman* (indeed) *with all those things*: intimating, that there are very few men found, that are wise, good, prudent, and of great knowledge and understanding, but yet far fewer women so qualified and conditioned, see Prov. 31. 10. The words *one* and *none* are here taken for few, and fewer, to wit, in comparison of the rest; for else many godly, both men and women, are mentioned both in the old and new Testament.]

29 *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made men upright, but they* [To wit, men] *have sought* (out) [yea, and they seek them still, in regard they are fallen from that glorious state, wherein they were created and set by God] *many inventions.* [to wit, wicked, naughty, evil devices or practices. As if he had said, But this is a sure thing, that all mankind, both men and women, are corrupt and sinful; however no blame can be laid upon God, for he made man good, and after his own image; but all the blame lieth upon man himself, who brought himself, and all his posterity into that wretched

and damnable condition, by the seduction and instigation of the Devil, and by his own wilful disobedience.]

CHAP. VIII.

An exhortation to yield all due obedience to the King, or to the Magistrate, v. 2, &c. That men should not be too much troubled at approaching evil, 6. Next he relateth yet some other vanities of this life; as namely, how subjects are oppressed by evil Magistrates, 9. That many men continue in sin, because they are not presently punished, 11. However, they shall not escape punishment, 12. though oftentimes the godly are afflicted, and the wicked prosper in this world, 14. Thereupon he concludeth, that it is best in this life for a man to enjoy the gifts of God with cheerfulness, 15. Laying aside the unnecessary and superfluous care for the things of this life, 16.

WHo is like the wise? [Divers, both Hebrew and also other translations joyn the first words of this verse to the last verse of the seventh chapter] *and who knoweth the interpretation of things?* [As if he said, it is most certain, that a wise man excelleth all other men in worth and dignity, because he can interpret and answer all things well, and upon good grounds] *the wisdom of man lighteth his face*; [that is, it maketh him courteous and friendly. Oth. it giveth him the light of knowledge, so that he seeth very plainly and distinctly, how he ought to walk, and what he ought to do, or to leave undone, see above, ch. 2. 14.] *and the fierceness* [or cruelty. Heb. *strength or hardness*] *of his face is changed* (thereby.) [to wit, by wisdom; that is, he layeth the fierceness or cruelty aside, which commonly appeareth, and is seen in the face. See Deuteron. 28. 50. and Judges 14. 14. and the Annotations there]

2 *I* (say) *give heed to* [Heb. keep. It is a short abrupt phrase] *the mouth of the King*; [that is, that which the King saith, or that which he commandeth thee. The word, *mouth*, signifieth often a sentence, or words: and *words* signifieth often commands or precepts, as Exod. 17. 1. Compare, Prov. 24. 21.] *but according to the nature of the oath of God.* [that is, obey the King or the Magistrate so, as that in the mean while thou forsake not, nor forget the duty and oath whereby thou art principally bound and engaged unto God. Oth. *in regard of the oath of God, or because of the oath of God, or for the oath of Gods sake.*]

3 *Make no hast to go away from his* [To wit, the Kings] *face*; [to wit, through impatience, when he injoyne thee somewhat that pleaseth thee not: bewraying by thy speedy going away, that thou art loth to do that which the King injoyne thee. Oth. *to go away*, that is, to depart from his service, and to leave him. Some understand this and that which followeth, of God] *persist not in an evil thing*: [that is, maintain not a bad cause, stand not out in it, plead not for it. See the annotation. 2 Kings 23. on vers. 3. or do not obstinately persist in refusing to obey the Kings command] *for he doth whatsoever pleaseth him*, [to wit, the King, so that whensoever he pleaseth, he can be avenged on thee, and when he is once angered, he will soon punish thee.]

4 *Where the word* [That is, the command] *of a King is, there is dominion: and who shall say unto him, What dost thou?* [that is, why dost thou injoyne me this? The meaning is, when once the King commandeth his servants to punish thee, who dare oppose or withstand his power and swaying authority.]

5 *Who so keepeth the Commandment,* [To wit, the com-

commandment or precept of the King, which is not repugnant to the will and commandment of God] *shall feel no evil*; [that is, he shall not incur the displeasure and punishment of God, or of the King, or of the Magistrate. Compare Rom. 13. 3. Heb. *shall not know an evil thing*] and the heart of a wise man will know (both) *time and manner*. [that is, a wise man knoweth how to fit and frame himself to every occasion or opportunity he meeteth with, so as not to offend either God or the King.]

6 *For every purpose hath time and manner: Because the will of man is much over him.* [That is, man is subject to much misery and infirmity, therefore he ought to be wise and prudent in his affairs.]

7 *For he knoweth not what shall come to passe: for who shall certify him, when [Or how] it shall come to pass?* [that is, he knoweth not what God will do to him, as he likewise knoweth not the time when: and therefore he cannot prevent it. Therefore he ought continually to beg of God, an holy prudence, that he may know how to behave himself aright, compare above, ch. 6. 12.]

8 *There is no man that hath dominion over the spirit,* [To wit, when death seizeth upon a man] *to keep the spirit in*: [that is, to keep the breath, or the soul, or the spirit of life in the body, that it should not depart out of it. The Hebrew word signifieth as much as to shut and keep in a prison] *neither hath he any dominion over the day of death*: [or, in the day of death. That is, when death cometh to assault life, and that once the day of death is come, there is no way or means to escape death, compare Job 14. 5. and Psalm 39. 6.] *also (there is) no weapon* [that is, carnal weapons. Oth. *no disubarge*] *in this battel*, [that is, when life and death strive together, or fight one against another] *neither shall wickedness deliver its masters.* [as we commonly say, iniquity or justice smiteth its own master. Oth. *the disquiet stir*; as if he had said, that a man at one time intendeth this thing, at another time that thing, and is very busie and restless to attain to his intent and purpose, this likewise will not avail or profit him against death.]

9 *All this have I seen, when I applied mine heart unto all (or every) work that is done under the sun. There is a time that (one) man ruleth over (another) man, to his (own) hurt.* [To wit, either to the hurt of him that ruleth, or of him over whom he ruleth. Or, (I saw also) a time, wherein, &c. to wit, when an unrighteous or unjust man is advanced into the place of authority, and swayeth the scepter; whereas those that execute that office, ought chiefly and above all to seek the good and welfare of their subjects, Rom. 13. 4.]

10 *So have I also seen the wicked that were buried,* [That is, that were put in oblivion] *and (those that) came and went out of the place of the holy, they were forgotten in that City (in) which they had done judgement*: [understand here by the place of the holy one, the Temple, wherein the holy God dwelleth. To come, or to enter in, and to go forth, is as much here as to converse, or to be conversant in the house of God, and to exercise ones self in godliness. Others understand here by the holy place the place of Judicature, where the Judges sit in Gods room or place, and represent the person of God, God being there present with them, yea being president in the midst of them. Oth. understand this verse of the wicked, and render it thus; And then I saw the wicked, that they were buried and perished, and went away from the place of the holy, and were forgotten in the City wherein they had done so: that is, had governed wickedly.] *This* [to wit, this inconstancy and unthankfulness of the people] *is also vanity.*

11 *Because judgement (concerning) an evil deed is not speedily done, therefore the heart of the children of men is full in them to do evil.* [As if he had said, Because God often delayeth his righteous judgment con-

cerning the wicked, therefore they conceive that they shall alwayes remain unpunished, and therefore they fall to all manner of wickedness and profaneness, compare Psalm 50. on v. 21.]

12 *Though a sinner do evil an hundred (times), and (God) prolong his (dayes) yet I know surely that it shall go well with those that fear God,* [To wit, with a filial or child-like fear] *that fear before his face.* [that are afraid to offend him, see Psalm 37. 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20. Prov. 1. 33. 14. 3. 10.]

13 *But it shall not go well with the wicked,* [Understand withall, but he shall be punished at last, either here or hereafter] *neither shall he prolong (his) dayes*: [that is, he shall not live long, at least in quietness, and with a good conscience, which is true life indeed] *he shall be as a shadow,* [which soon passeth away, see Psalm 144. 4. Oth. *he shall not prolong his dayes, as a shadow*; which becomes long towards Sun-setting, as the Sun declineth or goeth down] *because he feareth not before the face of God.*

14 *There is (yet) a vanity which is done upon the earth*: That there are just men unto whom it happeneth, [Heb. *toucheth, hitteth*] according to the work of the wicked, [That is, as if they had done the works of wicked men] *and there are wicked men unto whom it happeneth, according to the work of the righteous.* [the meaning is, sometimes it fareth ill with the godly, and well with the wicked. See Psalm 73. 11, 12, 13, 14.] *I say* [or, I said,] *that this is also vanity.* [to wit, because no man can be assured, that he shall alwayes prosper in this world, because of his vertue and piety. Oth. *this is also vanity*; that is, this is a vain and absurd thing, according to the judgment of man.]

15 *Therefore I commended mirth, because a man hath nothing better under the sun,* [That is, as much as concerneth this temporal life] *then to eat, and to drink and to be merry*; [but so as that he alwayes have the fear of God before his eyes. See below, chap. 12. verse 13. Compare above, chap. 2. 24. and 3. 12, 22. and 5. 18. and 9. 7.] *for that shall cleave unto him of his labour*, [that is, that shall be his portion] *the dayes of his life which God giveth him under the sun.*

16 *When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to consider the business that is done upon the earth, that a man neither by day, nor by night seeth sleep with his eyes*; [That is, sleepeth not, to wit, by reason of care and trouble, which a man hath and undergoeth, for and about temporal riches. See above, chap. 2. verse 23, 24.]

17 *Then I beheld all the work of God: that a man cannot find out* [To wit, by his own wit or understanding] *the work that is done under the sun*: [to wit, Gods providence concerning the things that are done in the world; as namely, how this can stand with the righteous government of God, to punish the godly oftentimes so severely, and on the contrary, to bless the wicked so exceedingly] *to seek which (out)*. [that is, to understand which thing; to wit, to know how all things in the world are wisely and prudently governed by God] *a man labourerth, but he shall not finde it out: yea, if a wise man also should say,* [to wit, with himself in his heart] *that he knew it, yet (surely) he shall not be able to find it out.*

CHAP. IX.

The Preacher relateth certain things that happen both to the godly & to the wicked, v. 1, &c. Therefore he concludeth, that it is best for a man to enjoy the gifts of God with cheerfulness, 7. and to be diligent in his calling, 10. and

and to leave the issue to God, 11. Next he teacheth, that man knoweth not the time of his death or misery, 12. Lastly, he extollet wisdom in the highest degree, 13.

Surely all this have I laid (up) [Hebr. given, as above Chap. 7. 2.] in mine heart, [that is, I have taken all this to heart] that I might clearly understand [or, might declare] all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works are in the hand of God, [that is, are subject to the wise government of God] neither doth man know either love or hatred (by) all that is before his [to wit, mans] face. [that is, when a man shall judge according to outward things, which he seeth daily doth befall both good and bad; then no man can conclude or judge from thence, whether he be in Gods favour or displeasure, yea or no; much less can he conclude or judge it of another; for the godly are in this world as well, yea sometimes more plunged then the wicked, as v. 2. further followeth. Concerning the certainty or assurance which the children of God have of his love towards them, of that is elsewhere spoken.]

2 All (or every) thing happeneth to (them) [To wit, to the righteous and wise] as to all (others): [to wit, to the unrighteous and foolish. Hebr. all like as to all] one and the same thing [oth. one accident, as above chap. 2. v. 14. and below v. 3.] (happeneth) to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the clean, as to the unclean: as well to him that offereth, [that is, to him that diligently heedeth the worship of God] as to him that offereth not, as to the good, so (also) to the sinner: to him that sweareth, [that is, rashly, or falsely, making no conscience of perjury] like as to him that feareth an oath. [to wit, a rash oath, fearing to offend God thereby. The meaning is, adversity befalleth the righteous, as well as the wicked, and on the contrary prosperity befalleth the wicked as well as the godly.]

3 This is an evil among all that happeneth under the Sun, [As if he had said, this is that which sorely grieveth and vexeth a man] that one and the same thing [see above v. 2.] (happeneth) unto all, [to wit, men] and that also the heart of the children of men is full of wickedness, and that in their life [that is, during their life, or while they live] there are madneses in their heart: and after that [that is, after all the madneses which they have practised and committed all their life long] they must (go) to the dead. [to wit, go; that is, they must die. Compare Prov. 2. 18. and 9. 18.]

4 For for him that is accompanied with all the living [That is, for him that is yet alive] there is hope, [as if he should say, as long as a man is yet alive, he hath hope that it shall go well with him in this life, but when he is once dead, the hope is out, or at an end. Oth. for who is there that is hoped? to wit, from death, or that he should not die. Some take the words of v. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. as being spoken in the person of the wicked, and begin this fourth verse thus: For (say the wicked) for him that is yet, &c. Others attribute these words unto Salomon, whose opinion we follow] (for a living dog is better [or is in a better condition] then a dead lion.) [Hebr. it is better to, or, for a living dog, &c. that is, he is happier; to wit, because he may enjoy life.]

5 For the living know that they shall die: [The meaning is, because the living know that they must die, therefore do they with a merry heart enjoy these temporal goods, as long as they may] but the dead know nothing at all: [namely, of that which was done here upon Earth, as Salomon further sheweth, v. 6. For his purpose is not here to prove that the souls of men after the death of the body, perish and come to nothing. See Job. 14. 21.] they also have no reward more, [that is, they enjoy no more any comfort of their labour, in eat-

ing and drinking, as they did while they were alive] but the memory of them is forgotten. [that is, is had in oblivion; to wit, with men, namely, so far as concerneth these earthly things: no man is carefull, or inclined to do them any service, or to pleasure them.]

6 Also their love, also their hatred, also their envy is already perished: [That is, they know not what there is done in this world, neither do they enquire after it, therefore they love no man in this world, neither do they hate, or envy any man] neither have they any portion more in (this) age, [compare this with that which is said above 3. 11, and see the annotat. there. Oth. for ever; that is, never in this life] on all that is done under the Sun.

7 Go thy way (then) [To wit, whiles thou art yet alive] eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a good heart: [that is, with cheerfulness. See Judg. 16. on v. 25. and 1 King. 21. on v. 7. The meaning is, enjoy cheerfully that which God hath given thee by means of thy labour; for Salomon speaketh here to the godly] for God already delighteth in thy works. [to wit, because thou fearest him and gettest thy living by the labour whereunto thou art called; and consequently it is needless to vex and torment thy self with vain carking and distracting care: rest thy self satisfied and contented in the wise providence of Almighty God, and in the love and affection which he beareth unto thee.]

8 Let thy garments be alwaies [To wit, as long as thou mayest have it so. For there may come a time that we may grieve with those that grieve. See above chap. 7. 2.] white, [that is, pure, clean] and let no oil [to wit, sweet-smelling oil, see the annotat. Ruth 3. on v. 3. and Luke 7. 46.] be wanting upon thine head. [that is, be merry or joyfull. A token of this joy or mirth was in times past, the wearing of pure white garments, and the anointing of the head with sweet-smelling oil or ointment.]

9 Enjoy life with the wife whom thou lovest, [Hebr. see life, &c. that is, enjoy the delights and sweetness of this life all manner of waies, as much as thou canst or maigest with the leave of God; and with the peace of a good conscience. See Job 7. on v. 7. Here life signifieth as much as a good and joyfull life] all the dayes of thy vain life, [Hebr. of the life of thy vanity; that is, as long as thy vain and transitory life lasteth] whith [to wit, dayes. Compare above chap. 8. on v. 15. Others understand by, with, which wife] (God) hath given thee under the Sun, all thy vain daies; for this is thy portion in this life, and of thy labour which thou labourst under the Sun. [that is, that which thou maigest enjoy of the goods which thou hast gotten by thy labour.]

10 Whatsoever thine hand findeth [See Lev. 25. on v. 28. and Judg. 9. on v. 33.] to do, [to wit, whatsoever is good, and tender to the furthering and advancing of thy calling] do (it) with thy might, [that is, do it as diligently and as well as thou canst] for there is no work nor deliberation, [or, reason, understanding, apprehension] nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest. [that is, when thou art dead, thou shalt not be able to do any of all those good things, which thou doest in this life.]

11 I turned me, and saw under the Sun, that the race belongeth not to the swift, nor the battel to the champions, neither also meat [Hebr. bread] to the wise, nor also riches to men of understanding, [he speaketh of successful race, whereby a man out-runneeth the danger: and of successful battell, whereby a man getteth the victory. The same is not alwaies on the side of the swift; So neither is the victory alwaies on the side of the strong and valiant champions, &c. but with those unto whom God giveth his blessing] nor also favour to well-knowing men [as if he had said, to attain unto favour with men, thereunto it availeth not for a man to

be skil'd or able and well experienced? Understand with-
all, unless God adde a blessing thereunto] *but that time
and chance happeneth to them all.* [that is, that which
God from all eternity hath ordained, the same shall and
must come to pass at such a time, as God hath ordained
it should be, and likewise in such a way and manner,
as he hath ordained it shall be done. For Solomon speak-
eth not of any uncertain chance or casualty, but of such
a one which is ruled and governed by God.]

12 *That man also knoweth not his time, as the fishes
that are caught with the evil net;* [That is, with an
evil net. For when the fishes are caught, they are then
killed, Thus straightway in this verse time is called evil,
in regard of the evil that befalleth a man in it] *man
knoweth not his time,* [to wit, the time of his death, or
the time of misery, that shall come upon him: yea he
knowes it no more then the silly fishes that swim in the
water know what danger is at hand, or approaching un-
to them. See the annotat. Psa. 81. on v. 16.] *and as
the birds that are caught with the snare: as they, (so)
are the children of men snared in an evil time, when it
falleth suddenly upon them.*

13 *This wisdom have I seen also under the Sun,
and it was great with me.* [That is, in my judge-
ment.]

14 *There was a little city, and a few men were in it;
and (there) was come a great King against it, and he com-
passed it about, and he built great bulwarks against
it.*

15 *And (there) was found in it a poor wise man, who by
his wisdom delivered the city; but no man remembered
that same poor man.* [That is, no man gave him thanks,
as they ought to have done, for his good counsel, where-
upon the deliverance followed. Oth. no man thought on
that poor man; that is, no man ever thought that that
poor man was so wise.]

16 *Then said I, wisdom is better then strength,
[Compare Prov. 21. 22. and 24. 5. above chap. 7. 19.]
although the poor mans wisdom was despised, and his
words were not heard.* [that is, were not esteemed.]

17 *The words of the wise ought to be heard in quiet,
[Hebr. in rest] more then the cry of him that ruleth over
fools.* [as if he should say, they ought to be heard with
greater attention, then the cry of fools. Or the words
may be taken in this sence, those that keep themselves
quiet, ought to be sooner and rather heard, then those
that make a great noise, when they are among fools.]

18 *Wisdom is better then weapons of war:* [Hebr.
then the vessels, or instruments of war] *but one sinner
destroyeth much good.* [that is, one foolish man giving
ill counsel. Yea even when a wise man committeth
an error, many good things miscarry thereby, and like-
wise his own reputation and credit. By the word sinner
may be also understood here, a bold presumptuous man,
that relying on himself, whether it be in his own wis-
dom, or in his own strength, unadvisedly assaulteth his
Enemy, whereby he endangereth not only himself, but
also in like manner many more with him.]

CHAP. X.

*Salomon recommendeth wisdom to every man, and adviseth
every one to beware of folly, v. 1. &c. and he instruct-
eth how men should behave themselves in the presence
of the King, when he is offended, 4. although it often
fall out that wicked men are advanced to honour by the
King, and the Godly despised, 5. Then he speaketh of
the imprudence of some men, 8. And he speaketh a-
gain, how profitable that wisdom is, and how hurtfull
that folly is, 10. &c. especially in a Prince, 16. &c.
who may not be cursed, 20.*

A Dead fly causeth the ointment of the Apothecarie,
[That is, an ointment or oil, that is prepared and
made very artificially and curiously by the skill and art of
the Apothecarie] *to sink (and) bubble up:* [Hebr. *flies
of death causeth to sink;* that is, every dead fly causeth
to sink. The meaning is, though a fly be but a very
little creature, yet it causeth a sweet smelling oil or oint-
ment to sink; to wit, if it fall into it, and continue
there] *(so doth) a little folly a (man) that is precious in
wisdom, (and) in power.* [that is, because of his wis-
dom and honour. The meaning is, so is also a little fol-
ly the cause, that a man of note and esteem loseth his
reputation and credit.]

2 *A wise mans heart is at his right (hand)* [That is,
a wise man manageth and ordereth his affairs well and
wisely, pondering all things before-hand in his heart]
but a fools heart is at his left hand. [that is, he mana-
geth his affairs foolishly. We ought in no wise to con-
clude from these words, that Solomon here would infer,
that the heart of wise men is or lieth otherwise in their
bosom then the heart of fools doth in theirs; for the heart
both of wise men & also of fools lieth in the midst of the
breast, tending or declining a little toward the left side.
It is a similitude taken from the right hand and left, in
the performing of any business, either well or ill. The
most and the greatest part of men use the right hand to
do a thing well; so that when a man doth a thing well
and with wisdom or judgement (which proceedeth from
the heart) it seemeth, that he then hath his heart lying
at his right hand, to manage his affairs aright: On the
contrary, he that manageth his affairs not well, nor
conveniently, or wisely, he seemeth to have his heart ly-
ing at his left hand.]

3 *And also when the fool walketh on the way, his heart
faileth (him):* [That is, then the infirmities of his
heart appear and are discovered] *and he saith to every
one,* [that is, to every one that teeth him go or walk in
the streets] *that he is a fool.* [that is, he doth sufficient-
ly bewray (to wit, by his gait, behaviour, apparel and
gesture) that he is none of the wisest. Oth. he saith of
every one, that he (to wit, that man of whom he speak-
eth) is a fool]

4 *When the spirit* [That is, the anger. See the an-
notat. Judg. 8. on v. 3.] *of the Ruler riseth up against
thee, leave not thy place;* [that is, thy calling, office,
state and condition of life. Oth. *leave not thy place;*
that is, behave and carry thy self, as it becometh a sub-
ject to do, namely, submissive and humble] *for it is
necessary, it purifieth great sins.* [which otherwise a Ru-
ler in his wrath might commit against thee; therefore
seek rather to assuage and soften his anger with sweet and
gentle words. It may also be taken in this sence, soft and
humble words pacifie, that is, prevent, or remove, or
cover great offences or trespasses, which thou mightest
have committed against the Prince. Oth. *softness, or
meekness, or mildness,* (that is, meek or mild yielding)
pacifieth great offences.

5 *There is (yet) an evil (which) I have seen under
the Sun, as an error which proceedeth* [That is, is com-
mitted] *from the face of the Ruler:* [that is, a great
fault, that is, as are the faults that proceed from Prin-
ces, or from the great ones of the land; for the greater
and higher any man is in place and authority, the greater
and more hurtfull are also the faults that are commit-
ted by him.]

6 *A fool* [Or the fool] *is set in great* [or, in many]
dignities: [that is, sots or idiots that are altogether
unfit to govern and rule others, and to bear office, are
advanced to places of honour and command. It pleaseth
God sometimes that such should govern cities and coun-
tries, that he might punish them by such kind of go-
vernours. Hebr. *folly is,* &c. that is, such a man that
is folly it self] *but the rich,* [to wit, in wisdom, or
those

those that are rich in understanding, or those that are both rich and wise; that is, that have knowledge and understanding enough, to be in place of command, or to bear offices well] *sit in low place*. [that is, in low degree, in humility.]

7 *I have seen servants* [That is, such as had a servile and foolish spirit, or nature, or that were descended from servants and slaves] *on horse-back: and Princes* [that is, valiant, understanding, wise men, that have such a spirit, or such a courage as Princes have, or at least ought to have] *going as servants upon the ground*. [that is, going on foot, yea even ministering unto others.]

8 *Who so diggeth a pit, shall fall into it*: [That is, he that intendeth mischief to another, it shall fare ill with him, by the just judgement of God. See Prov. 26. 27. Solomon sheweth in this and in the 9. verse, by four similitudes, how dangerous and hurtfull imprudence and want of circumspection is. See Psa. 62. on v. 4.] *and who so breaketh thorow a wall, a Serpent shall bite him*. [serpents lie commonly hid in the clefts and chinks, or in the holes of walls, when the walls are broken down, then they appear, and come to light, and bite or sting those whom they first meet with. It seemeth that Solomon here saith that those that break either the Ecclesiastical or Political lawes and ordinances, they shall not go unpunished.]

9 *Who so carrieth away* [Or removeth] *stones*, [to wit, great stones, that are too heavy for him to remove. Oth. the stones which separate his neighbours landmarks or bounds from his own, thereby to enlarge his own ground. See Deu. 27. 17.] *shall endure grief thereby*: [the meaning is, as those that lift up heavy stones, or remove them, or carry them from one place to another, do labour painfully: so all offices and high places have their difficulty] *who so cleaveth wood, shall be in danger thereby*. [so as that in cleaving he may easily hurt or wound either his hand, or foot, or some other member of his body. Oth. he shall grow warm thereby. In this signification is the Hebrew word taken, 1 Kings 1. 2. The meaning is, that businesses of great weight and concernment are not performed, but with great trouble, much sweat and difficulty.]

10 *If he* [To wit, he that will cleave wood with a blunt axe] *hath made the iron* [that is, an iron tool, whether it be an axe or such like tool] *blunt, and he do not whet the edge*, [Heb. *the face*; that is, the foremost part which cleaveth the wood] *then must he* [to wit, he that will cleave with a blunt axe] *put forth more strength*: [Heb. *then must he strengthen the powers*] *but wisdom is an excellent thing to make (something) straight*. [that is, wisdom is the best help or means to make a thing right or straight indeed. Oth. but wisdom is an excellent direction; that is, when a man would do a business of concernment well and in a right manner; then it is not strength and force as in cleaving of wood, but wisdom and understanding that doth the thing.]

11 *If the serpent have bitten before the enchantment be done*, [Or before the enchantment, before she is enchanted. Heb. *without enchantment*] *then there is no benefit for the most excellent (enchanter)*. [that is, then the enchanter's enchantment doth not benefit him at all, but her sting is deadly. See Psa. 58. v. 5. and 140. v. 4. Heb. *then there is nothing left for the master of the tongue*. That is, for him that useth his tongue to charming or enchanting. See the like phrase Gen. 14. 13. and Psa. 140. 12. Understand withall, in like manner it will not benefit a subject, that he then first seeketh and endeavourieth to pacifie his Prince with intreating and submissive words, after that the Prince hath begun to punish him in his wrath and displeasure: and so likewise in general, that it is in vain to use means against an e-

vill or mischief, when it is too late. Oth. *if the serpent bite, not being charmed, then the babbler is no better*.]

12 *The words of a wise mans mouth are gracious*: [Heb. *are favour*; that is, they make a wise man gracious; and consequently they are advantageous and profitable unto him] *but the lips of a fool swallow up himself*. [that is, they bring him into trouble.]

13 *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his mouth* [That is, of the words of his mouth] *is wicked madness*, [that is, is mischeivous madness; because his madness increaseth still more and more.]

14 *The fool maketh many words*: [That is, he maketh a great deal of chatting of that which he intendeth to do, telling others what he will, and how he will do it, as if he could effect and accomplish whatsoever he will or intendeth. But he shall be deceived in his own vain hope. See Jam. 4. 13, 14.] *(but) a man knoweth not what it is that shall come to pass; and what* [Or, *how*] *shall come to pass after him, who shall tell it him?*

15 *The labour of fools maketh every one of them* [Heb. *him*; that is, every one of them] *weary, because they know not (how) to go to the city*. [that is, a fool may be compared to him, that desiring to go to a city, knoweth not the way to it, and therefore with much ado he goeth thither, through crooked paths and by-waies. The meaning is, he knoweth not how, or in what manner he shall effect and accomplish that which he intendeth or purposeth. Others take the words of this verse in this sense: fools, or many men void of understanding are often carefull and troubled about many businesses of high and mighty concernment, wherein they exceedingly vex and torment themselves, whereas indeed they are ignorant of common and trivial things, which are as plain and as well known as the streets, or the way or common road leading to a city, which is even known unto children and simple persons. It seemeth to be a proverb, whereby great ignorance is meant or descryed.]

16 *Wo to thee, (o) land*, [That is, the inhabitants of the land] *whose King is a child*: [whether in years or in understanding, see Isa. 3. 4.] *and whose Princes* [that is, Councillers, Officers, Judges, and the like persons in authority, or bearing great offices] *eat* [that is, feast and make good cheer] *in the morning*. [that is, at an unseasonable and unfit time; to wit, at such time as they ought to sit in judgement, and to be in counsel. See Jer. 21. 12. Compare Isa. 16. 11. and Amos 6. 4.]

17 *Blessed art thou (o) land, whose King is the Son of the Nobles*: [That is, that is of a noble birth, of a noble stock or race. Understand withall, and that is trained up in piety, wisdom, and all vertue. Heb. *a son of white ones*; that is, of nobles, that were wont to wear white garments. See Nebem. 2. on v. 16. in Prov. 22. 29. the ignoble or mean men are called *darkned, or obscure ones*] *and whose Princes eat in due season*, [that is, at the time when men are wont to eat; to wit, after they have dispatched their necessary business] *for strength, and not for (much) drinking*. [that is, to strengthen the body, not to be drunk.]

18 *Through great laziness* [Heb. *two lazinesses*; that is, double laziness, or laziness of both hands] *the cieling groweth weak*: [Oth. *the rafters, or beams sink*; that is, the house goeth to decay, and all goeth to waste] *and through slackness* [Or *letting down*] *of the hands the house becometh leaking thorow*. [Or *the house leaketh thorow*. Understand withall, how much more shall the land perish and come to nought, where careless and negligent princes, and such as are given to all manner of licentiousness, bear rules.]

19 *Feasts* [Heb. *bread*, as Dan. 5. 1.] *are made* [Heb. *they are making*] *for to laugh*, [that is, for merriment, to be joyfull and merry together] *and wine* *rejoiceth*

rejoiceth the living: [at the life] and money answereth all things. [or money causeth all things to answer: that is, it maketh every thing to be present. All things are under the obedience or command of money; therefore every one ought to be diligent and careful, that by his honest labour, and by the use of lawfull means, he may gather something afore-hand, and lay up somewhat in store.]

20 *Curse not the King, even in thy thought.* [Or, in thy conscience, or heart. As if he had said, Though it fareth thus in the Courts of Kings and Princes, yet do not think or speak any evil of them: yea, even not in the innermost and secretest place of thine house, as is further expained in the following words. Compare *Exod. 22. 28.*] *neither curse the rich in the innermost (part) of thy bed-chamber; for the fowles of heaven would carry the voice away,* [to wit, unto the King, who should be certified thereof in a most wonderful manne,] *and the winged (creatures)* [Heb. the Lord, or the possessor of wings or feathers: that is, the creatures that have wings; as *Prov. chap. 1. on v. 17.*] *shall make the word [or the matter] known.* [to wit, unto the King; who will punish thee, when he heareth that thou hast cursed him. The meaning is, speak not evil of the King, or of those that are in authority, for it will not long lie hid, it will out at last, though the fowls of the air should be the means or the instruments to bring it out, or to discover it. Kings and Princes have many ears and many eyes, as well as they have long hands.]

CHAP. XI.

An exhortation to liberality unto the poor, without regarding their unworthinesse, v. 1. &c. having the providence of God alwayes before our eyes, 5. yet without neglecting the taking of pains, 6. Life is sweet unto men, yet there are more evil dayes then good, 7. An exhortation unto young men, that they would alwayes in the midst of their pleasures and delights think of the day of judgment, 9.

Cast thy bread upon the water: [That is, do well unto every one, both to those whom thou knowest, and also to those whom thou knowest not. Hebr. upon the face of the water, or of the waters, Meaning, by the water, the poor, who have nothing wherewith to recompense a man again, so that it seemeth to be lost, whatever is given unto them. So we are likewise used to say, of a thing which we conceive to be lost and gone. It is all one, as if it were cast into the water, or thrown into the sea] *for thou shalt find it after many dayes.* [Hebr. after multitude of dayes; that is, after many dayes are expired. The meaning is, God will restore it unto thee again, yea oftentimes also the man himself, unto whom long before thou hast shewed some kindnesse or relief.]

2 *Give a portion* [To wit, thine almes or thy bread] *to seven,* [a certain number for an uncertain, as *Prov. 6. v. 16. Mich. 5. 5.* so are likewise the words following, *and also to eight,* to be understood. Christ saith, *Give to every one that asketh, Luke 6. 30.* compare *Deut. 15. 7, 8.*] *yea also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.* [as if he should say, the time may come, that thou shalt be bereaved of all that thou hast, and be made a beggar. Then shalt thou wish, that others would afford thee liberal assistance: Do thou then likewise so unto others. See *Luke 16. 9. Galat. 6. 9. 2 Corinth. 9. 10.*]

3 *When the clouds are grown full, then they pour down* [Heb. when they empty] *showers of rain upon the earth:* [intimating, that the rich ought plentifully to shew their

liberality unto the poor, as the rain doth plentifully water the dry ground, without distinction of places or fields: God causeth his rain to fall on the evil, as well as on the good] *as the tree falleth toward the South, or as it falleth toward the North, in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be.* [the meaning is, as a tree that once falleth, or is felled, riseth not again, nor beareth any more fruit: so likewise when we are once dead, be it in what state or condition soever according to the soul, we shall not rise again, to enter again into this temporal life; so that after we are dead, we shall not be able to give or communicate any thing unto the poor; and therefore we ought to do good, while we are yet alive. See *Galat. 6. 10.*]

4 *Who so observeth the winds, he shall not sow, and who so regardeth the clouds, he shall not reap.* [As if he should say, he that too curiously mindeth winde and weather, and from time to time still looketh for better weather, not intending to sow, till he hath weather wholly according to his mind, he will not easily fall upon the work of sowing, but will let slip the fittest season and opportunity of sowing: so likewise he that in harvest-time, or in the time of reaping, too much regardeth wind and weather, will neglect also the reasonable time and opportunity of reaping. Some apply these words to the distribution of almes, thus: So likewise, if a man should too scrupulously think of all changes and alterations of times, as if he should think that he himself might grow poor, &c. Or, if he should think of the unworthinesse and unthankfulnesse of the poor, &c. He that scrupleth those things, he will never give almes, and by doing so, he will never do that which he ought to do.]

5 *As thou knowest not what is the way of the wind,* [To wit, whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, how long and how mightily it will blow out of one part or corner of the world, *Job. 3. 8.*] *(or) of what fashion (or quality) the bones are in the womb of a (woman) with child:* [Heb. of a full (woman).] By the bones here must be understood the whole bulk or fruit, or the child in the mothers womb, compare *Psal. 139. 15, 16.*] *so thou knowest not the work of God, who maketh all.* [Or which he doth unto, or, with all. That is, thou knowest not, neither indeed canst know the providence of God, nor understand or apprehend what he in his most wise counsel hath decreed; how long thou shalt have and keep thy goods: therefore leave thy unnecessary and unprofitable care, and do good unto the poor, as long as God granteth thee life and power to do it.]

6 *In the morning* [That is, betimes] *sow thy seed, and in the evening with-draw not thine hand:* [to wit, from sowing, or from casting the seed into the ground] *for thou knowest not what shall be right, either this or that;* [that is whether that will grow, which thou hast sown in the evening, or whether that will better grow which thou hast sown in the morning] *or whether they both shall be good together.* [Heb. as one, that is, alike good.]

7 *Moreover,* [Or truly, or surely. As if he had said, It is true indeed, &c.] *the light* [that is, this temporal life, that a man may behold the light of the Sun] *is sweet,* [that is, it is pleasing and acceptable unto man] *and it is good,* [that is, it is a pleasant thing] *for the eyes to behold the Sun.*

8 *But if a man live many years, (and) rejoyce in them all; then let him also remember the dayes of darknesse;* [That is, let him remember death; for the dead are laid in the grave, where there is darknesse] *for they shall be many; (and) whatsoever is come,* [that is, whatsoever hath befallen him] *is vanity.* [that is, he shall be faine to confess, that there is nothing permanent and perpetual in this life, wherein a man may fully rejoyce.]

9 *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee,* [Heb. do thee good] *in the dayes of thy youth.*

youthfulness, and walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in the contemplation of thine eyes; [that is, in all that is pleasing and delightful to thine eyes, follow that freely, take thy pleasure in this life. Do whatsoever thine heart desireth, and whatsoever is pleasing and acceptable to thine eyes. From these words it appeareth plainly, that Salomon speaketh not here in good earnest, but Ironically, and by way of derision, against those that speak and mean, that which is here mentioned, in good earnest; namely, that youthful years ought or may be spent in pleasures and delights. In *Numb. 15 39*. the Lord forbiddeth to walk in the wayes of the heart] but know, that God for all these things will cause thee to come before judgment. [As if he had said, thou wilt be loath to come thither, but God will make thee come, to give an account of all that thou hast spoken and done, see below, chap. 12. 14.]

10 So then cause wrath to depart from thine heart, [Under the term, *wrath*, he comprehendeth all evil motions of the heart, which do disturb or disquiet it, when they are exhorted to forsake pleasures and delights, and to imbrace the fear of God. Others understand by *wrath*, sin, which provoketh the wrath of God against men. Oth. *grief, trouble, sorrow, &c.*] and put away evil, [that is, all manner of evil concupiscence, and evil lusts or sins] from thy flesh: [that is, from thy body, see *Rom. 6. 13.* and *1 Cor. 6. 15.*] for youth and young age [the word that is used in the Hebrew text, signifieth properly the morning or break of day. Youth or childhood are as the morning of a mans life. The morning is soon gone, the day passeth swift away, and the presently night followeth, wherein none can work] is vanity. [in regard it is transitory, passing soon away, and full of folly.]

CHAP. XII.

The wise man exhorteth young men to apply and accustom themselves unto piety, before old age cometh, v. 1. which he describeth by many comparisons, 2, &c. Hereupon followeth the conclusion of this Book, that all is vanity, 8. And he concludeth, that the sum of all learning is this, To fear God, and to keep his commandments. 13.

AND remember thy Creator [The Hebrew word is used in the plural number. Compare the annotation. *Gen. 1. on v. 26.* The meaning is, apply and inure thy self to the fear of God, and to the keeping of his commandments] in the dayes of thy youthfulness, before the evil dayes [that is, the dayes of old age, which bring much pain and grief along with them: for old age is as a continual disease or sickness] come, and the years draw nigh, whereof thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

2 Before the Sun, and the Light, and the Moon, and the Stars be darkened, [Not that they are darkened indeed, but that they seem to be so unto those that are old, being half blind] and the clouds return after the rain. [that is, one misery cometh after another, as one tempest followeth after another. This verse, and some more that follow, contain a description of old age, after the manner of the Poets, and there is a continual Allegorie prosecuted until the seventh verse.]

3 In the day, when the keepers of the house [That is, the arms with the hands, which preserve the body (wherein the soul dwelleth, as in an house) serving to keep off evil, and to entertain and imbrace good] shall tremble, and the strong men [that is, the legs or shanks, which bear the body, like two strong men] shall bow themselves, and the grinders [that is, the teeth, which (as it were) grinde the meat, chewing and biting it in pieces] cease, [to wit, from grinding, that is, from chewing. The meaning is, when the teeth shall not be so nimble to chew meat, as formerly] because they are grown lesse:

[to wit, lesse in number] and those that look out of the windows [that is, the eyes, that see or look from between the eye-lids] shall be darkened.

4 And the two doors [That is, the two lips thorow which the meat passeth, as between two doors. Compare, *Job 41. 5.* Others understand by the doors the throat, or pipe thorow which the meat and drink do pass] toward the street [That is, which are seen outwardly in the body. There are also inward doors which are not seen, as the covering of the throat, and the covering of the bladder of the gall] shall be shut, [to wit, instead of opening them, when they should receive or take in hard meat. Some understand this thus: when the doors, that is, the lips, shall be shut, because old persons have an impediment in their speech, not being able to frame and utter their words so well as young men do] when there is [or, because of] a low sound of grinding, [to wit, when the teeth doe grinde the meat in pieces, or grind it small. The meaning is, because the teeth can hardly chew, so that a man can hear nothing crack or break between or under them, as is heard, when young men chew and bite hard meat in pieces, having good teeth, which old persons seldome or never have] and he [to wit, the old man] riseth up [to wit, from his bed] at the voice of the bird, [that is, early in the morning, when the birds begin to sing, for he cannot sleep to take rest] and all the singing women [Heb. the daughters of the song; that is, the singing women. Understand withall the singing men also, or the Musicians. Oth. All the daughters of the song, that is, all the parts or members of the body, which form or frame the voice] shall be bowed down. [or, shall bow; that is, shall perish, decrease, lose their strength; or shall be little esteemed, and counted of no value; inasmuch as the old man regardeth it not, as taking no more any delight in musick. See an example heretofore in *Barthillai, 2 Sam. 19. 35.*]

5 Also (when) they [To wit, old persons] shall be afraid of the high place [or, of high places; that is, of high exalted, or uneven places, which old men and women are loth to tread on, by reason of the weakness of their legs, fearing to stumble at them, or to fall down from off them, or because it is troublesome and cumbersome to them to climb up high stairs or hills] and (when) there shall be terrors in the way, [or amazements; to wit, great or many: Fearing, that they may hit their feet or toes against something] and the almond-tree shall flourish, [when there shall be gray or hoary hairs there] and the grass-hopper shall be a burden to himself, [that is, the old man, who is grown as lean, crooked, and withered as a grass-hopper. Oth. and a grass-hopper, that is, a thing as light as a grass-hopper] is burdensome to him, and the desire [to wit, after bodily pleasures and delights, also the appetite to eating, drinking, &c.] shall perish: for man goeth to his everlasting house, [that is, to the grave; for there shall man abide a long while. As if he had said, When a man is sensible of all those inconveniences and distempers in his body, he may then well imagine, that he is nigh unto death, yea, that he hath one foot already in the grave] and the mourners [that is, those persons that see the dead put into the grave, and which do bewail and lament them, or mourne over them; for which purpose certain persons in former time were wont to be hired. See the annotation. *Jerem. 9. on v. 17.*] shall go about in the street.

6 Before the silver cord be unchained [That is, before the marrow or pith in the back-bone be loosed. This marrow is white like silver, and it is extended from the brain all along the back-bone, like unto a cord or rope. Others understand here by the silver cord, the arteries. Oth. removed. Oth. chained or bound; that is, dried and stiffened] and the golden bowl be beaten in pieces, [by the golden bowl is meant, the same thin membrane or skin, wherein the brains lie, or which is of a gold colour.

lour. Others understand here by the *golden bowl*, the skull, wherein the brains lie shut up. Which likewise perisheth by death, and is as it were broken asunder] *and the pitcher be broken at the fountain*, [by the pitcher here is meant the chief great hollow vain, at or about the liver, called *Vena cava*] *and the wheel beaten in pieces at the well*; [by the wheel here is meant, the lungs, which by their continual motion do at one time thrust out the breath from them, and at another time draw it in again, resemble the wheel of a well, now drawing up the bucket towards it self, anon letting it down again into the well.]

7 *And the dust return to the earth as it was*: [By dust here, is meant the body, which in the beginning was taken out of, and made of earth, *Gen. 3. 19.* see *Job 7. v. 5.*] *and the spirit* [that is, the soul. See *Numb. 16. 22.* and *27. 16.*] *return unto God*, [to wit, into heaven. It is to be understood, that Salomon here onely speaketh to the people of God. Some understand it of the souls both of believers and unbelievers, which are both sentenced by God, as supreme Judge, immediately when man dieth, every one to their place, the souls of believers to heaven, of unbelievers to hell. Compare, *Luke 16. 22.*] *who gave it* [see *Gen. 2. 7.* *Numb. 16. 22.*]

8 *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, it is all vanity.* [See above, ch. 1. 2. compare *Psa 62. 9.* and *144. 4.*]

9 *And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge*, [That is, good doctrines, he being converted, did likewise convert and teach others] *and gave good heed*, [oth. he pondered or weighed; to wit, in the scales of wisdom] *and searched out* [oth. examined] *he set in order many proverbs.* [Salomon spake many proverbs, *1 Kings 4. 32.* whereof onely the Book of the Proverbs, and the Book called *Ecclesiastes*, (in Hebrew, *Cobelet*) is come to our hands. And understand here, under the name of *Proverbs*, most excellent wise sentences or sayings, treating of the life and manners of men, and of the course of the world, see the annotat. *1 Kings 4.* on v. 32.]

10 *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words*, [Or, matters, things] *and that which is written, is right*, [or rightly constituted, ordered aright; that is, such, against which no man hath justly any thing to say] *(even) words of truth.*

11 *The words of the wise are as goods*, [Intimating, that as oxen are driven on, or made to plow, by the pricking of the goads or sharp pins, that so likewise men ought to be put on by sharp and earnest exhortations to the practice of vertue and piety, and to the loathing and

abhorring of worldly vanity] *and as nails knock deep in* [Heb. *implanted*] *(by) the masters of the assemblies*, [or of the Congregation; that is, of the Teachers of the Congregation] *(that)* [or which; to wit, words of the wise; or which, to wit, nails] *are given by the onely Shepherd.* [Heb. *by one shepherd*; to wit, by God, who is the Shepherd and Keeper of his people, *Psal. 23.* and who sending forth his Prophets and Ministers, enlighteneth and enableth them by his Spirit, see *John 10. 11.* *1 Pet. 1. 11.* and ch. 5. 4. Oth. *by the first shepherd.*]

12 *And whatsoever is above them, my son be warned*: [Above them, to wit, the words of the wise, and of the onely shepherd. Oth. Moreover, my son, be by these admonished or exhorted. Heb. properly, be enlightened; to wit, by the Proverbs that are contained in this Book, and especially also in the Book of my Proverbs, and other Books beside. Thou hast enough with these, observe these but well, and take heed of receiving and entertaining that which the Philosophers or wise men of the world have written concerning the chief good and happiness of man, for these were not led by the spirit of God, and therefore have stept far aside from the right way] *of making many Books* [to wit, as the Philosophers, the wise men of the world, have done] *(there) is no end, and much reading* [or, too much reading. Oth. too much study] *is a wearying to the flesh.* [that is, of man. The meaning is, it maketh the head and the brains weary.]

13 *Of all that hath been heard*, [That is, all that, whereunto this Sermon of mine tended, concerning the chief good] *the end* [that is, the conclusion or summe] *of the matter is, Fear God*, [by whom alone thou canst obtain the supreme good and salvation, but not by any earthly or transitory thing] *and keep his Commandments*; [compare, *Deut. 6. 2.* and *10. 12.* *Prov. 3. 7.*] *for this (becometh) all men.* [Oth. for this is the whole (work or duty) of man; that is, he ought to make it his whole business, or his whole employment; this is the most principal end of mans life: or, this is the whole of man; that is, absolute and perfect happiness: or herein consisteth his welfare and salvation. Oth. of the whole man.]

14 *For God shall bring every work* [Or, every deed or action; that is, all mens deeds and works] *into judgment, with all that is hidden, whether (it be) good, or whether (it be) evill.* [For at the last day will God judge the very secret thoughts of men, *Rom. 2. 16.* *Hebr. 1. 34.* Compare, *1 Corinth. 4. 5.* and *2 Cor. 5. 10.*]

The end of the Book of the P R E A C H E R.

CAN-



CANTICLES,

OR,

The High Song of SALOMON.

The Argument of this BOOK.

THe Author or Pen-man of this Book is Salomon, who wrote the same by the Dictate and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. It is a Dialogue between CHRIST, as the Bridegroom, and his Church, as his Spouse or Bride, under the type or figure of Salomon and his Spouse or Bride, in manner and form, as in the fourth Psalm. Likewise in this Song the friends of the Bridegroom, and also the Bride-maids, or companions of the Spouse, do sometimes speak and act their parts. Under the name of the Friends of the Bridegroom, may be understood the true, sincere, godly Prophets of the Old Testament, and the holy and blessed Apostles of the New Testament, together with all the faithful Preachers or Teachers and Defenders of the Church. Under the name of the Bride-maids, or companions of the Spouse, may be understood the professors of the name of JESUS CHRIST, and of true Religion. Under the name of the Bridegroom, and of the Bride or Spouse, are described in this Song, in flourishing and Rhetorical words, the true hearty love, and the most excellent benefits and favours of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, the Bridegroom, unto the Christian Church, his Spouse or Bride: And on the contrary, the earnest and hearty longing of the Spouse, his Church, after her beloved Bridegroom, the Lord JESUS CHRIST. Also in this Book is represented unto us the state and condition of the Church of God here upon earth: As likewise her virtues, and also her blemishes and imperfections.

The Jewish Rabbins or Doctors would have none to read the first Chapter of Genesis, neither this High Song of Salomon, nor the beginning, nor the end of the Prophet Ezechiel, until he were thirty years old, but wrongfully and out of superstition; howbeit the mysterious sentences and matters that are therein contained & treated of, require a very mature, soiled, and well-exercised understanding, as likewise moderated and sanctified affections, very requisite and necessary for the right apprehending of the deep mysteries and secrets therein contained. With the expositions which are hereunto annexed for illustration or enlightening, are nevertheless not rejected other Scriptural interpretations which might be thereunto applied.



CANTICLES,

OR,

The High Song of

SALOMON.

CHAP. I.

In this Chapter is first described unto us the great, and earnest longing of the Church after the grace and favour of Christ, vers. 1, &c. Her outward contemptible countenance, but inward beauty, 5. Together with her danger among false brethren, 6. And her longing after Christ, 7. A consolation and instruction of Christ unto his Church, 8. The great joy of the Spouse because of the love of Christ unto her, 12. Christs delight in his Church, 15. And the Churches love unto her Bridegroom, 16.

THE High song, [Heb. the song of songs : that is, a very fair, and exceeding excellent song. See the annotat. Genes. 9. 25.] which is Salomons. [Oth. which concerneth Salomon. Understanding by Salomon Jesus Christ, of whom Salomon was a type, in his Royal dignity and glory, as also in his wisdom, and in his teaching and instructing of the people.]

2 *Let him* [To wit, my Bridegroom Jesus Christ. They are the words of the Spouse ; that is, of the Church of Jesus Christ] *kisse me* [That is, let him shew or manifest his love unto me. Oth. *Oh that my Bridegroom would kisse me* ! To kisse one another was at all times held to be a token of love, friendship, and courtesie : in token whereof, men were also used to kisse one another, Exod. 4. 27. and 18. 7. Rom. 16. 16. & 1 Thes. 5. 16. Christ kisseth his Spouse, that is, his Church, or chosen ones, when he manifesteth unto them, and causeth them to feel that great and wonderful love which he beareth unto them : We kisse Christ, when with an upright faith, hearty love, and child-like fear and reverence, we acknowledge him to be our Lord and Saviour, and do wholly submit our selves unto him, and obey him, Psal. 2. 12.] *with the kisse* [In the plural number, whereby is exprest the riches of the manifold graces and mercies, which Christ sheweth to his elect, Ephes. 1. 7, 8, 9, &c.] *of his mouth*, [Our Lord Jesus Christ revealeth unto be-

lievers the love with he beareth unto them, by his words. Therefore it is said, Psal. 45. 3. that his lips are very pleasant, or gracious. See below 5. 15. and Isa. 50. 4. Peter faith likewise, Lord, *Thou hast the word of eternal life*, Joh. 6. 68.] *for thy excellling love* [That is, kindness, loveliness. Heb. *loves*. Now the Spouse (that is, the Church of God) speaketh here unto Christ her Bridegroom. Understand here by the word *loves*, the transcendant love and affection, as also the benefits and favours which Christ sheweth unto his elect] *is better then wine*. [By the word *wine*, here is to be understood all earthly comforts and delights, Compare Jud. 9. 13. Psal. 104. 15. So below chap 4. 10.]

3 *Thine oils are good for smell*, [Understand by *oils* here, sweet-smelling oils, precious ointments, or balmes. Hereunto spiritual gifts or gives are often resembled, as Psal. 45. 8. Isai. 61. 1. and 1 Job. 2. 27.] *thy Name* [Understand the name, person, and the soul-saving office of Christ, as the same are revealed unto us in the Gospel] *is an oil, that is poured forth* : [Salomon seemeth here to have looked at the name *Messias* ; that is, *Christ*, *Anointed*, who was anointed with the Holy Ghost, not onely for himself ; But that holy Balsam flowed down from him ; who is our head, upon us his members. See Psal. 133. 2. and Job. 1. 16. This name after Christs ascension into heaven, is spread far abroad ; for all Christians have their name from Christ] *therefore do the virgins love thee*. [That is, (as it is said, vers. 4.) The upright love thee. The elect are more then once in Scripture compared unto Virgins, Matth. 25. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Revel. 14. 1, 4, 5. and that in this respect, because the children of God must so narrowly heed and watch their consciences, lest they be defiled with the sins of the world, as an honest maiden or virgin ought to look to her own honesty and chastity.]

4 *Draw me, we will run after thee* : [Draw me, That is, incline mine heart and minde, that it may adhere unto thee by faith and love. For this drawing is not done with outward strength and violence. But by the

word

word of preaching outwardly, and inwardly by the powerful working of the Spirit of Christ, whereby the understanding of the children of God is so enlightened, and our will so reformed and amended, as that we willingly and joyfully follow; yea run after our blessed Lord and Bridegroom Jesus Christ. See *Isai. 40. 31. Jer. 31. 3. John 6. 44, 45. and 12. 32. Phil. 2. 13. Heb. 12. 1, 2.* the King [Understand by the King, Christ the King of righteousness, and of peace, *Heb. 7. 2.* of whom Melchizedek and Salomon were types] brought me into his inner chambers, [By these inner chambers are meant the mysteries of the Kingdom of Christ, which in the Old Testament were veiled and covered under the shadows of the Ceremonial Law: but now in the New Testament we behold the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* See also *Rom. 16. 25. and 1 Cor. 2. vers. 9, 10, 16. and 2 Cor. 1. 20. Heb. 8. 10, 11.* Or, understand by the inner chambers, the Kingdom of Heaven, wherein are many mansions, *Joh. 14. 2.* which we already possess and enjoy by faith, *Eph. 2. 6.*] we [To wit, I and my maidens, or, companions, that is, all the faithful, or all believers] will rejoyce, and be glad in thee; [O King: and in thee; that is, because of thee. As if he should say, the more we increase in the knowledge of thee, and in the taste of thy grace and mercy, the more we shall be consumed and strengthened in spiritual joy. Compare *1 Pet. 1. 8.*] we will mention thy excellling love, [that is, we will extoll and publish the grace of Christ, who hath called us out of darkness unto his marvellous light, *1 Pet. 1. 9.* See also *Psal. 125. 18. and 71. 16. Psal. 12. 3, 4. and 63. 7.*] more then wine: [As if he should say, Lord, we will magnify and praise thy grace and favour with more joy and delight, then wordlings take in earthly things. For the peace of God passeth all understanding. See *Psal. 4. 8.*] the upright [Heb. the rightnesses, or, uprightnesses; that is, those that are endued with uprightness, who v. 3. are called Virgins, namely, those, in whom there is found no guile, *Psal. 32. 2. Joh. 1. 47.*] love thee.

5 I am black, [Understand here by blacknesse, the outward deformity of the state and condition of the Church, occasioned both by tyrannies and persecutions, also by reason of the heresies, schisms, and offences that do befall the same. See *Psal. 119. 83. Lament. 4. 8. and 5. 10.*] but lovely, [The Church of Christ is lovely, because she is cleansed and purified by the blood and Spirit of Christ, *1 Cor. 6. 12.* So that in that respect she shineth and is fair, as the doves, *Psal. 68. 14.* see likewise *Psal. 45. 14, 15, &c.*] (the Daughters of Jerusalem) [That is, the faithful children of God. Jerusalem that is above, is the mother of us all, *Gal. 4. 26.* Thus are also particular Churches, and Christians called here Daughters of Jerusalem, and Virgins, *2 Cor. 11. 2. Revel. 14. 4. and Psal. 45. vers. 13, 14.* the Church is called the Kings Daughters. Such are here comforted and strengthened against the scandalls of the crosse, and the infirmities that do accompany the crosse in this world] as the tents of Kedar, [Understand here by the tents of Kedar, the posterity of Kedar, the second son of Ismael, *Genes. 25. 13.* who dwelt in tents, having no settled habitation or dwelling-place; but they swarved to and fro thorowout Arabia, from one place to another. See the annotat. *Psal. 120. vers. 5, 6.* The children of God are likewise according to the world and outward appearance, not beautiful, nor comely, they likewise have here no abiding City, but look for the heavenly Jerusalem] as the curtains of Salomon. [As if he had said, I am (it is true) as the tents of Kedar, but likewise as beautiful as the curtains of Salomon: (of the beauty whereof see *Iosephus in antiq. lib. 8. cap. 2.*) for the children of God are inwardly beautified and adorned with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as are Godliness, the love of God, and of our neighbour. Orth. as the pavilions of Salomon, which outwardly (by reason of rain, wind, and the scorching of the Sun) were not

very beautiful, but inwardly were exceeding fair and beautiful.]

6 Look not upon me, that I am blackish, [The meaning is, look not upon mine outward baseness and deformity, despise me not for it, but look upon mine inward beauty] because the Sun hath shined upon me. [Heb. the Sun hath looked upon me. Understand here by the Sun, (which maketh them black, upon whom it shineth) persecutions and afflictions, as *Matth. 13. 6, 21.*] My mothers children [Here mention is made of false brethren, as *Psal. 69. 9. Isa. 48. 1, 2. Acts 20. 30.* who indeed boast that the Church is their mother, but in vain, seeing they have not God for their Father. See *Deut. 32. 5. Joh. 8. 44.*] were incensed, [To wit, with anger] against me: [That is, they grieved and vexed me. The enmity and persecution of false brethren is (*2 Cor. chap. 11. 26.*) counted among the most grievous afflictions and crosses, that do befall Christians. See *Galat. 2. 4.*] they have set me to be a keeper of the Vineyards: [By Vineyards in Scripture are oftentimes meant, the assemblies of men, both good and evil. Of the first, to wit, of the assembly of good men, see *Psal. 80. Isai. 5. 2, 7. Matth. chap. 20.* Of the second, to wit, of the assembly of evil or wicked men, see examples, *Deut. 32. 32. Revel. 14. 18.* Some do understand here by the Vineyards, false Churches in general, and hypocritical members in particular, whereunto her Mothers sons or children sought to bring her, willing that she should give heed to the traditions and commandments of men. See *Mark 7. 13. Acts 15. 1, 10. Galat. 6. 12, 13. Coloss. 2. vers. 20, 21, 22, 23.* However the Church complaineth there, that she is oftentimes so far overpowered by false brethren, as that her own Rulers and Overseers do rather defend and protect the goats, then the true sheep: the hereticks and schismatics rather than the Orthodox. Whence nothing, but great calamity and destruction of the Church can arise] my Vineyard which I have, have I not kept. [That is, I have not minded it, as I ought to have done, being hindered and kept back, either by reason of mine own infirmity, or by reason of tyranny, and persecution. Others take those words thus, as if the Spouse, or (the Teachers of the primitive Church) should say, I was appointed to have the oversight of other Churches, I have left the primitive Church which I had planted; and other Churches have been planted by me thorowout all the World: The primitive Church that was planted at Jerusalem, I could not keep there, nor tarry with it, by reason of the persecution of the Jews and other tyrants.]

7 Tell me [Or, make me acquainted] (thou) whom my soul loveth, [So below, chap. 3. 1, 2, 3.] where thou feedest, where thou lodgest (thy flock) at noon: [Here the Spouse speaketh again unto her Bridegroom, and she requirerth of him the Spirit of discerning, that she may not be deceived or seduced by false Teachers, as followeth in the text. For there shall come false Prophets, who shall say, here is Christ, (or) there is Christ, *Mark chap. 13. vers. 21.* and sometimes God hideth his face, *Deut. 32. 20.* and saith, I will not feed thee, *Zach. 11. 9.* Christ is the supreme or chief shepherd of the sheep, *Psal. 23. 1.* that is promised, *Ezech. 34. vers. 23, 24.* The Prophets, and Apostles; and all true Teachers or Ministers of the Word, are his Ambassadors and Messengers, whom he sendeth forth, to feed in his Name his sheep in the pastures of life, *Joh. 21. vers. 15, 16, 17.* The Church enquirerh here most earnestly, where she may finde rest and pasture at noon, that is, in the hottest time of persecution, of heresies, and schisms, when the sheep are ready to faint by reason of the heat of the crosse. Compare *Isa. 49. 10. Joh. 16. 33.*] for why should I be as one that covereth herself among the flocks of thy companions? [That is, why shouldst thou suffer me to be as a woman, that is covered by reason of grief and heaviness, when I wander up and down in a sad and sorrowful way, for not being able

able to finde thee? The covering of the face is a token, either of grief, or of shame. Therefore the Spouse here desireth to know, where her Bridegroom feedeth his sheep, that she might forthwith joyn herself unto them, or unto him, lest wandering up and down, she might either be despised, or go astray. Oth. *As one that turneth aside to the flocks of thy companions? As if she had said, If I should do this, (through want of thy gracious presence) I might come to be deceived, because there are many that bear the name of thy companions, ministers, or friends (Matth. 24. 5, 24. and 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2.) whereas indeed they are thine enemies, and seducers from thee, 2 Cor. 11. 3. This happened to the Galatians, Galat. 1. 6, 7. All those that have not their abode in the inheritance of the Lord, they are in danger of falling to the worship and service of other Gods, 1 Sam. 26. 19.]*

8 *If thou know it not, [Oth. Seeing thou knewest it not; to wit, where I do feed my sheep. This is an answer of our Saviour Christ, unto the fore-going question of his Spouse, vers. 7. reproving in a friendly and loving way her ignorance in this needful and weighty matter. Oth. If thou knowest it not for thee, or for thy self; as if he should say, Seeing thou art ignorant of thy self, therefore I will instruct thee] O thou fairest among women: [Heb. thou fair among women; that is, thou that art the fairest. Thus the Angel speaketh unto the blessed Virgin Mary, Thou art blessed among women; that is, the most blessed of women, or, more blessed then other women, Luke chap. 1. 28, 42. Thus the Lion is said to be strong among the beasts; that is, the strongest, Prov. 30. 38. See the annotat. there. The Church of God is called the fairest, because by the blood and Spirit of Christ, she is washed and cleansed from all her sins, Eph. 5. 26, 27. and endued with all manner of excellent spiritual virtues, although she be in her own self by nature deformed and contemptible, Ezech. 16. 3, 4. See in this chapter vers. 5, 15, 16. So also below chap. 5. 9. and 6. 1. the same title is given to the Church] then go forth in the footsteps of the sheep, and feed thy kids by the shepherds dwellings. [As if he said, Give heed to the examples of the Holy Patriarchs, and others of mine elect, that are graced with honourable testimonies in Holy Scripture, Heb. chap. 11. Imitate their faith and their works. Follow them who from the beginning of the world have known and followed me, considering the issue of their walking and conversation, Heb. 13. 7. and 11. 1, 2, &c. and 12. 2. See also Jerem. 6. 16. and 1 Cor. 11. 1. Understand by sheep, and kids, those Christians, that joyn themselves to the Church of God, Joh. 21. 15, 16. 1 Pet. 2. 2. These the Bridegroom will have the Spouse (that is, the Church) to receive, and to take care, that they be fed and nourished with spiritual food. Feed thy kids by the shepherds dwellings. That is, bring thy flocks into the pasture and fold, which the Prophets and Apostles followed and shewed, and which they left unto the Church in their writings. See Psal. 77. 21. and Psal. 78. vers. 70, 71, 72. and 1 Pet. 1. 19. and 3. 2.]*

9 *My love, [See below chap. 2. vers. 2, 10, 13. and 4. 1, 7. and 5. 2. and 6. 4. Joh. 15. vers. 14, 15.] I compare thee to the Horses in Pharaohs charrets. [In divers places of Holy Scripture there is mention made of the goodly Horses, and the strength of the charrets of Egypt, as Exod. 14. 17. 1 Chron. 9. 28. Isai. 31. Ezech. 17. 15. The Church of Christ is compared unto these, both in respect of her beauty, and also in respect of her strength and power, which she hath received from Christ, to vanquish and subdue her enemies, 1 Cor. 10. 4. Among this Cavallie, do shine forth by name the Holy Prophets and Apostles: Whence Elias is called the charrets and Horsemen of Israel, 2 Kings 2. 12. and likewise Elisa, 2 Kings 13. 14. Because they were able to effect more by their prayers, then a great strength or power of charrets and Horsemen. See Revel. 19. vers. 14, 15.]*

10 *Thy cheeks are lovely in the spangles, [The Hebrew word, which is found here, and vers. 11. and by us rendered spangles, signifieth properly Turtle-doves, as Lev. chap. 12. and elsewhere. But here it signifieth a certain ornament belonging to women, being like unto Turtle-doves, that are adorned about the neck with a kinde of collar. So fair are the cheeks of the Spouse of Christ, inasmuch as he hath washed and cleansed them with his blood, and adorned them with precious Pearls of spiritual gifts, especially with humility and meekness, which are precious in the sight of God, 1 Pet. 3. 4.] thy neck in the Pearl-strings. [Christian virtues are fitly compared here unto strings or chains of Pearl, because all the fruits of regeneration are fastened and linked together as with a string or chain: Prov. 1. 9. and 20. 15.]*

11 *We will make thee golden spangles, [This is spoken in the Name of the Holy Trinity; for they that keep the commandments of Christ, they are beloved of the Father and of the Son, Joh. 14. 21, 23. and the Holy Ghost shall likewise abide with them for ever, Joh. 14. on vers. 16.] and silver finds, [Or, knobs, or pimples, or small buttons. Understand hereby all manner of Christian virtues, whereof many are recited, Galat. 5. 22, 23. and Coloss. 3. 12.]*

12 *While the King is at his round table, [Or, as long as, &c. Here the Spouse speaketh again to her maidens or Virgins, commending her Bridegroom before them. By the King here is meant the Lord Christ, the King of all Kings, as above, vers. 4. Round table. See 1 Sam. 16. on vers. 11. By the table here is meant the Heavenly glory, whereinto Christ entered by his suffering. See Matth. 8. 11. and 26. 29. Luke 24. 26. Rev. 3. 20.] my spikenard giveth its smell. [As if the Spouse should say, while Jesus Christ is in Heavenly glory, compassed about by those that sit round about with him at his table, in his Kingdom: my spikenard giveth, &c. Spikenard is a very precious herb, the oil whereof they were wont to pour upon Princes and Great men, or excellent persons, as they sat at table. See Mark. 14. 3, 8. Joh. 12. 3, 7. Hereunto the Holy Ghost is compared, by reason of his sweet-smelling gifts, which were more abundantly poured forth after Christs Ascension, then in former time, Joh. 7. 39. giveth its smell. That is, the Holy Ghost, whom he sendeth unto me from the Father, comforteth me in all tribulation. Others take those words in this sense, as if the Spouse said, I diligently apply my self to the doing of good works, which may be pleasing and acceptable unto the King: I employ the gifts, which I received of him, well; I hide them not, but let them give their smell, that is, bring forth goods works, that are acceptable unto God, and wherein the King taketh pleasure and delight]*

13 *My most-beloved is a bundle of myrrhe unto me, [That is, the memorial of Christs love, which he manifesteth unto me, in and by his bitter suffering, is unto me as a sweet and pleasant nosegay or posie of myrrhe, to cheer and comfort mine heart. Myrrhe is a very good and pleasant spice, drugge, or gumme, which was heretofore used to perfume the garments, or apparel of Princes, and other wayes. See the annotat. Exod. 30. on vers. 23. and Psal. 45. 9. Being mingled with wine, it maketh a very pleasant drink, to comfort and strengthen the heart, and to purge the blood, as Plinie testifieth. It was also used in a mixture with other spices for the embalming of dead bodies, Joh. 19. 39. In brief, it is a precious herb, which deserveth to be presented unto Kings as a special gift, or present. See Genes. 37. 25. and 43. 11. and Matth. 2. vers. 11. Therefore no wonder, that the love of Christ is compared unto it] (which) overnighieeth betwixt my breasts. [Hereby is intimated, that the Church of God will continually keep and preserve the memorial or remembrance of her Bridegroom, especially as long as the dark night of persecutions & tribulations lasteth, comforting & strengthening-*

strengthening her self therewith, *Ephes. 3. 17.*

14 *My most beloved is unto me a cluster of Cyprus,* [*Cyprus* is a certain plant which bringeth forth a sweet smelling fruit or gum, like unto a flourishing Vine-branch, as *Hierome* witnesseth. Some conceive that hereby is meant a natural cluster of grapes, called by the name of *Cyprus*, in Hebrew, *Copher*, because the grapes of *Engedi* had the taste of *Cyprus*, which herb grew in great abundance thereabouts, see the *Herbals*. However it be, there-by is understood an exceeding pleasant fruit, whereunto our Saviour Christ is compared, by reason of his sweet-smelling merits and soul-saving gifts. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins, 1 *Joh. 1. 7.* He is the propitiation for our sins, 1 *Joh. 2. 2.* in the vineyards of *Engedi*. [See of this city the *Annotat. 1 Sam. chap. 24. on v. 1.*]

15 *Behold, thou art fair, my Love,* [The beauty, which the Church of God hath, is of free grace, being obtained and purchased by the blood of Christ, and by his righteousness. See below, *ch. 4. 1.*] *behold, thou art fair,* [the iterating or doubling of the words serveth to strengthen and encourage the Church of God the more against the persecutions of her enemies] *thine eyes are doves* (eyes.) [that is, single and chaste. See below, *ch. 4. 1.* hereby is signified, the spiritual purity, simplicity, and chastity of the Church of Christ, whose eyes are onely fixed on him, and in him alone look for salvation and eternal life. See *Psal. 123. v. 1, 2. Matth. 10. 16.* But some do understand here by eyes, the Ministers and Elders, or Overseers of the Church, and the Instructors of those that are ignorant, who ought to have the most quick-sighted eyes in the Congregation. See also *Job 29. 15. Psal. 32. 8. Numb. 10. on vers. 31. below, Cant. 4. 1.*]

16 *Behold, thou art fair, my most beloved,* [Christ is fair or beautiful by nature, for he is the lamb without spot or blemish, *Exod. 12.* But the Spouse is fair or beautiful by grace, by means of the merits and satisfaction of Christ, *Joh. 1. 16.*] *jea, lovely,* [that is, not surly, nor proud. He inviteth us in a most friendly and loving way, saying, *Come unto me ye that are burthened and heavy laden, I will refresh you, Matth. 11. 28.*] *also our bedstead is green.* [that is, there are daily many spiritual children born in thy Church, of the immortal or incorruptible seed of thy word, 1 *Pet. 1. 23.* Therefore the Church is called, *the Mother of all believers, Galat. 4. v. 25.*]

17 *The beams of our houses are Cedars,* [The Church commendeth her habitation or dwelling, to invite and bring others to it. She calleth the assembly of Believers *houses*, in the plural number, because there are many particular Churches. By the *beams* is understood, the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, for thereby the Church is tied fast together, in Christ, as the foundation, *Eph. 2. 20.* These beams are of *Cedar*; that is, strong and incorruptible, for the word of God abideth for ever, *Isa. 40. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 25.* Of the durableness or lastingness of Cedar-wood, see *Judg. 9. on v. 15.* Christ speaking of the durableness and continuance of his Church, saith, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it, Matth. 16. 18.*] *our galleries & our walking places, or tilings,* as *Gen. 30. 38, 41.*] *are Cypresses.* [This word is very pleasant, therefore Christ is rightly compared thereunto. Oth. of *Boratin*, called in Latine, *Bruta*, which is a tree like unto the Cypress-tree, of a very pleasant smell, *Plin. nat. Hist. lib. 12. cap. 17.* The Hebrew word used here in the text, is found no where in Scripture, save onely here.]

CHAP. II.

The excellency and dignity of Christ, vers. 1. and of his

Church, 2. Christs care of his Spouse, and the comfort which she receiveth from him, 3. An excitation unto publick profession of Christ, in regard the winter of persecution is past, 11. An admonition to beware of the close and secret enemies of the Church, 15. Mutual love between the Bridegroom and the Spouse, 16.

I *Am a Rose of Saron, a Lily of the Valleys.* [Here the Bridegroom speaketh again, as some conceive: But others are of opinion, that they are the words of the Spouse. The *Rose* is the choicest among the flowers, and the smell thereof comforteth and cheereth the brain. By the *Roses of Saron* (that is, the *Roses* that grow at *Saron*) are meant, exceeding fair *Roses*; as by the *Lilies of the valleys* (that is, the *Lilies* that grow in the valleys) are meant, fair sweet-smelling *Lilies*. *Salomon* in all his Royalty was not so beautifully arrayed as one of these, *Matth. 6. 29.* But forasmuch as here is spoken of the *Rose* growing in the fields of *Saron*, and of the *Lilies* in the valleys, but not of such as grow in fenced or inclosed gardens: it seemeth that hereby is intimated, that the Church of Christ is subject and liable to persecution, as the flowers of the field are subject to be plucked off by every one that passeth by, or to be troden down and bitten off by the beasts and brute creatures. This seemeth to be the true and right meaning of the words, as appeareth by *v. 2.* *Saron* was a fair, pleasant Countrey, reaching from *Casarea* unto *Foppa*, not far distant from the Midland-sea. Thus is a certain City likewise called, that lieth there. See further of *Saron*, 1 *Chron. 5. 16.* and *Isaiah 33. 9.* and *35. 2.* and *65. 10. Acts 9. 35.*]

2 *As a Lillie among thorns,* [Wicked and ungodly men are in Scripture (and likewise, according to the opinion of many, in this place) called thorns, partly in respect of their barrenness in bringing forth good fruit, partly in respect of their pricking malice against the children of God, see *Numb. 33. 55. Prov. 22. 5. Ezek. ch. 28. v. 24.*] *so is my love among the daughters.* [By *daughters* are oftentimes meant in Scripture the assemblies of men; and that sometimes of good men, as the *daughter of Zion*; that is, the Church of God, *Isa. 36. 22.* Sometimes of evil and wicked men, as the *daughter of Babel*, *Psal. 137. 8.* the *daughter of Edom*, *Lament. 4. 21.* The meaning of the verse is this; As far as the *Lillie* (being compared with the thorns) excelleth them in beauty and glory: So far doth also my Love, or most beloved, exceed and surmount all other women, being compared with them. That is, the true Church being compared with other meetings and assemblies, goeth far beyond them all in dignity and excellency.]

3 *As an apple-tree among the trees of the forest,* [That is, the trees that grow in the wood, or in the wild forest. All men without Christ are wilde unpruned trees, *Rom. 11. 17, 24.* which in that respect bear, either no fruit at all, or else evil, or harsh bitter fruit, or fruit of an unpleasant and unsavoury taste. Unless they be ingrafted into Christ by faith, they cannot bring forth good fruits, *Mat. chap. 7. v. 18. Job. 15. 4.*] *so is my best beloved among the sons:* [to wit, the sons of Adam, or the sons of men. Or, among the sons; that is, among young men: All these Christ doth far exceed, *Psal. 45. 3.* The words of this verse are now again the words of the Spouse, Our Lord Jesus Christ is often in Scripture compared to a tree, as *Revel. 2. 7.* and *22. v. 2.* Here he is compared to an apple-tree, As that (to wit, the apple-tree) doth far exceed all wilde trees: so (saith the Spouse here,) doth Christ, my best beloved, far exceed all other men, who are by nature like unto wilde trees. And as the apple-tree with his broad and low branches giveth a goodly shadow and shelter against the scorching heat of the Sun, and beareth sweet and pleasant fruit, for the cheer-

cheering and refreshing of man : so (saith the Spouse) do I also find shadow, shelter, and refreshing under the wings of his grace and mercy, both against the wrath of God, and also in the scorching heat of persecution ; so that I alwayes desire and indeavour to hide and shelter my self under them, as followeth, in the text] *I have great delight in his shadow, and sit (down under) it ;* [to wit, under the shadow of the apple-tree, that is, under the defence and shelter thereof. As the trees by casting a shadow upon us, do free and protect us from the burning and scorching heat of the Sun : So doth Christ free and deliver us from the scorching heat of Gods wrath, and from the persecution of the wicked world, see *Psal. 121. v. 5, 6, 7. Isa. 25. 4.* See also *Psal. 91.* the annotat. on v. 1.] *and his fruit is sweet to my palate.* [this is yet another benefit, which the Spouse enjoyeth by Christ : to wit, that she is not onely freed and delivered from evil, but also is made partaker of his pleasant fruits, as of his death, resurrection, ascension, and other benefits of his. Others understand here by *fruits*, the comforts and consolations of Christ, which are most sweet and pleasant unto the hearts of true believers.]

4 *He bringeth [Or, he brought] me into the wine-house,* [Heb. *into the house of wine*; that is, into the house of joy and gladnesse, which we receive by the power and working of the Holy Ghost in our hearts, *2 Cor. 1. 5.* Besides, that wine quencheth thirst, it maketh also the heart merry, *Psal. 104. 15.* and causeth it to forget its sorrow, see *Prov. 31. 6, 7.* To this house of joy are all Gods children invited, *Prov. 1. 3.* see likewise, *Prov. 9. 1, &c.*] *and the love* [understand here by love, the love wherewith Christ loveth us, *Eph. 5. 2.* Therefore some do read the last words of this verse thus, *his banner is love over me*, or towards me, see *2 Thess. 2. 16.* and *Rom. 5. 5.*] *is his banner over me.* [as souldiers are distinguished one from another by banners or colours : so the true members of the Church of Christ are discerned and distinguished from hypocrites and tormal professors, by the spirit of adoption, and his fruits, *Rom. 8. 14. 1 John 3. 24.* The banner signifieth also defence and protection against all spiritual enemies, the devil, death, and damnation.]

5 *Support ye me with flagons,* [That is, with the wine that is in the flagons, as *Luke 22. 10.* and *Hos. 3. 1.* that is, with the holy Scriptures, wherein Christ hath shut up his wine and milk, that is, all his promises and spiritual comforts, see *Psal. 94. 19.* and *119. 92.*] *strengthen me with apples :* [or, *strew apples under me*; to wit, that by the smell thereof I may be comforted and refreshed ; for which end and purpose Oranges and Limons especially are very useful and requisite. By these are understood the comfortable doctrines of holy Scripture, concerning the grace and merits of Christ. The Church here speaketh unto the friends of the Bridegroom, which are the true Teachers or Ministers of the Gospel, *John 3. 29.* intreating them to strengthen her with the comforts of the Gospel, before she languish and fail for longing after Christ] *for I am sick of love.* [that is, I am faint, and do languish through continual longing after the comforts and consolations of my Bridegroom, and the tokens of his grace and favour, see *Psal. 42. 2.* and *63. vers. 2.* and below, ch. 3. v. 2. and 5. v. 6, 8. It is God that healeth all our diseases, *Pf. 103. 3.*]

6 *Let his left hand be under mine head,* [To wit, as a pillow to rest upon. By reason of sin the whole head is sick, and the heart is faint, *Isa. 1. 5.* But by the consolations of the Holy Ghost our consciences are strengthened, and our sins (the causes of our sorrowes) pardoned, see *Rom. 14. v. 17.* and *1 John 2. 12.* and *3. 24.*] *and let his right hand embrace me.* [this is an outward token of love, see *Gen. 29. 13.* and *48. 10.* The Church desireth and expecteth the gracious and favourable help and assistance, which the Bridegroom was to afford her in

time of trouble, comforting her by the Holy Ghost, and by his word, see below, ch. 8. 3. *Eph. 5. 29.*]

7 *I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem,* [Some take these to be the words of the Bridegroom, others to be the words of the Spouse. The meaning is, I exhort and charge you in the highest manner or degree, *Ye daughters of Jerusalem*; that is, O ye my companions or friends, see chap. 3. 5. and 8. 4.] (*which are by the Roes or by the Hinds of the field*) [*Hinds* are the females of the Harts] *that ye stir not up that love, nor waken (it,) until it please the same.* [that is, that ye never disturb the rest and peace thereof. Others, *I adjure you, by the Roes, &c.* that is, as dear as the Roes and the Hinds are unto you, that ye stir not up that love; that is, that ye disturb not the rest of the Bridegroom, or of the Spouse, that is, the peace of the Church : to wit, by heresie, schism, or by giving offence.]

8 (*That*) [To wit, the voice which I hear] *is the voice of my best beloved,* [the Spouse speaketh thus. As if she should say, That is his institution which I hear, see *John 18. 37.* and *10. v. 3. 4. Acts 13. 46. 47. Heb. 3. 7.*] *behold him, he cometh,* [to wit, to mine help and assistance, as *Isa. 3. 5. 4. John 14. 23. Rev. 22. 20.*] *leaping upon the Mountains, skipping upon the hills.* [A similitude borrowed from swift Roes and Hinds, whereunto the Bridegroom is compared, verse 9. To shew the willingness and readinesse of Christ to help and deliver his Spouse.]

9 *My best beloved is like a Roe or a whelp of the Harts :* *behold, he standeth behind our wall,* [Understand here the fiery wall of the Church, or the wall of fire round about the Church : that is, the preservation and protection, which God affordeth unto his Church by his ho'y Angels, see *2 Kings 6. 17. Psal. 34. 8. Zach. 2. 5.* When it is said here, *our wall*, thereby is intimated, that this wall is a Bulwark, which is proper to the Church, and belongeth to her alone. Others understand these words, *he standeth behind our wall*, thus ; that they signifie a nearer union and fellowship with Christ, then when he was yet afar off, comming skipping and leaping upon the mountains and upon the hills, v. 9. but yet not so neer, but there was yet a wall between both. So that here is shewed the steps or degrees, whereby Christ manifesteth his love unto his Church, not equally all at once, but according as he knows it to be good for us] *looking out of the windowes,* [this is a similitude borrowed from a watch man or centinel, that keepeth watch or guard upon a tower, see *2 Kings 9. 17. Ezek. chap. 33. v. 2.* The Lord Christ is the true watchman and keeper of *Israel*, who never sleepeth nor slumbreth, *Psal. 121. v. 4.* he seeth and derideth all the counsels and devices of the wicked against his Church, *Psal. 2. 4.*] *shining [or shining like a flower ;* that is, shewing himself like a flower, to wit, pleasant and gracious. It is the very same that is straightway said, The repetition serveth to strengthen and confirm the thing before-mentioned] *thorow the lattise.* [Ofentimes lattises and windowes are joynted together, as *Judges 5. 27. Proverbs 7. 6.* and elsewhere.]

10 *My best beloved answered and said unto me. Rise up, my Love, my fair one, and come away* [Heb. *and come to thee, or for thee, or for thy self*, so likewise verse 13. see *Genes. 12.* the annotat. on vers. 1. And, *come hither*, to wit, to minister unto me. By these words the Spouse doth intimate the cause of the speedy or swift coming of her Bridegroom; to wit, to call her by his word and spirit out of her sad and miserable condition unto a better.]

11 *For lo, the winter is past :* [That is, the time of the Churches oppression, *Zach. 14. 8.*] *the great shower of rain is over,* [that is, the time of trial in adversity, is lightened or eased by Christ, see *Isa. 4. 6. & 32. 2. Matth. 7. 27.*] *it is gone over.* [or, *it is gone away.*]

12 *The flowers are seen* [Or, *do appear, shew themselves*] in the earth, [In these, and the following words is contained a description of the Spring: being spiritually understood, it signifieth the restauration of the Church, after the troubles were past and gone. See *Psal.* 72.16. *Isa.* 27.6. *Hos.* 14. *vers.* 4.5.6.] *the singing-time* [Or, *the time of singing*, or, the time of chiiping, or, chattering] *approbeth*, [That is, the Spring, or, May-time is come, when the birds use to sing, and to make a sweet and pleasant harmonie. That is, the faithfull begin to cheer up, and to sing for joy. Oth. *the pruning-time*] and *the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our Land.*

13 *The fig-tree bringeth forth her young figs*, [Or, *unripe figs*. The Hebrew word that is used here, is found onely in this place, no where else.] and *the vines* [By *the vines*, are meant here the particular Churches, as *Isai.* 5.1. *Hos.* 9.10.] (*with their*) *young grapes* [Or, *tender, small, green, unripe grapes*. The Hebrew word is used onely here, and below *vers.* 15. and chap.7. v.12.] *give a smell*: [To wit, an excellent smell, as below 7.13. The meaning is, that men that were before like drie and withered trees, begin now in a spiritual manner to budde and flourish through my grace: The Churches which formerly lay waite and desolate, begin now to bring forth fair and goodly fruits by the powerful working of my Word and Spirit, and cast forth a sweet and pleasant savour, 2 *Cor.* 2.15. See the parable of the fig-tree, *Matth.* 24. v.32. *Luke* 13.6.] *Arise, my Love, my fair one, and come* (away). [As above v.10.]

14 *My Dove* [So the Church of Christ is called by reason of her chastity, and simplicity, or innocency. See *Matth.* 10.16. and above chap.1.15.] *being in the clefts of the rocks*, [Hiding thy self there, for fear of the enemies. See *Jerem.* 48. *vers.* 28. Oth. *that abidest in the clefts*, or, *vents of the rocks*, being ashamed because of the deformity of thy sins] *in the secret* (holes) *of a steep place* [That is, that hidest thy self in places uninhabited, in dens and caves, by reason of persecution; as 1 *Kings* 18.4. *Psal.* 55.7.8. and 68.14. *Revel.* 12.6. Some render the words *secret stairs*, applying it to our Saviour Christ, who is the stairs and the ladder that reacheth up unto heaven, *Genes.* 28. *Job.* 1.52.] *shew me thy shape* [That is, come unto me, walk uprightly before me: as *Genes.* 17.1. *Rom.* 12.1. *Ephes.* 5.27. to wit, after thou shalt be washed and cleansed by my Spirit and blood] *cause me to hear thy voice*: [That is, thy prayers, and songs of praise. See *Psal.* 5.4. and 28.2. and 42.5. and 50.15. and elsewhere.] *for thy voice is sweet*, [That is, it is acceptable unto me; to wit, when it springeth from a true and lively faith] and *thy shape is pleasant*.

15 *Take ye us the Foxes, and the little Foxes, which destroy the vineyards: for our vineyards* (have) *young* [Or, *small, tender*] *grapes*. [These are the Bridegrooms words unto his companions; that is, the words of Christ unto the Teachers and Pastours, or Shepherds of the Church: and to the Christian Magistrates. And *taking*, or *catching* signifieth here, that the Teachers or Ministers of the Word, ought to withstand, and confute the subtil and wicked Doctrine of the Foxes: and that Magistrates ought to restrain it, and not suffer it to be broached or published within their Jurisdictions and Dominions. The Foxes spoil or destroy the vineyards by eating off the grapes from the vines: So false Teachers, Hereticks, and deceitful Rulers spoil and ruine the true Religion and Church of God. They are compared unto Foxes here, and *Ezech.* 13.4. *Luke* 13.32. partly in regard of their deceitfulness, 2 *Cor.* 11.13. and partly in regard of their mischievousness; for their word fretteth (or consumeth) like a canker, 2 *Tim.* 2.17. See the like descriptions, and warnings, *Jerem.* 12.10. *Eph.* 4.14. *Tit.* 1. v.10,11. *Heb.* 13.9. 2 *Pet.* 2.1,12.]

16 *My best beloved is mine, and I am his, he feedeth among the lilies*: [These are the words of the Spouse, as *Cant.* 6.2. and 7.10. The meaning is, He is my Sheep-herd, and I am the flock of his sheep, therefore I cannot want, *Psal.* 23.1. 1 *Job.* 4.13.] *He feedeth among the lilies*: [The meaning is, he feedeth his flock not only in a wholesome, but also in a delightful pasture; yea so pleasant, and delightful, as if it were full of lilies. Understanding hereby, the pasture of the word of God, which is sweet, like honey and the honey-comb: And in the company of the Godly, which are like lilies among the thorns.]

17 *Untill that day* [That is, the time of knowledge, holiness, comfort, peace, and spiritual joy. See *Rom.* 13. *vers.* 12.13. and 1 *Thes.* 5.5. 2 *Pet.* 1.19.] *dawn*, [Heb. *blow on*. Thus do the Hebrews speak, because the day commonly riseth with some cold, or cool gale] and *the shadows* [That is, all that is yet imperfect] *flee* (away): *turn about, my best beloved*, [To wit, unto me. These, and the rest that follow, are the words of the Spouse unto her Bridegroom, beseeching and intreating him, that he would assist her in her trouble and afflictions] *be thou like a roe*. [To wit, in swiftnesse, to help and assist me. See *vers.* 8.] or *a whelp of the harts upon the Mountains of Becher*. [Or, of *Birron*, or, of *separation*. These are the Mountains of Gilead, which by the Jordan are divided or separated from Judea. These mountains were full of wilde beasts, and very commodious for hunting. See the annotat. 2 *Sam.* 2.29.]

CHAP. III.

The Spouse relateth, how diligently she had sought her Bridegroom, but in vain, *vers.* 1. 2, 3, &c. At length she findeth him, and taketh fast hold on him, 4. He will not suffer his Spouse to be awaked, 5. The Spouses ornaments, after she was come out of affliction, 6. The Bridegrooms bed or bed-stead, under the figure of Salomons bed and bed-stead, 7. The faithfull are invited, under Rhetorical and flourishing terms or words of Salomons marriage with his Spouse, to the Kingdom of Glory, 11.

BT night on my bed I sought him, whom my soul loveth: [Heb. *in the nights*. Hereby is intimated the great temptations and trials of the Church, as *Isa.* 21.12. and 26.9. *Amos* 5.18. And likewise here is shewed, that the Church in time of temptation and persecution, when she seemeth to be left and forsaken, seeketh Christ by prayer. See *Deut.* 4.29. *Jerem.* 50.4. *Hos.* 3.5. and 5.15. *Zeph.* 2.3. *Matth.* 7.7. Him, whom my soul loveth; To wit, my Bridegroom Jesus Christ, his grace, and mercy; who is found of us, when we feel and apprehend his grace and favour in our hearts to our comfort] *I sought him, but I found him not*, [This is no wayes repugnant to the promise of Christ, *Matth.* 7.7. For that fixeth no precise punctual time of finding; for that is onely in the hand of God, he alone knoweth the fit and seasonable time of help, *Heb.* 4.16. Below *vers.* 4. it is said of the Spouse, that after a little while, she found her beloved] (*I said*)

2 *I will arise now, and go about in the City*, [That is, in the Church of God, *Psal.* 87. *vers.* 3. or in the spiritual Jerusalem, see *Heb.* 12.22.] *in the passages*, [Or, *markets, broad places*. See *Luke* 14.21,22,23.] and *in the streets, I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not*.

3 *The watchmen* [Understand here under the name of watchmen, such kinde of Teachers or Ministers, as were those, of whom the Prophet *Isaia* speaketh chap. 56. *vers.* 10. They are (saith he) *dumb Dogs*, they cannot bark.

Or by *watchmen* may here be understood the great and wife men of the World, who if they should be asked where Christ is to be found, are not able to tell where. See *Matth.* 2. vers. 3, 4. Compare below vers. 5. v. 7.] *that went about in the City, found me; (I said,) Saw ye him, whom my soul loveth?* [The meaning is, cannot ye direct me to my Friend, or Bridegroom?]]

4 *When I had passed a little from them, [To wit, a little while, or a little way] I found him whom my soul loveth:* [Heb. *A little that I had passed from them, till I found him whom my soul loveth.* Here is fulfilled the promise of our Saviour Christ, *Matth.* 7. 7. *Seek, and thou shalt find, &c.*] *I held him fast, and did not let him go:* [To wit, I held him fast, &c. with the hand of faith. See *Prov.* 4. 13. *Eph.* 3. 18. *Colos.* 1. 23. See also *Genes.* 32. 26.] *untill I had brought him into my mothers house, and into the innermost chamber of her, that bare me.* [Or, *that conceived me.* The Church here intimateth, that she having recovered and gotten again a sense and feeling of the grace and mercy of Christ, will constantly persist or persevere in fellowship and communion with him.]]

5 *I adjure you, ye Daughters of Jerusalem, which are by the rees, or by the bindes of the field, that ye stir not up that love, nor waken (it) untill it please (her.)* [This whole verse is expounded above chap. 2. vers. 7. See also below chap. 8. 4.]]

6 *Who is she, that cometh up out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrhe, and frankincense, (and) all manner of powder of the Grocer!* [This is an admiration or wondering of weak believers, speaking of the Church, as of the people of Israel, that went up out of the wilderness toward the Land of promise, admiring at the boldness or courage, and glory of the Church, after she had by struggling and wrestling got away from under sore troubles and persecutions, whereof mention is made above chap. 2. and also in the beginning of this Chapter. By the *wilderness* is here meant, the desolation or waiting of the outward form and beauty of the Church, as well by tyrannie, as by heresie, schisme, and great and grievous scandals. As the word *wilderness*, is likewise taken, *Isa.* chap. 32. vers. 15. and *Revel.* 12. 6. *like pillars of smoke:* That is, like a mighty smook, that goeth straight, like a pillar, or *Palm-tree*, which signification the Hebrew word also hath. This signifieth the courage and boldness of the Church in the exercise of true Religion, without intermitting or omitting the same through fear of wicked men, or for other respects, *Heb.* 12. 1. By *Myrrhe*, and *Frankincense* are to be understood the merits of Christ, which are a sweet-smelling favour unto God the Father, *Eph.* 5. 2. *Revel.* 8. v. 3, 4, 5. By the *powder* here mentioned, may be understood the fruits of regeneration, as also, and especially, the prayers and thanks givings of believers, *Malach.* 1. 11. *Of the Grocer:* Or, of the *Drugster.* Oth. of the *Apothecarie, of the perfumer*]

7 *Behold, the bed which Salomon hath, [Oth. his bed is as the bed of Salomon] therefore champions are about it, of the champions of Israel;* [What courageous valiant champions there were in Israel, see *1 Chron.* 11. vers. 10, 11. to the end of the chapter; and chap. 12. vers. 1, 2, 3. to vers. 38. The words contained in this verse, seem to be the words of the Spouse. By Salomons bed, and the strong guard that was about it, is typified, that the Church of God is kept and preserved by Christ; but yet far better, and in a more transcendent way, then King Salomon was kept and guarded by guard: For the Angels of God, those ministering Spirits, are sent forth by Christ, to guard and protect them. See *Heb.* 1. 14. The faithful children of God being thus guarded and protected, are not afraid of the terrour of the night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day, *Psal.* 91. 5. Hereby may

also be understood the Pastours and Teachers, who must watch over, and keep the Church of God.]]

8 *They all hold swords, [So likewise are the Holy Angels armed, with Gods righteous vengeance, as with swords to defend the good, and to punish the wicked, 1 Chron. chap. 21. vers. 16. All faithful Shepherds, and Ministers of the Church, are armed with the word of God, and with Christian Discipline, having vengeance in readiness against all disobedience, 2 Corinth. ch. 10. 6. *Psal.* 149. 7. Albeit otherwise also, all Christians are (or at least ought to be) armed with the sword of the Spirit, *Ephes.* 6. 17.] taught to war, [To wit, by God, who teacheth the hands of his people to fight, 2 Sam. 22. 35. and giveth his Angels and Ministers power to watch over the Church, and to keep and defend it. Oth. expert, trained, exercised in war] each having his sword at his thigh, [To wit, standing ready and prepared to fight, as *Exo.* 32. 27.] because of the terrour of the night. [In the night time a man is subject to more danger, then in the day-time, whether it be danger of robbery, or of murder, or of treachery, or of the like mischief; which are usually practised in the night-time, so that a man ought at that time and season, to keep a strong watch and guard, *Matth.* 24. 43, 44. So every Christian Souldier ought to stand ready-armed, as the Apostle teacheth us, *Ephes.* 6. vers. 12, 13, 14. Especially in the time of persecution.]]*

9 *King Salomon made himself a Chariot* [The Hebrew word signifieth properly a *bride-bed*, or, *bedstead*. But it signifieth also a *Coach*, or, *Chariot*. It seemeth that here is spoken of that triumph-chariot, of which we read, *Psa.* 45. 5. where by the *Chariot* is meant the word of truth, or the preaching of the Gospel. Others understand by the Hebrew word here used, a sumptuous or glorious building, as a palace, or the like] *of the wood of Libanon.* [That is, of Cedar-wood, which was wont to grow in great abundance on mount Libanon. See the annotat. *Julg.* 9. on vers. 15. This word puttifieth not: so that the Doctrine of the Gospel may be fully compared unto it: For it is an everlasting Gospel, *Revel.* 14. 6. See above chap. 1. 27.]

10 *He made the pillars thereof (of) silver, [By pillars is signified in Scripture, constancy, or perseverance, as *Revel.* 3. 12. and by pillars of silver, may here be understood, the faithful Pastours or Ministers of the Church, but especially the Prophets and Apostles. See *Gal.* 2. 9.] the pavement [Or, bottom, ground, stay. Oth. seat; to wit, whereon Salomon sat in his charer] of gold: [Christ, who is the ground-work, or foundation of his Church, is rightly compared unto gold, but the pillars unto silver. See *1 Cor.* 3. 9. *Revel.* 21. 21.] the roof (or, top) of it (of) purple: [Understand by this roof, Gods royal defence or protection of his Church] *the inmost (part thereof) as bespread with the love of the Daughters of Jerusalem.* [Or, paved, floored, beset with pleasantness, or, paved with love; that is, pleasantly wrought; to wit, imbroidered with pleasant images, or fair pictures, or curiously wrought with the needle by the Daughters of Jerusalem. Oth. kindled. According to the spiritual application, here by love may be understood, that inward or intimate love that God beareth unto his Children, giving his Son for the life of them, as likewise that love, which we bear unto God, and to our neighbour: for we cannot love God, unless he do first manifest his love unto us, *1 John* 4. 10. Some understand the 9th. & 10. verses to be a description of the heavenly glory.]]*

11 *Go forth, ye Daughters of Zion, and behold King Salomon with the Crown, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his marriage, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.* [The Daughters of Zion signify here Christians, or the Church of Christ, as *Isa.* 49. 14, 22. These are here exhorted to behold and receive Christ (the

true Salomon) with his Crown; that is, in glory, and honour. See *Psal.* 149. 2. *Matth.* 21. 5. *Revel.* 6. 1, 3, 5, 7. (*wherewith his mother crowned him, &c.*) It seemeth by those words that Bathsheba honoured her son with a very fair and beautiful crown upon his wedding-day: and by this Crown is typified and represented the glory and dignity, whereunto Christ was advanced by his ascension, and which he shall cause his Church to behold in Heaven. See *Luke* 24. 26. *John* 17. 24. *Phil.* 2. 9. (*In the day of his marriage*) Oth. *in the day of his espousals*: to wit, when Salomon married with his Spouse. In a spiritual sense may here be understood Christ's marriage with his Church, with is done when she receiveth and embraceth the preaching of the Gospel with a true and lively faith, then, or that time, she is said to be espoused or married to Christ, *2 Cor.* 11. 2. (*In the day of the joy, or, gladness of his heart.*) As a Bridegroom rejoiceth in his Bride, so doth God rejoyce in his people. See *Isai.* 62. 1, 5. In this veile under the name and glory of Salomon, that was a Type of Christ; there is described the glory, which all the children of God are to behold at the wedding of the Lamb, prepared for all the children of God. When we are exhorted to go forth; thereby is made known, that it is well worth the pain to be at some labour for it, as we see people do, to come forth and behold a King riding in triumph.]

C H A P. IV.

The Bridegroom commendeth the Spouse for her beauty, v. 1, &c. He telleth her, that he will be absent from her for a while, 6. He calleth her, to come down unto him, 8. Testifying his love unto her, 9. And commending her yet further, 10. The Spouse beseecheth her Bridegroom to come speedily unto her, and to work powerfully and effectually in her by his Holy Spirit, to the end that she may bring forth fruits that may be pleasing and acceptable unto him, 15.

Behold, thou art fair, my Love, [The Spouse of Christ is called fair, or beautiful, not onely as she is beheld and considered in Christ, but also as she is transformed and changed into the image of Christ, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, *2 Cor.* 3. 18. See above chap. 1. on vers. 15.] *behold, thou art fair,* [See above chap. 1. on vers. 15.] *thine eyes are doves (eyes.)* [See the annotat. chap. 1. 15.] *between thy locks:* [Or, *between thy hair-dressing*, as below vers. 3. Oth. *thine hair-bindings*] *thine hair is as a flock of goats, that shear off (the grasse) of mount Gilead.* [That is, it is fair, smooth, and like unto the hair of the Goats, that feed upon mount Gilead, or go somewhere in a goodly fat ground or meadow, and thereby grow fat, and get thin lost hair. That is, thou art adorned with good works. (*that shear off, &c.*) The Hebrew word is onely found here, and below chap. 6. 5. It signifieth to shear off, or to make bald; that is, to eat off. Oth. *that shine from mount Gilead.* This Countrey of Gilead was very commodious to feed cattel in, by reason of its fatness, as appeareth by *Genes.* 31. 21. *Numb.* 32. 1. *Jerem.* 22. vers. 6.]

2 *Thy teeth are like a flock of (sheep,)* [To wit, thy spiritual teeth; whereby thou art to chew the cud, or to ruminate the spiritual food of the soul, have all the beauty and ornament, that may be required in teeth, and consequently are fit and apt to chew and ruminate the spiritual food] *that are shorn,* [Or, *are cut off*, or which are made alike or equal to one another, so that the one is not greater then the other; otherwise it would be unseemly, and be an impediment in the chewing of the spiritual food] *which come up from the washing-place;* [Or,

which come up from the washing, and consequently are clean, and white] *they all bring forth twins, and none is without young* [Or, barren] *among them.*

3 *Thy lips are like a threed of scarlet,* [The lips are the instruments of uttering or producing words: And here they signify the Ministers of the word, and their sweet and pleasant Doctrines, which is further intimated by the words following (*and thy speech is pleasant*, or, *comely.*) (*like a scarlet-lace*) That is, red, which is a commendable thing in the lips. It signifieth that their Doctrine is pleasant and delightful to the hearers, or members of the Congregation] *and thy speech is pleasant:* [compare *Psal.* 147. 1. *Col.* 4. 5.] *thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate* [Wherein little red kernels or grains are seen & discerned. Under the word temples may be likewise understood and comprehended the red blushing cheeks being a part of the beauty of the face. But here it signifieth bashfulness and modesty in the members of the Church, taking narrow heed of doing, or speaking any thing, whereat they may have cause to blush] *between thy locks.* [as above v. 1.]

4 *Thy neck is like the tower of David, which is built for the hanging up of armour,* [That is, thy neck is bolt upright, high and strong, and hung about with ornaments, as that fair tower, which David built. See *Neh.* 3. vers. 19. and 25. and *Mich.* 4. 8. But others understand this of Davids strong-hold, *2 Sam.* 5. 7, 9. This signifieth the courage, boldness, and sure hope or confidence of the Church of Christ, who being united unto Christ her head, boweth her neck no more, to serve the Devil, or sin, *Rom.* 6. 17, 18. or men, *1 Cor.* 7. 23. But by the weapons of her warfare (which are not carnal, but mighty through God, to cast down strong holds, *2 Cor.* 10. 4.) she standeth fast in the evil day, being armed, as it is written, *Ephes.* 6. 11, &c. (*Built for the hanging up of armour, or arms:*) Or, *for an armour, or, magazine for all manner of armour, or, arms.* The Hebrew word is onely found in this place. And it seemeth, that here such weapons are meant or understood, which serve to hurt or wound the enemy with, as by the bucklers and shields (mentioned in the following words) are meant such kinde of weapons or arms, whereby a man defendeth himself, and keepeth off the blows,] *whereon (there) hang a thousand bucklers,* [The number of thousand is used here and elsewhere for a great number] *all being the shields of Champions.* [Of Davids Champions, and their valiant acts, see *2 Sam.* 23. 8. to the end, and *1 Chron.* 11. 10. to vers. 47. whole shields being hung up in the tower of David for perpetual memory, signify here all those, who by the shield of faith have done many great and valiant acts, whereof the Apostle relateth some, *Heb.* 11.]

5 *Thy two breasts,* [Understand here by the two breasts, the Doctrines and comforts, which are to be found in the Old and New Testament, wherewith the faithful are fed and nourished. See *Isai.* 66. 11. and *1 Pet.* 2. 2. Others understand by the Spouses two breasts, the administration of the word of God, and of the Holy Sacraments, wherewith the sheep and lambs of Christ, are fed and nourished as upon a good and fast pasture] *are like two whelps, twins of a roe,* [That is, both of them are fair, full, firm, and uniform; So are the Old and New Testament every way like to each other, the one according and agreeing with the other in all things] *which feed among the lilies.* [To wit, in fat and wholesome pastures, signifying the good and wholesome Doctrine of the Church. See below 5. 13.]

6 *Until that day break, and the shadows flee (away,)* *I will go to the mountain of myrrhe, and to the hill of frankincense.* [The Bridegroom answereth here the scruple which his Spouse might object, saying, Lord Jesus Christ, am I so fair and beautiful in thine eyes? why then stayest thou so long from consummating and solemnizing

nizing the marriage betwixt us? Hereunto the Bridegroom maketh answer, Thou must wait the time that is appointed and decreed for it; to wit, the time of the restitution or restitution of all things, *Acts* 3. 21. That is, until the evening or end of the world come: then will I take thee up unto me; in the mean while I will go to the mountain of myrrhe, and to the hill of frankincense; that is, I will ascend into heaven, whither the faithful do daily offer up and send up their prayers, which are like unto sweet-smelling myrrhe and frankincense, below, chap. 5. 13. I being and remaining there thine advocate with mine heavenly father.]

7 *Thou art all fair, my Love*, [Above, v. 1. and chap. 1. 15. the Spouse is called *fair*; here she is called *all fair*, in regard she is all fair and perfect in Christ, *Eph.* 5. v. 25, 26, 27. *Col.* 1. 22. and 2. 10. *Rev.* 14. 5.] and there is no blemish in thee. [See of the word, *blemish*, *Proverbs* 9. on v. 7.]

8 *With me from Libanon, O Spouse, come with me from Libanon: look from the top* [Or, point. Hebr. the head] of *Amana*, from the top of *Senir* and *Hermion*, from the dwellings of the *Lionesses*, [Or, of the *Lions*] from the mountains of the *Leopards*. [Christ speaketh this unto his Spouse, of whom he said immediately before, that she was all fair, or altogether fair. The meaning is, Come to me into heaven, which thou now seest and beholdest by faith, as if thou sawest and beholdest the land of *Canaan*, from the top of the mountains round about that are here named, which are yet under the possession and dominion of tyrants, who are here to be understood by the *Lions* and the *Leopards*, see *Psal.* 57. 4. Some understand here by these mountains lying at or nigh divers corners of the land of *Juda*, not onely the calling and conversion of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles scattered in the four corners of the world. (O Spouse!) Thus the Church is called here, and in the sequel, in respect of her spiritual marriage with Christ, her Bridegroom, which shall be consummated and solemnized on the Marriage-day in Heaven, see *Rev.* 21. 2. and 19. 7. *John* 3. 29. 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. *Eph.* 2. 25. *Libanon* or *Libanus* was indeed a pleasant place, *Deut.* 3. 25. But being compared with other fruitful places, it was a kind of wilderness, *Jerem.* 29. 17. and like a haunt of wild beasts or hunting-place, 2 *Kings* 14. 9. Whereunto respect is had in this place. Yet in other places of Scripture *Libanus* signifieth excellent and delightful things, in respect of the abundance of the fair trees that grew on it, as below, chap. 5. 9. and 5. 15. *Amana* is a mountain in *Syria*, where there was a valley and also a River, that bare the same name, otherwise called *Abana*, 2 *Kings* 5. 12. *Strabo*, lib. 14. saith, that this mountain was possessed by divers tyrants. Of the mountains *Senir* and *Hermion*, see *Deut.* 3. v. 9. *Senir* is to be taken here for a part of mount *Hermion*. *Hermion* is a famous mountain, of which we may read, *Psal.* 42. 7. and 89. 13. It is otherwise called *Sion*, with an S, *Deut.* 4. 48. (From the dwellings of the *Lionesses*, from the mountains of the *Leopards*.) Some understand withall, being delivered and freed, thou shalt see the danger wherein thou wast: And on the other side, thou shalt see the blessed state and condition wherein thou art brought. Or some such like thing, see 1 *Cor.* 6. v. 9, 10, 11.]

9 *Thou hast taken the heart from me*, [Or, thou hast taken mine heart: or, hast ravished, or wounded mine heart; to wit, by love, see *Isa.* 62. 5. The Hebrew word signifieth, *Thou hast hearted*, or *unhearted me*. The meaning is, thou hast gained my love and favour, notwithstanding thy manifold sins and infirmities] *my Sister*, [thus the Church is called, in regard that Christ is the brother of us all, having taken our nature (that is, our flesh and blood) upon him, and by faith made us children of God, and joynt-heirs with him. See *Matth.* 12. 50. *John* 1. 13. *Rom.* 8. 16, 17. *Heb.* 2. 11.] O Spouse;

thou hast taken the heart from me, [and therefore thou maiest rest satisfied and contented, being fully assured, that I will never leave nor forsake thee] *with one of thine eyes*, [that is, thou gainest or gettest the heart from me, by true faith, whereby thou beholdest and imbracest me, as thy loving Bridegroom. Without faith we cannot in any wise please God, *Heb.* 11. 6.] *with one chain of thy neck*, [to wit, hanging about thy neck; that is, with the ornament of thy works proceeding from true faith, see *Prov.* 1. 9. This chain we have not of our selves, but by the grace of God, as appeareth above, chap. 1. 11. God crowneth his own gifts in us.]

10 *How fair is thy surpassing love*, [That is, how delightful and acceptable is it unto me, to discern thy love towards me? see above, chap. 1. vers. 2. This love consisteth in the keeping of Christ's commandments, 1 *John* 2. v. 3, 4, 5.] *my sister, O Spouse! how much better is thy surpassing love than wine?* [see the annotat. above, chap. 1. on v. 2. and 4.] and the smell of thine oils, [understand by oils or ointments the gifts and graces of the spirit, which the Church received, see *Psal.* 45. 8. and 133. 2. 1 *Joh.* 2. 20. and 27. above, ch. 1. 3. The spouse commendeth the savour of the oils or ointments of the Bridegroom, see the annotat. there: so the Bridegroom here commendeth the oils or ointments of the Spouse, see *Isa.* 62. 4, 5.] *then all spices?* [that is, sweet-smelling herbs, as those were, whereof the holy ointment or oil was made, *Exod.* 30. 23. see likewise, 2 *Chron.* ch. 9. v. 1. 9. and 16. 14. *Ezra.* 2. 12.]

11 *Thy lips*, [Wherewith thou callest upon God, preacheest his Word, praisest and glorifiest his Name, and edifiest thy neighbour] *O Spouse, drop of the honey-comb*, [that is, thy words and sayings are as pleasant and acceptable unto me, as the honey-comb is unto men, see likewise this similitude, *Psal.* 119. 10. 103.] *honey and milk are under thy tongue*, [this signifieth the same that was said immediately before, see 1 *Pet.* 2. 2.] and the smell of thy garments [that is, thy good works] is like the smell of *Libanon*. [Upon Mount *Libanon* grew many sweet-smelling trees and herbs, especially frankincense trees, from which Mount *Libanon* hath its name; for *Lebona* signifieth frankincense. In *Hos.* 14. 5, 6, 7. God promisseth unto Israel that his smell or savour should be like unto *Libanon*, by the dew of his grace, see 2 *Cor.* 2. 14, 15.]

12 *My sister, O Spouse, thou art a garden inclosed*, [Or a garden bolted, shut close, locked with a lock. Hereby is signified, the immaculate or undefiled spiritual purity and chastity of the Church, who giveth no admision or access unto strange wooers or seducers. But others understand this of Gods defence and protection, who keepeth and preserveth his Church from wild beasts; that is, from cruel tyrants. In *Isa.* chap 5. God compareth his Church to a vine inclosed or fenced in. And *Zach.* 2. 5. he promisseth that he will be a wall of fire round about Jerusalem] a well shut up, [out of which springeth the clear and pure water of the Gospel, whereby the sad hearts and minds of believers are refreshed and comforted, *Psal.* 23. 2. according to the promise which God maketh to his Church, *Isa.* 58. v. 11. And therefore this well or spring is said to be shut up, because this water of grace pertaineth only to those that are members of the Church. No man cometh unto it, but by Christ] a fountain sealed. [understand hereby the assurance or confirmation of grace, which Christ affordeth unto his Church, see 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. *Eph.* 1. 13. yea, unto his Church onely; for a thing that is sealed, is not made common, or imparted unto others, see *Isa.* 8. 16.]

13 *Thy shoots*, [Or, thy plants, branches, sprigs] are a *Paradise* [or, garden of pleasure, fair orchard. It signifieth properly a place beset, or planted with trees, as appeareth by *Eccles.* 2. 5. It is likewise sometimes taken for a wood or forest, *Nehem.* 2. 8.] of pomegranates, [that is, the

the faithful members of the Church are abundantly adorned and filled with good works, as a pomegranate is full of kernels: they are like fruitful trees planted by the fresh waters, *Psal. 1. 3. and 92. 13.* *with precious fruits,* [or excellent transcendent fruits. Understand hereby the good works of believers, which are pleasing and acceptable unto God, as pomegranates and other pleasant fruits are unto men] *Cyprus with Spikenard.* [Of *Cyprus*, see above, chap. 1. 14. *Hebr. Cyprusses with Spikenards*, or, *much Cyprus with much Spikenard.* Therefore the word *Spikenard* is here put in the plural number, and *vers. 14.* in the singular number, because there be divers sorts or kinds of *Spikenard*; or understand here the leaves of *Cyprus* and *Spikenard*, which likewise have a pleasant smell.]

14 *Spikenard and Saffron, Calamus, [Och. sweet-reed] and Cynamon,* [*Calamus* and *Cynamon*, as also *Myrrhe*, were used in the holy oil, *Exod. 30. 23* to *34.*] *with all manner of trees of frankincense,* [that is, of such trees as produce frankincense] *Myrrhe and Aloes,* [or tree of lign-aloes, see *Numb. 24. 6. Prov. 7. 17. and Psal 45 9.*] *together with all the chief spices.* [*Hebr. all head-spices*; that is, all kind of chief spices, see *Exod. 30. on v. 23.* Understand withall from *verse 13.* are thy shoots or branches. And by these pleasant sweet-smelling herbs or spices, are signified the manifold gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, wherewith the godly are indured, see *1 Cor. chap 12. vers. 5, 6, &c. Galat. 5. v. 22, 23. 1 Pet. 4. 10.*]

15 *O fountain of gardens, well of living waters, which flow from Libanon!* [With these words the Spouse commendeth her Bridegroom, who indueth her with abundance of waters, that is, with many excellent spiritual gifts or graces, wherewith all the gardens, that is, all the Churches or Congregations are watered and moistened, to bear and bring forth fruits in abundance, see *Isa. ch. 58. v. 11.* (*Well of living waters*;) that is, of perpetual waters, continually running, never drying up or putrifying, but alwayes refreshing and comforting men with their pleasantness, see *Gen. 26. on v. 19.* Such kind of water Christ giveth to those that are his, *John 4. v. 10, 14. and 7. 38, 39. and Isa. 12. 3.* (*which flow from Libanon.*) It seemeth that here respect is had to the River of Jordan, which taketh its rise at the foot of *Libanon*, and runneth along thorow the land of promise, watering it. It is said, *Rev. 22. 1.* that there proceeded out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb (which is Christ) a pure stream of living water.]

16 *Awake, [Or arise, rise up] (O) North-wind, and come thou South-wind, and blow thorow* [It is God that bringeth forth the winds out of his treasures, *Psal. 135. 7.*] *my garden,* [observe, that the Church calleth this garden, *her garden*, likewise, *his garden*, in the words following; to wit, the garden of Christ, and that in divers respects. Christ is the owner and heir of this garden, but the Pastors and Overseers of the Church are Gods husband-men, and co-workers in this garden; that is, the Church, wherein also every member hath spiritual fellowship and communion, *1 Cor. 3. 9.*] *that the spices thereof may flow out:* [that is, the labour and smell may be spread abroad] *O that my best-beloved would come into his garden, and eat his precious fruits.* [that is, O that he would enjoy the fruits which by the power and working of his Spirit, we bring forth unto him, and whereby we are bound to honour him, *Rom. 6. 22.* Of *precious fruits*, see above, v. 13. In the words of this verse is expressed a further blessing, which God bestoweth upon his garden; that is, upon his Church; to wit, that the winds do blow upon it, to refresh and revive it, and to purge and cleanse the air, and so to make the garden thereby the more fruitful. Understand here by the wind, the Holy Ghost, as *John 3. 8. and Acts 2. 2.* And although the South and North-wind be of divers quali-

ties and operations, the one being cold, the other warm; the one moist, the other dry; yet they are both beneficial and profitable to this Garden, or to the Church of God, which hath sometimes need of sharp reproofs, and sometimes of calmes, and sweet comforts and consolations.]

CHAP. V.

Here the Bridegroom maketh answer to the Spouses invitation, *ch. 4. 16.* and sheweth, that he hath a singular delight in the fruits of the Spouse, *vers. 1.* *she acknowledgeth, that she once neglected to let her Bridegroom in, 2.* But that afterward she rising to let him in, 5. he was gone away, which troubled her much, 6. To what inconvenience she came, when she sought him, 7. She acquainteth her companions with her exceeding great love toward him, 8. with a description of his beautifulnes, 10.

I Am come into my garden; that is, into my Church. Here the Bridegroom answereth to the request & petition of the Spouse, chap. 4. 16. he is ready to fulfill the desire of those that fear him, *Psal. 145. 19.* see likewise, *Ex d. 20. 24.* O my sister, O Spouse, [see above, chap. 4. v. 8, 9.] *I have plucked my myrrhe with my spice,* [that is, I have enjoyed the prayers and thanksgivings of believers, as also the good and pleasant fruits of good works, which I wrought in thee by the powerful working of the Holy Ghost. Of the preciousness of myrrhe, see above, ch. 1. on v. 13. Observe here, that Christ calleth all these portions here mentioned, his portions; he saith, *My myrrhe, my spice, my honey-comb, &c.* for without him we can do nothing, *Joh. 15. 5. and ch. 1. v. 16. and 1 Cor. 4. 7. Rev. 3. 18.*] *I have eat my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my wine together with my milk,* [that is, I take delight in thy good fruits and good works. On the contrary, the evil fruits of sinners are called *poisonous or venomous grapes, which have bitter berries,* *Deut. ch. 32. v. 32, 33.* The Word of God, and the doctrine of the Gospel, together with the obedience unto the same, the use of the holy Sacraments, are compared to meat, honey and honey-comb, wine and milk, *Psal. 119. 11. and 119. 103. Isa. 55. 1. John 4. 34. and 1 Pet. 2. 2.* Because, as honey, wine, and milk are pleasant and convenient to cheer and nourish the body: so are also the aforelaid things pleasant and convenient to refresh and comfort the soul] *Eat (O) Friends,* [here, and in the following words of the verse, Christ, the Bridegroom of his church inviteth the holy Angels and all the faithful to rejoyce with him, because of the fair and pleasant fruits (that is, the obedience) of his Church upon the earth, see *Luke 2. v. 13, 14. and ch. 15. v. 7, 10.* (*Friends*) They are the friends of Christ, that do the will of his heavenly Father, *Joh. 15. 14. compare Isa. 41. 8. Jam. 2. 23.*] *drink and be drunken, O best-beloved.* [see the annotat. *Gen. 43. 34.* *Be drunken*, is to say here, be ye filled with love towards me, and toward one another; or be abundantly satisfied with spiritual joy, which abideth unto life everlasting, see *Prov. 9. v. 5. Isa. 25. 6. and ch. 5. v. 1. 2.*]

2 I slept, [Here is shewed, that the Spouse, or some members of the Church, after they have eaten and drunk well, that is, have abundantly enjoyed the mercies of Christ, do sometimes fall into sleep or slumbering; that is, wax flow and slack in zeal & good works, and fall into carnal ease and security, see *Mat. 25. 4. Rom. 13. 11. 1 Thes. 5. v. 6, 7.*] *but mine heart waked;* [that is, notwithstanding I forgot not my Bridegroom, but kept him still in mine heart. Understand here by the heart, the inward man, or the regenerate man, who is opposed to the flesh, or the outward man, *Rom. 2. v. 28, 29.* see likewise, *Mat. 26. 41. Gal. 5. 17.*] *(it) was the voice of my most beloved that knocked,* [the Spouse relateth here the love and care of the Bridegroom, that would not suffer her to rest quietly in the bed of worldly ease. Christ knocketh at the door of our heart by his

his word by his Spirit, and by cross, or chastisement, *Rev. 3. ver. 20.* [laying;] *Open to me,* [To wit, the door of thine heart: Rise up out of the sleep of sin, let me dwell in thine heart by faith, awakening it] *my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my Perfect* (one:) [These loving or pleasant names and titles, which Christ here giveth to his Spouse (she being yet in her infirmity) signify his transcendent love and affection unto her, loving her, and delighting in her, notwithstanding that she yet liveth and converse in this sinful flesh, not imputing unto her her sins and imperfections] *for mine head is filled with dew, and the locks of mine hair with the drops of the night.* [That is, I have endured much hardship and trouble. Hereby is intimated, that Christ was to suffer much, and to undergo sore and heavy crosses and afflictions, to deliver his Spouse, and to cleanse and purify her from her sins. For to be wet, with the dew of Heaven, is a great inconvenience, or discommodity, *Gen 31. 40.* and it signifieth here to suffer misery or affliction, as *Dan. 4. 25.* As also rain, when a man is not covered or sheltered. So likewise drops, signify leaking or soaking in of rain, that is, great troubles, or adversities, *Amos 6. 11.* Others take these words thus. As the dew and rain do make the ground or earth fruitful. So the Doctrine of Christ causeth his Church to bring forth abundance of fruit. See *Deut. 32. 2. Psal. 72. 6. Hos. 14. 5.*]

3 *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on again?* [As if she had said, I cannot put it on without trouble. The Spouse maketh this answer to her Bridegroom, refusing to rise for to let him in when he knockt at the door. By the putting off of the coat, and the lying down in the bed, may be here understood the ease and security of this world, which do sometimes hinder and obstruct the true believing children of God themselves, that they do not readily and openly, freely profess Christ and his word, as soon as he knocketh, and offereth his grace unto them, fearing the trouble & persecution that doth usually attend it.] *I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them again?* [This is yet another argument, proving, that the Spouse had given up herself to rest and ease: for in those hot countreys, where they commonly went bare-foot, they were wont in the evening, when they went to take rest, to wash their feet: Which the Spouse having done, she was loath (as she here affirmeth) to rise from off her bed, to let her Bridegroom in, fearing to soil her feet. Of such frivolous and idle excuses, see *Luke 14. 18, &c.*]

4 *My best beloved drew (away) his hand from the hole (of the door,)* [His hand, that had been at the hole of the door, he drew away, to depart, as followeth, *ver. 6.* Oth. *put his hand thorow the hole of the door;* to wit, for to open the door; and so here should be spoken of the door of the heart, and be intimated, that Christ still continueth preaching unto, and exhorting his elect, when they do not forthwith obey and follow him, so moving and touching their hearts by the power, and efficacy of the Spirit, as that he rouseth them up to a fervent love and longing after him, as followeth in the next words] *and my bowels are moved for his sake.* [Or, because of him: to wit, because of the Bridegroom. Hebr. *over him*, or, *for him.* By these words the Spouse testifieth her disquietness, hearty sorrow, and grief, for putting off her Beloved so uncivilly and discourteously, when he knocked at the door, *ver. 3.* See the like phrase, *Jerem. 4. 19. and 31. 20.*]

5 *I rose up, to open to my best-beloved: and my hands dropped (of) myrrhe, and my fingers (of) flowing myrrhe, upon the handles of the lock.* [Here and in the verse following, the Spouse manifesteth her grief by outward tokens of sorrow and amendment, (fruits that are worthy of repentance) in rising up out of her bed, opening the door, seeking, and calling after her Bridegroom, that was gone away from her. Understand here by *myrrhe*,

the oil of myrrhe, whereby is signified, that the call and operation of Christ by his Holy-Spirit in the hearts of believers hath exceeding great power; and that they being sensible thereof in their hearts by true faith and repentance (as sweet-smelling spices) do prepare themselves to receive and entertain their Bridegroom. (*with flowing myrrhes*) Or, *running myrrhe.* Hebr. *passing-by*, or, *proceeding myrrhe*, or, *excelling myrrhe*: that is, which passeth all other in worth and value. (*Upon the handles of the lock:*) That is, which were at the handles of the lock. Hebr. *hands*, or, *palms*; that is, handles, whereon a man layeth his hand. Oth. *bars*, or, *bolts*; and understand here the bolts, wherewith the door was bolted within, keeping Christ without doors, and hindering him from coming in; which now being oiled with the oil of myrrhe; that is, her heart being anointed with the oil of grace, and so all locks and bolts, that is, all impediments and hindrances being removed, the Bridegroom might come in unto her without molestation, to enjoy the fruits of his grace, which she had received of him]

6 *I opened to my Most beloved,* [This goeth yet one step or degree further, to wit, that she being risen, openeth the door her own self, that the King of glory might come in unto her, laying aside all evasions and excuses, that might hinder her from enjoying his gracious presence] *but my best-beloved was departed, he was gone away:* [By the iteration or doubling of this sentence, wherein the Spouse complaineth of the departure of her Bridegroom, is signified her hearty sorrow, because she could not enjoy his presence, as she had done in times past] *my soul went out* [That is, I was like a dead body; to wit, through fear and terror. See *Genes. 35. 18. and 42. 28.* and the annotat. there. As likewise *1 Kings 10. 5.* Or, *my soul went out*; to wit, by reason of the great love and hearty longing, which I had after him] *because of his speaking:* [That is, because he had spoken so comfortably unto me, *ver. 2.* which before I did not much heed or regard; but now I am heartily moved and sorry for it] *I sought him, but I found him not; I called him, but he answered me not.* [This is one of the sorest and greatest troubles that do befall the children of God, when God seemeth not to hear their prayers, though they cry and call night and day unto him, *Psal. 22. 3. Isai. 59. ver. 1, 2, 3.* So above chap. 3. 1.]

7 *The watchmen that went about in the City, found me,* [See above chap. 3. *ver. 3.* Hence we may gather, that the Spouse went not onely to the door to seek her Bridegroom, but also further, seeking him in every corner of the City,] *they smote me, they wounded me:* [Hereby is intimated, that God sometimes suffereth his Church to be persecuted and oppressed by Tyrants, and wicked Governours; yea also by false Teachers, and Hereticks, to chastise her for her drowsiness and negligence, and to make her the more watchful and zealous in time to come. Smiting is not onely down with the hand, or with sticks and words, &c. but also with the tongue, as appeareth, *Jerem. 18. 18.* Yea *smiting* signifieth to vex and torment a man be it by what means soever, *Psal. 69. 27. Isai. 53. 4.*] *the watchmen on the walls took (away) my scarf from me* [Or, *my Tiffany*, &c. The Hebrew word hath its original from spreading abroad, because women-kinde are wont to spread abroad their scarfs or vails over their heads, partly for ornament, *Isai. 3. 23.* and partly for modesties sake, *Genes. 20. 16. and 24. 55. Jerem. 2. 32.* Likewise for a token of subjection, *1 Cor. 11. ver. 6, 7, 10.* Now to take such a covering from off a Womans head, tendereth to her great shame and disgrace. So that the Spouse hath cause here to complain of it, as if she had been counted a dishonest, light, unchaste Woman. See *Ezech. 23. 26.* Some understand here by

the scarf or vail, the bold profession of faith, and of true Religion. Of this vail or scarf the unfaithful Shepherds, or false Teachers, and Tyrants seek to rob the Church and members thereof.]

8 *I adjure you, ye Daughter of Jerusalem*, [That is, I charge you upon your oath. The Spouse speaketh this, after she had escaped the watchmens hands, seeking for help and comfort among the true members of the Church of Christ. Of the phrase *the Daughters of Jerusalem*, see the annotat. above chap. 1. 5. and 2. 7.] *if ye finde my best beloved, what will ye tell him?* [Oth. *ye shall tell him this*] *That I am sick of love.* [As if she had said, when ye come before him in prayer, tell him (I pray) of the sad condition that his Spouse is in; to wit, that I do so heartily long after his mercy and compassion, that he would be pleased to heal the wounds of my sins, that I may not faint through longing, if I must needs wait yet a long while the tokens of his love and favour.]

9 *What is thy best beloved more than (another) best beloved*, [That is, then the other freinds which are also loved and are accounted dear. See above vers. 1. as the Patriarchs Prophets, and Godly Teachers or Ministers, who have not the Bride, but are friends of the Bridegroom, who rejoyce in his voice, *John 3. 29.*] *O thou fairest among women?* [See the annotat. above chap. 1. 8. And observe here, that although (as was said, vers. 7. and 8.) the Spouse was so grievously beaten and wounded, being fallen into the dark night of persecution, yet she is called here *the fairest among women.* See *Heb. 11. 26.*] *what is thy best beloved more than (another) best beloved, that thou hast so adjured us?* [The words of this vesse, they are the words of such members of the Church, that as yet were not fully acquainted with Christ. In that they put forth this question the second time, it intimateth the great affection and desire which they had, for to know Christ aright.]

10 *My best beloved is white and red*, [These and the following words to the end of the Chapter, are the words of the Spouse to those that had asked her concerning her Bridegroom, vers. 9. These two colours (to wit, *white* and *red*) being found alike proportion in one man, do much adorn and beautify him. The white colour signifieth purenesse and triumphant glory. Wherefore it is said, that the Angels appeared in white raiment, *Matth. 28. 3.* *Acts 1. 10.* Yea also Christ himself, *Matth. 17.* See also *Rev. c. 6. 2.* and *19. 14.* By the red or ruddy colour is meant Christs Priest-hood, or Priestly office: because he washed us in his blood, *Re. 1. 5.* see likewise *Re. 19. v. 13.* &c. and *Isa. 63. 1, 2, 3.* &c.] *he beareth the banner above ten thousand.* [Heb. *he is bannered*, or, *he bannereth*, &c. It is a similitude borrowed from an ensigne-bearer, and his ensigne or standard, which may be seen above all others. The meaning is, that Christ excelleth far above all the Angels, and all other creatures, because he beareth in his hand, and upholdeth alone, by his Divine power, and banner of his Holy Gospel, *Isa. 11. 12.* and *49. 22.* Oth. *he is adorned with a banner of ten thousand.* (Above ten thousand.) That is, over or above many thousand: a certain number for an uncertain. The meaning is, that although Christ hath an innumerable number of elect under him, (*Revel. 7. 9.* and *19. 14.*) yet he exceedeth and surmounteth them all as their Head, Prince, Standard-bearer.]

11 *His head is of the finest gold; and of the massiest gold*: [Here two words stand together, whereby the Hebrew expresse two sorts of the best and choicest gold, *Chechem*, and *Phaz*. And hereby intimated, that the head; that is, the Divine Kingdom of the Bridegroom is exceeding fair and excellent, yea also perpetual and everlasting, *Dan. 7. 14.*] *his hair-locks are curled*, [Or, *crisped, frizled*] *black, as a Raven.* [Hereby is sig-

nified the beauty of youth; for in these times black hair was held to be an excellent grace and ornament in youth: it being a token of a hot and strong constitution.]

12 *His eyes are as the (eyes) of doves* [Above c. 1. 13. and 4. 1. it is said; that the Spouse hath doves eyes, and here it is said that the Bridegroom hath doves eyes; that is pure, clear, fair or beautiful eyes. In *Dan. 10. 6.* there are attributed or ascribed unto Christ eyes like lamps of fire: and *Revel. 1. 14.* like flames of fire: all of them signifying that he seeth and beholdeth the wayes of all men, and bringeth the secret actions of men, yea even their very secret thought to light, *2 Chron. 16. 9.* *Psal. 11. 5.* and 90 8. and 94. 9. *Jerem. 16. 17.* *Heb. 4. 13.*] *by the water-streams*: [that is, that have their abiding place by the water-brooks,] *washed with milk*, [that is, looking as white, as if they were washed with milk] *standing (as) in small ouches of rings.* [Heb. *sitting in the filling*; that is, as precious stones stand or sit in the small ouches of gold-rings; that is, they are neatly fitted and joyned in, and stand like a precious stone fitted and fastened in a fair gold-ring: Such are the pure and comely eyes of Christ the Bridegroom of his Church.]

13 *His cheeks are as a bed of spice*, [The Bridegrooms cheeks are likened to a garden-bed of spices, not of such as are dry and withered, but of such as have flowers and leaves, giving a sweet and pleasant smell: whereby is signified the pleasant and acceptable graces of the Lord Christ, whereof all those that receive him by a true and lively faith, are made partakers. See below chap. 6. 2.] (as) *fragrant turrets*, [Or, *little spice-turrets*; meaning such kinde of Apothecaries boxes, as are spiring like little turrets or towers, wherein spices, drugs, or powders or perfumes are kept] *his lips are (like) lilies, dropping of flowing myrrhe.* [That is, his lips send forth a sweet smell, as if the smell of myrrhe, and lilies were mixt together; that is, they bring forth sweet and comfortable Doctrines. (Dropping of flowing myrrhe:) That is, of oil made of sweet-smelling lilies and myrrhe, mixt among one another, as above v. 5. This signifieth the gifts and graces (or, words of grace, *Luke 4. 22.*) poured out into the lips of Christ, *Psal. 45. 3.*]

14 *His hands are (as) gold rings, filled (or set) with the Turquois*; [In Hebrew *Turkis*, as *Exod. 28. 20.* Oth. *on his hands are gold rings*, &c. Understand here by the hands, adorned with gold rings, wherein precious stones are set; the precious, pure, and glorious works of the Bridegroom. Thus the word *hands* is taken for working or power, *1 Chron. 29. 12.* and *2 Chron. 20. 6.*] *his belly* [Heb. *his bowels*. But here by bowels must be understood the belly and the breast; wherein the bowels lie shut up. Hereby is intimated the inward or hearty affections and inclinations of the Bridegroom; to wit, his love, grace, and compassion. See *Luke 1. 78.* *2 Cor. 7. 15.* *Phil. 2. 1.*] *is (as) standing Ivory*; [Heb. *the splendor of the tooth*: to wit, of the tooth of an Elephant. Understand this of the fairest, most polished, brightest and clearest Ivory that is] *overlaid with Saphirs.* [That is, beautified, or adorned with Saphirs. Some Saphirs are white, and glister like a Diamond: Others are blew. Understand here white Saphirs, whereby the cleanness and purenesse of the Bridegroom is set forth. Of the Saphir, see likewise *Job 28. 6.*]

15 *His shanks are as marble-pillars, grounded upon feet of the thickest gold*: [Under the name of shanks, or legs, are the thighs also understood, yea the whole inferior part of the body unto the feet, they being the instruments or parts, that carry, support, and move the body from one place to another. This similitude is likewise used, *Revel. 1. 15.* See *Psal. 147. vers. 10.* The strength and power of Christ, or the mighty and constant

constant help which he affordeth unto his Church, are compared unto pillars of marble, which stand beautiful & firm, being set or grounded upon pure, or thick solid gold, signifying, that the promises, and works of God, are pure, firm, and constant, yea even prevailing against the gates of Hell. In this respect Christ is called the rock, upon which the Church is built, *Matth. 16. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 6.* *his countenance is as the Libanon*, [That is, glorious, strong, and pleasant, like the fair, great, and high trees, which grew in great abundance upon mount Libanon, whereof see the annotat. above chap. 4. vers. 8.] *choice as the Cedars*. [That is, fair and excellent as the Cedars. Things that do exceed others in beauty and greatness, are commonly chosen and pickt out by men]

17 *The roof of his mouth* [That is, his words, speech, sayings, (as *Prov. 5. 3. and 8. 7.*) likewise his Doctrines, comforts, promises] *is meer sweetness*, [See *Rom. 15. 4. and Col. 3. 16.*] *and whatsoever is in him, is altogether desirable*: [Heb. *he is altogether desires*; that is, all that is in him, is exceeding lovely, and worthy that we should desire and covet to enjoy it. Such a one is Christ unto his Church, and to all his Elect, but to the wicked and reprobate he is a stumbling-block, and foolishness, *1 Cor. 1. 23.* See also *Psal. 22. 7. Isai. 52. 14. and 53. 2.*] *Such a one is my best beloved, yea such a one is my Friend, ye Daughters of Jerusalem*. [With these words the Spouse intendeth to conclude the excellency and dignity of the Lord Christ; above all others]

CHAP. VI.

The companions ask the Spouse for her Beloved, vers. 1. She telleth them whither he is gone, 2. The Bridegroom describeth the form and beauty of his Spouse, 4. He telleth likewise, how that he visiteth his garden, 11. The Bridegroom inviteth his Spouse to come to him, 13.

WHither is thy best beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? [These, and the following words of the verse, are the words of the Daughters of Jerusalem, of whom mention is made, chap. 5. vers. 16.] *whither hath thy best beloved turned (his) face*, [To wit, from thee to others, or to another place] *that we may seek him with thee*? [Or, *and we will seek him with thee.* The daughters of Jerusalem having heard how the Spouse had praised and commended her Bridegroom, are thereby moved to enquire earnestly, the second time after him, (expressing thereby their great and fervent zeal) and they promise and engage that they will seek him with her, to the end that they also may be made partakers of his grace and blessings. Such is the power of the preaching of the Gospel in the hearts of the Elect: See *Acts 2. 37. and 4. 4. and chapter 11. vers. 20. 21.*]

2 *My best beloved is gone down into his garden*, [The Spouse that at the first sought Christ her Bridegroom, but could not finde him, knoweth now where he is, and she instructeth others of it. So that we do here see fulfilled that which Christ promiseth, *Matth. 7. 7. Seek, and ye shall finde.* See *Deut. 4. 29.* The garden of Christ is his Church, as above chap. 4. 16. and 5. 1. There is Christ to be sought, and likewise to be found] *to the bed of spices*, [It seemeth that hereby is intimated the flocks or companies of Believers, in whose hearts, as in good ground the good sweet-smelling seed of the Word of God is sown, *Matth. 13. 8. 23.* This is the Bridegrooms garden of pleasure, where he is continually present with his grace and Spirit, and he taketh his delight

in the good works of believers, as men do in pleasant garden plots, which are set and sown with all manner of precious spices and flowers] *to feed in the gardens*, [That is, to have fellowship and communion with his Elect, eating and enjoying his pleasant fruits. See above chap. 4. 16. As also to feed and nourish those that are his, and make them partakers of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost. (*In the gardens*:) That is, in the particular Churches and Congregations of Believers, as above chap. 1.] *and for to gather the Lilies*. [That is, to gather unto himself his elect and chosen people, who are compared unto lilies among thorns; above, chap. 2. 2.]

3 *I am my best beloveds, and my best beloved is mine*; [The Spouse rejoiceth here because of the love and peace that was renewed betwixt her Bridegroom and her self, notwithstanding her former weaknesses and adversities. Those very words the Spouse likewise uttereth, of, or concerning her Bridegroom, above chap. 2. 16. and below chap. 7. 10. but somewhat in another sense] *that feedeth among the Lilies*. [That is, not only in a wholesome pasture; but also in an abounding pleasant pasture, to the refreshing, and to the everlasting comfort of his sheep.]

4 *Thou art beautiful, my Love, like Thirza, comely as Jerusalem*: [The Bridegroom having found his Spouse, commendeth her for the manifold gifts and graces of the Spirit, wherewith she is beautified and adorned. See above chap. 4. 1. *Thirza* was a City in the Land of Canaan, lying not far from Samaria, wherein one of the Kings which Josua subdued kept his Court, *Jos. 12. 24.* Afterwards the Kings of Israel kept their Court there, until Samaria was built by Omri; See *1 Kings 14. 17. and 15. 21, 23. and 16. 6, 8, 23.* The Greek Interpreters leave out the word *Thirsa*, and put into the text *Good refreshing*; or, *favourable acceptance*. Whence may be gathered, that it was a fair pleasant City, in which kinde of places Kings and Princes were wont to dwell. Such kinde of beauty, or comeliness is here ascribed unto the Spouse, being made fair and acceptable in and by Christ her Bridegroom, *Ephes. 1. 6. and 5. 27.* The City of Jerusalem is famous for her beauty and glory. It was in times past the famousst City of all the East, *Plin. lib. 5. cap. 14.* It was the seat of pure Religion, or, of the pure worship of God, and the dwelling-place of the Kings of Juda, *Psal. 122.* It is called *the joy of the whole earth*, *Psal. 48. 3.* *terrible* [that is, full of majesty and courage, terrible in the eyes of her enemies, as below vers. 10.] *as battalies with banners*. [Hebr. *as bannered*; to wit, armies, or, battalies; that is, as camps standing under their banners, or Ensigns in battel-array, ready to give battel. Therefore the Church is terrible in the eyes of her enemies, because she is environed and compassed about with many powerful Angels, *2 Kings 6. 17. and 19. 35.* Likewise because she is armed with spiritual armour or weapons. See *Acts 5. 11. Eph. 6. 13. and 3 Cor. 10. 4.* See also below v. 10.]

5 *Turn away thine eyes from me*, [Or, *over against me*, as *Numb. 2. 2.* A phrase expressing the greatness of Christs love. O. h. *Turn thine eyes towards me.* The Hebrew word signifieth sometimes to turn ones self toward another, as *1 Chron. 12. 23.* Sometimes to turn away ones self from another, as *Ezech. 7. 22.*] *for they offer violence unto me*: [Oth. *they have lifted me up*, or, *exalted me*] *thine hair is as a flock of goats*, [See the annotat. above 4. 1.] *that shear off (the grasse) of Gilead*. [Here is mentioned onely Gilead, but chap. 4. 1. is mentioned, *the Mountain of Gilead.* Both in the one place, and in the other the whole countrey of Gilead is meant and understood.]

6. *Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep, that come up from the washing-place, which do all together bring forth twins, and (there) is none without young among them.* [See above chap. 4. on vers. 3.]

7. *Thy teeth are as a peece of a pomegranate between thy locks.* [See above chap. 4. on vers. 3.]

8. *There are threescore Queens, and fourscore Concubines, and Virgins without number.* [These words may be likewise taken as spoken conditionally, thus, *Let there be threescore Queens, &c.* that is, although there were threescore Queens, &c. yet (but) one is my dove, &c. Christ the Bridegroom of his Church speaketh this under the name of Salomon, who was a type and figure of him. Some conclude from hence, that Salomon made this Song in the first years of his Reign, when he had not yet so many wives and Concubines, as he had afterward, 1 Kings 11. 3. but some conceive that here a certain number is put for an uncertain, as Job 5. 19. Mich. 5. 5. and elsewhere. The meaning is, that the true Church alone is to be accounted and esteemed to be the true Church of Christ, as is further exprest, vers. 9. Of the word *Concubines*, see further Genes. 22. on vers. 24. It seemeth that by these Queens and Concubines are meant those Churches, which pretend to be true Churches, but have no inward spiritual fellowship and communion with the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ, although by the grace and mercy of God they may be brought unto it. Understand here by *virgins*, hand-maids or Ladies of honour that waited and attended upon the Queens, as Esth. 2. 9. Psal. 45. 15. and by these hand-maids is meant the people, that depend upon the great ones, and suffer themselves to be led by them: which is by far the greatest number in the world.]

9. *One only is my dove, [Or, (but) she alone is my dove.* This is opposed to the great number of Queens, &c. vers. 8. And here the Spouse of Christ, which is but one (as there is but one body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one faith, Eph. 2. vers. 4, 5.) is counted and esteemed more then the great and infinite number of others, that are in their own, and in the opinion of others, Queens, and Princesses. See what God saith unto Israel, Exod. 19. 5. 2 Sam. 7. 23.] *my perfect one, the only one of her mother,* [All the particular Churches on earth, that are orthodox, being put all together, make up no more but one body, Ephes. 5. 16. The only Church being as the only and legitimate Daughter of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the universal Church, which is the mother of us all, Galat. 4. vers. 26.] *she is the pure one [Or, purified one, or choice one, or, the clear one: and so below vers. 10. and 1 Chron. 7. 40. There are many bastard-Churches, but there is no more but one pure, legitimate, chosen Church, of which see 1 Pet. chap. 1. vers. 2.] of her, that bare her: [Hebr. of her bearer] when the Daughters [To wit, the Daughters, or Virgins, whereof is spoken, vers. 8.] see her, [That is, fully know her state and condition] they shall proclaim her blessed, (yea) the Queens, and the Concubines; and shall praise her. [To wit, this Spouse. See Deut. 4. 6. and 20. 19. Acts 5. 13. (They shall praise her:) That is, they shall count her blessed, or happy. The meaning is, although the Churches that in this World are so highly esteemed both by others, and by themselves, seem to be the true Church, yet they shall be convinced at last, (at least (unless they do repent) at the day of judgement, when they shall see the sheep stand at the right hand of the supreme Judge) that there is but one true Church, and that they are blessed and happy that belong unto it, Malach. 3. 18.]*

10. *Who is she [That is, what manner of person is this?] that looketh forth, [Or, peepeth out, appeareth] as the day-break [That is, as the clear and bright morn-*

ing appeareth after the dark night, so doth the Spouse rise up, and come forth after the darknesse of affliction, ignorance, and errour, To wit, when the morning-star of the knowledge of Christ ariseth in her heart. See [Isai. 60. 2. and 2 Pet. 1. 19.] fair as the Moon, [The Moon hath in Hebrew her name from whitenesse, and from her clear and shining-brightness. Here the fair and clear brightness of the Moon signifieth the beautiful and glorious state of the Church of God. See the like phrases, [Isai. 30. 26. and 60. 20. Ezech. 16. 14. and 32. 7, 8. Joel. 3. 15.] pure [Or, clear, or, clean] as the Sun, [Christ is the Sun of righteousness, Malach. 4. 2. The woman, to wit, his Spouse, is clothed with the Sun, Revel. 12. 1. For she hath put on Christ by faith, Gal. 3. 27. by whose righteousness she is cleansed from her sins, and so is become glorious, and shining bright] terrible [To wit, unto her enemies, with whom she is to combat under the banner of her Bridegroom, being armed not with carnal weapons, but such as are mighty through God, to cast down strong holds, 2 Cor. 10. 4. See likewise Exod. chap. 15. vers. 14, 15, 16. Deut. 2. 25. and 33. 29. Psal. 48. 5, 6. See also above the annotat. on vers. 4.] as (batalias) with banners? [This question made in this verse, is propounded by those that are mentioned in the former verse. They admire or wonder at the beauty, and glory of the Church of God; as if they had said, Is this that Church which we have despised, reproached? behold, how glorious and excellent is it now?]

11. *I went down to the garden of nuts, to see the green fruits of the valley: [These, and the following words, are the words of the Bridegroom, shewing how he visiteth the garden, his Church. The Hebrew word Egoz, rendered here nuts, is only found in this place. Most Interpreters take it for nuts, and conceive that here must be meant not mean or ordinary nuts, but nutmegs, such kinde of pleasant and precious fruits, as grew in great abundance in the Bridegrooms garden. See above cha. 4. vers. 12, 13, 14. Oth. cleansed, or, pruned garden. (To see the green fruits:) Oth. new, or, first fruits; to wit, that ripen in the beginning of the year. The meaning is, that after the winter of adversity, appeareth the pleasant Spring of grace in the garden of the Church. (of the valley;) Or, in the low ground, where the Church of Christ is watered and moistened with the Word and Spirit of God, that it may bear fruit in great abundance] to see whether the Vine flourished, (and) the pomegranates budded forth. [Or, blossomed, or, sprouted out. Understand here by the Vine, and the pomegranate, the people called by God, and planted in the garden of the Church, which budding and blossoming in true and sincere knowledge, do afterward bring forth fruits of good works, to the glory of God, and to the edification of their neighbour. See above chap. 2. 13, 14.]*

12. *Before I knew it, my soul set me (upon) the charets [That is, I set myself, &c. This phrase is very common in Holy Scripture: see examples thereof, Psal. 6. 4. Eccles. 7. 28. above chap. 1. 7. Isai. 1. 14. and 61. 10. and elsewhere besides. The meaning is, I was moved by my fervent compassion, and not by thy merits. Oth. my soul; that is, my desire. See Psal. 27. on vers. 12.] of my willing people. [Or, of my Noble, or, Princely people. The Hebrew word Nadib, which is used here, signifieth free-willing, or, good-willing, or, free, or, Noble, or, Princely. Some render it, upon the charets of Amminadib, making of two words one: But we finde not in Scripture who this Amminadib was: Therefore it is better to render it, my willing, or, my free-willing people; to wit, true Christians, or believers; who are said to be willing, or, free-willing in the day of power, or host, Psal. 110. 3. receiving the word preached with all willing-*

willingness, or readiness of minde, *Acts* 2. 41. and 17. 11. The words of this verse seem yet to be the words of the Bridegroom. As if he had said, *Before I knew it*; that is to say, suddenly, unsuspectedly, unawares, in regard of my great longing after my garden: Where I, seeing and perceiving such fair and pleasant fruits, I helped my people forward (as it were) with charets: defending them likewise against their enemies. This may be also understood by the word *charets*: because they used charets heretofore in war. See *Jos.* 11. 4. and 1 *Sam.* 13. 5. and elsewhere besides. Some understand here the Holy Angels.]

13 *Return, return, O Sulammith, return, return,* [This signifieth the earnest longing and desire after the conversion of those that wandered out of the way, and went astray: and it is therefore four times repeated, because we are by nature slow of heart and of ears, *Luke* 24. 25. *Heb.* 5. 11. Some apply this to the calling back, and conversion of the Jews unto Christ. See *Rom.* 11. 25. Others conceive that these are the words of the Spouses companions. (O Sulammith:) Salomon hath his name from peace, 1 *Chron.* chap. 22. 9. Jerusalem is also called *Salem*, *Psal.* 76. 3. that is, peace, *Heb.* 7. 2. So the Church, or, the people, that is called, or invited to return, is called *Sulammith*, which is as much to say, as peaceable, or, peaceful, or, living in peace; In respect of the peace which they have with God through Jesus Christ, *Rom.* 5. 1. It is then as much as if the Bridegroom here had said, Come hither my loving Spouse, that (after my name Salomon, Prince of Peace, or peaceable) art called *Sulammith*, that is, peaceable: return, come unto me, I will receive thee into grace and favour, although thou didst provoke me unto anger] *that we may look upon thee.* [Or, behold thee; to wit, with joy and gladness. These words seem to be uttered by the *Sulammiths* friends, wishing to see, that the former gifts and graces, might be again seen, and discerned in her: for the Angels themselves desire to see those things, which are communicated to the Church by the Gospel, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. See also *Psal.* 27. 4. *Isai.* 52. 8.]

14 *What look ye upon the Sulammith?* [Some conceive that these are the words of the Spouse: Others take them to be the words of the Bridegroom. Oth, *what do ye* (I pray) *see in the Sulammith?* or, in the *Salammitesse*] *she is as a dance* [Or, as a company; that is, as a company of those that make up a dance, that are merry together. The Israelites, yea even the godly themselves were wont sometimes to rejoyce with dances, and to praise God in them for victories obtained, or for other causes, *Exod.* 15. 20. *Jerem.* 31. 13. *Luke* 15. 25. In this place is signified by the *dance*, the joy and gladness of believers, when they shall come unto Christ] *of two armies,* [By these two armies is signified the multitude of those that should be converted unto Christ. But others understand by the two armies, the Church of Christ consisting of Jews and Gentiles. Others retain here in the text the Hebrew word *Machanaim*, which signifieth two armies, or two camps. See *Genes.* 32. vers. 1, 2.]

CHAP. VII.

The Spouse is commended because of her beauty and comeliness, vers. 1, &c. She rejoyceth because of her communion and fellowship with her Bridegroom, 10. She inviteth him, and requesteth to go along with him to visit the Churches, 11, &c.

How beautifull are thy goings in the shoes, [Understand hereby, her conversation in the faith in Je-

sus Christ, to wit so, as that her feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, manifesting thereby, that she is born of God, *Ephes.* 6. 15. See also *Isai.* 2. 7.] *thou Princes Daughter;* [Compare herewith *John* 1. 13. and *Jam.* 1. 18. This Spouse, or the Church, is also called a *Kings Daughter*, *Psal.* 45. 14. For God is a great King] *the joynts of thy thighs, are like precious chains,* [Or, like neck-chains, or, bracelets, or such like ornaments. See *Prov.* 25. on vers. 12. The Hebrew word rendered here *joynts* (which is only found in this place) cometh from a word that signifieth turning, or turning about, and it signifieth the hollownesse wherein the hip or thigh bone is moved or turned about. These joynts (or turning about) are compared to precious chains, or jewels, signifying the sure, upright, and fair feature, dealing, and conversation of this Princely, or Noble Daughter, well becoming the Gospel, whereof she maketh profession. Others render the Hebrew word here *girdles*, and understand thereby the girdle of truth, which is made by the inspiration of the Spirit of truth, who is the chiefest workman of all good and perfect gifts, as is intimated in the words following. This girdle is compared to chains of gold, that are fastened and joynted together with many links; for truth hath many parts, but they all suit with one another, like the links of a chain] *being the work of the hands of an Artificer,* [Understand by this skillful workman, the Holy Ghost. See 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. It is said, *Jam.* 1. 17. *That every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.* It seemeth that the friends of the Spouse made this description of the Spouses body. For vers. 5. and vers. 9. is spoken of Salomon or Christ, as of a third person: Notwithstanding some hold them to be the words of the Bridegroom]

2 *Thy navel is (like) a round goblet,* [The navel is the instrument, whereby the child is fed and nourished, while it is shut up in its mothers womb. Understand here by *navel*, the navel of regeneration, whereby we are made partakers of spiritual life, when we are conceived in the womb of the Church, by the seed of the word of God. This gift is compared to a round goblet or bowl, which wanteth no drink or liquour, as followeth in the next words of the text; that is, which is never emptied or dried up, because by regeneration we receive the Spirit of adoption, which never departeth from the elect, *Joh.* 14. 16. but he becometh in them a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life, *Joh.* 4. vers. 14.] *which wanteth no drink* (or liquour:) [Heb. *which wanteth no mixture.* Drink or liquour is often by the Hebrews called *mixture*, because they did not alwayes drink the wine as pure as it came from the grape or wine-press, but they mingled it with water, or also with spices. See above chap. 5. 1. and *Prov.* 9. 2. and below chap. 8. 2. mention is made of wine mingled with spices] *thy belly is like an heap of wheat,* [The spiritual gifts of the Spouse or Church of Christ are also fruitful, converting others, in such abundance and plenty, as wheat that beareth and bringeth forth much fruit, *Psal.* 72. 16.] *set round about with lilies.* [Heb. *fenced, &c.* Hereby is shewed, that the fruitfulness of the Church is crowned with the blessing of God and Spiritual joy. It seemeth to have respect to the new fruits, which they were used to crown or adorn with flowers, or green garlands. See *Hos.* 14. 6.]

3 *Thy two breasts, are like two whelps, twins of a roe.* [See the interpretation of this verse, above chap. 4. 5.]

4 *Thy neck* [By the neck is meant the power and glory of the Church of Christ. Others understand by the neck, hope and patience] *is as a tower of Ivory,* [that is, beautiful, strong, and right. See above chap. 4. 4. and the annotat. there] *thine eyes are (like) the fish-pools at Hecbon*

Hesbon [To wit, the eyes of thine understanding, and of thy faith, they are full of wisdom and knowledge of the Lord, as the fish-pools are full of clear and pure water, being clear to see and discern the truth, and to consider her own wayes and goings, and the wayes and goings of others. See above chap. 4. vers. 1. (at *Hesbon*) In the city of *Hesbon* King *Sihon* formerly kept his Court, *Numb.* 21. 26. It lay in a goodly fat soil or region, which fell by lot unto the *Reubenites*, *Numb.* chap. 32. vers. 3, 4, 5, to 37. It seemeth that there were in this city very fair fish-pools, that beautified and adorned it, as the eyes do the body. Oth. like fish-pools with consideration, or, with thought; that is, curiously, or, artificially made] by the gate of *Bath-rabbim*: [That is, by the gate, where many men go out and in, or, by the gate where many men meet together. Some conceive that there was a gate at *Jerusalem* called *Bath-Rabbim*, by which gate there were fair fish-pools. Some take it for the sheep-gate, *Nehem.* 3. 1. Or, the fountain-gate, *Nehem.* 3. 15. Others take it to be a gate of the city of *Hesbon*] Thy nose is as the tower of *Libanon*, [Here by way of similitude or comparison is described the beauty of the nose, and consequently of the whole face. Some take the words thus, Because the nose is the instrument of smell, whereby we can discern the virtue of many things; therefore they understand by it, the judgement, and the spirit of discerning, whereby we are able to discern the things that differ, *Phil.* 1. 10. See also *Isai.* 11. 3. (as the tower of *Libanon*.) This may be understood of the tower of the house, which *Salomon* built in the forest of *Libanon*, or, of the trees of *Libanon*, 1 *Kings* 7. 2. and 10. 17.] which looketh toward *Damascus*. [*Damascus* was in those times the most famous city of *Syria*, *Isai.* 7. 8. lying Northward of mount *Libanon*: A very fair city, *Jerem.* 49. 24, 25. This city was commonly enemy to, and made war often with the people of God: See 1 *Chron.* 18. vers. 5, 6. 1 *Kings* 11. 24, 25. *Isai.* 7. 5, 8. *Amos* 1. 3. So that the tower of *Libanon* looking toward *Damascus*, may here signify the vigilant and watchfull care of the Spouse for the rest both of her self, and of her children against her and their enemies. For, which looketh toward *Damascus*, others have, seeing with the face toward *Damascus*. In Hebrew it is called *Dammeseck*: and 1 *Chron.* 18. 5, and 6. it's called *Darmasus*: but 2 *Kings* 16. 10. and *Acts* 9. 2. *Damascus*.]

5 Thine head upon thee, is like *Carmel*. [See of mount *Carmel*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 2, 5. and 1 *Kings* 18. vers. 19, 20, to 42. and elsewhere besides. Now these words, thine head upon thee, is like *Carmel*, may signify, that the Spouse is excellently endued with wisdom and understanding, as mount *Carmel* being very fruitful, brought forth many good fruits. Others do render here the word *Carmel*, by *Crimson*, as a like word, to wit, *Carmil*, is so rendered, 2 *Chron.* 3. 14.] and the hair-lace of thine head [understand here such hair-lace or binding, or phylitery, wherewith they binde up the dressing or ornament of the head. The Hebrew word *dallath* signifieth properly thinnesse; tendernes, daintines; so that it may also signify here thin, or smooth hair. See chap. 4. 1.] like purple: [This colour as also the crimson-colour did Kings and Princes wear in ancient times, and therefore the same did well besit this Spouse, who is called a Princes Daughter, vers. 1. And these colours are representations of the blood of Christ] the King is (as it were) tied in the galleries. [Understand here by the King, King *Salomon*, who was a type and figure of Christ. The meaning is; When the King intendeth to go over the gallerye from one chamber into other, and spieth thee in his going; he is faine to

stand still to look upon thee; no otherwise then as if he were bound and tied fast to the gallery. Oth. the King is (thereby) tied to the goings. The Hebrew word *Repatim*, is *Genes.* 30. 38, 41. and *Exod.* 2. 16. rendered gutters: but a like word, above chap. 1. 5, 17, 18. rendered galleries, as it must likewise be so taken in this place. And understand by the word Galleries, Fabricks or buildings that go all along the Houses. And to be tied upon, or, in the Galleries; signifieth here, that Christ hath a sure and firm habitation or abode in the house of his Church, where this King is tied, and continueth tied with the bands and cords of love, which he beareth unto his beloved Spouse the Church, *Rom.* 8. 35. See also *Psal.* 45. 12. *Isai.* 62. 4. *Ezech.* 37. 25, 26. and chap. 48. vers. 35. *Hos.* 2. 19. *Joh.* 14. 23. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Revel.* 22. 3, 5.]

6 How fair art thou, and how pleasant art thou, O Love, [Here the Bridegroom sheweth a reason why he is tied, and continueth still tied with or by love unto his Spouse, as he assumeth vers. 5. See above chap. 1. vers. 15, 16. and chap. 4. vers. 9, 10.] in delights! [That is, in all manner of recreation, so that all those that love this Spouse, may rejoyce with her, and be glad in the beauty of her glory, as *Isai.* 66. 10, 11.]

7 Thy length [Or, stature, shape] is to be likened to a palm-tree, [this is a fair tall tree, growing straight up or bolt up-right, alwayes green and flourishing, and bearing fair and excellent fruit. Therefore the condition of the godly is compared unto it, *Psal.* 92. 13. See also 1 *Kings* 6. 29 and 7. 36.] and thy breasts to clusters (of grapes.) [To wit, to such clusters of grapes, as are full of sap and moisture, which the faithful may suck, receiving from thence heavenly comforts and consolations unto satiety, *Isa.* 66. 11. and above chap. 4. vers. 5.]

8 I said, [To wit, with my self; that is, I thought, I firmly resolved] I will climb up into the palm-tree, [to wit, to gather the fruits from off it. Take these words as being spoken by the Bridegroom, intimating that he greatly delighted in the spiritual fruits of his Spouse. See above chap. 5. vers. 1.] I will take hold of the boughs thereof: [that is, I will take the boughs or branches of this palm-tree unto my self, and I will purge and keep them, that they may bring forth better fruit, *Joh.* 15. 7.] so then thy breasts shall be as clusters of grapes on the vine, [this is a promise, which the Bridegroom maketh unto his Spouse, to wit, that he will blesse her, filling her with the sap and moisture of his grace, so as that she shall not be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ, 2 *Per.* 1. 8. See also *Isai.* 27. 6. But others take the words of the text to be a wish or desire, in this sense: that thy breasts might be, &c. That is, that thou wearest no empty, or an unprofitable vine, as is written of *Israel*, *Hos.* 10. 1. But that thou wert full of the Spirit, that the babes and sucklings might suck, and be filled with the breasts of consolation, *Isa.* 66. 11.] and the smell of thy nose [compare above vers. 4. with the annotat.] like apples. [Which have a pleasant smell among other fruits of trees, of what sort soever they may be. But some understand here pomanders or sweet-apples, which the Apothecaries make of divers sweet-smelling spices.]

9 And the roof of thy mouth like good wine, which goeth straight to my beloved, causing the lips of the sleeping ones to speak. [That is, the Doctrine of the Church is like good wine, to comfort and cheer the sad and heavy hearts, *Prov.* chap. 31. v. 6. See likewise this similitude taken from wine, *Isa.* 55. 1. and *Prov.* 9. 5. (which goeth straight to my beloved:) Hebr. according to the righteousness; that is, right on, straight forward,

as we commonly use to say, so also *Prov. 23. 31.* Oth. which goeth according to the righteousness to my beloved: That is, whose words tend thereunto, to bring others unto Christ, and consequently to righteousness; that is, to all good works, wherein he will have us to walk. (To my beloved :) That is, to every one of my members. (Causing the lips of the sleeping ones to speak :) The meaning is, As wine maketh men affable and fluent in words, *Prov. 23. 29.* So the spirit of God maketh those that have him dwelling richly in them, to speak of the mysteries of God, and to relate the great and wonderful works of the Lord, *Acts 2. 4, 11, 13.* (Of the sleeping ones :) that is, of those that are now raised or wakened out of the sleep of sin, by the preaching of the word of God, *Ephes. 5. 14.*

10 I am my best-beloveds; [These are the words of the Spouse, being filled with the wine of grace and comfort, which she had received of her Bridegroom. She testifieth and confesseth her assurance by faith, that she belongeth to Christ, see *Gal. 3. 29.* see also the annotat. above, chap. 2: on vers. 16. and chap. 6. on v. 3.] and his affection is toward me. [or, his desire tendeth unto me.]

11 Come my best-beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us overnight in the villages; [The Spouse requirerth the company of Christ; for without him we can do nothing, *Joh. 15. 5.* The Spouse petitionerth the Bridegroom for leave to go into the field, and into the villages; to wit, to visit her tillage, to see what successe it had, and whether the trees brought forth good and plentiful fruit, as is said, v. 12. This signifieth the love and care of Christ, and of his Church, for the propagation of the Gospel, and the increase and augmentation of the church throughout the whole world, (for the field is the world, *Matth. 13. 38.*) as Christ himself in the dayes of his flesh, went into all the Cities and Towns, preaching the Gospel, *Mat. 9. 35. Mark 6. 6.* so likewise the Apostles are sent forth to preach the Gospel to all the Nations of the world, *Matth. 28. 19.* see also *Acts 15. 36.* The building up of the Church is also compared to husbandry, *1 Cor. 3. 9.* and the faithful Pastors and Teachers are also called there Gods co-workers or fellow-labourers. (Let us overnight, &c.) hereby is shewed the vigilant care or carefulnesse of the Church, which even by night watcheth and keepeth guard over her vineyard.]

12 Let us get up early to the vineyards, [This is again a token of diligent carefulnesse, see *2 Chron. 36. 15.* and *Jerem. 25. 3, 4.* (To the vineyards) That is, to the Churches or places where the Gospel is planted or preached. For the house of Israel is the Lords vineyard, *Isa. 5. 7.* let us see whether the vine flourisheth, (whether the young grapes [see of young grapes, above, ch. 2. 13, 14.] do open, [or, have opened. Oth. bud, or blossom, see above, ch. 6. 11.] (whether) the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my excelling love. [to wit, in the vineyards of the church, in the congregations of the Saints, there will I offer up unto thee my soul and my body for an acceptable and sweet-smelling sacrifice. (My excelling love :) That is, the injoyment of the fruits of my faith, profession, thankfulness, good works, &c. See *Isa. 27. vers. 3, 6.* and *65. 9. Ezec. 20. vers. 40, 41.*

13 The Dudaim [The right signification of this word is unknown to us, see *Gen. ch. 30. on v. 14.* It cannot be the Mandrake, such as is known among us, as some conceive, because our Mandrake hath a stinking smell, which maketh the head heavy, and sleepy. The Spouse doth intimate here, that there is already some good hope of repentance and conversion to be observed in her, as the sprouting out or blossoming of flowers is a good beginning; and preparation of fruit to come, see above, ch. 2. v. 12.] give a smell; [to wit, a pleasant and acceptable smell. The meaning is, that the fume of the

gifts and graces of God poured forth upon his people, is spread abroad into all places both far and neer] and at our doors [or, nigh our doors. Compare *Matth. 24. 32, 33.*] are all manner of precious fruits, [see above, chap. 4. v. 13, 16.] new and old: [this phrase signifieth variety and plenty of fruits, see *Levit. 26. on v. 19.* See also, *Matth. 13. 52.* By the old fruits, understand the first gifts, and works, which they formerly received, *Rev. ch. 2. v. 5.* By the new fruits, may be understood the fresh graces, which they had but lately or newly received: for he that maketh a right use or improvement of the gifts of regeneration, shall by the grace and blessing of God, receive still more and more, *Matth. 25. 29. Rev. 2. 19.* Some do understand hereby double fruits upon trees; old, ripe, and decaying fruits, and new, green, and coming on; as may be seen in the Orange-trees, and in sundry other fruit-trees] O my best-beloved, I have laid them up for thee. [as the goodness, which the Lord hath laid up for them that fear him, is wondrous great, *Psal. 31. 20.* So likewise must all the good fruits, that flow from his people, be improved and employed to his praise and glory. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to him be glory for ever. *Rom. 11. 36. Prov. 16. 4.*

CHAP. VIII.

The Spouse wisheth and desireth, that the Bridegroom might appear in the flesh, and dwell with her, vers. 1, &c. An admiration concerning the Churches rising, 9. The Spouses wish, that she might have assurance of her Bridegrooms love unto her, 6, &c. After that the Spouse speaketh of her young sister; that is, of the Church of the Gentiles, 8. The answer thereunto, 9. The Spouse resteth satisfied, and contented therewith, 10. The care which the Bridegroom himself taketh for his vineyard, 11, &c. But he will also be published and preached by others, 13. The Spouse longeth after the speedy appearing of her Bridegroom, 14.

O H that thou wert unto me, as a Brother, [Heb. who shall give thee unto me, as my brother! See the annotat. *Deut. 5. 29.* and *Psal. 14. 7.* This is a wish, and longing of the Spouse, or of the godly, earnestly wishing and longing that they might live to see that day, wherein they might behold Christ, their Bridegroom (being become their brother, according to the flesh) manifested in the flesh. How greatly many of the people of God in the old Testament longed after this, see *Matth. 13. 17. Joh. 8. 56. Heb. 11. 13.*] sucking the breasts of my mother! [in a spiritual way here is to be understood by the mother, the universal church, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, *Galat. 4. 26.* Christ sucked the same breasts, that we do or have sucked, when he did partake of the Sacraments of the Old and New Testament; as namely, of Circumcision, the Passover, Baptism, and the Lords Supper, so to fulfill all righteousness, *Matth. 3. 15.*] that I might find thee in the street, I would kisse thee, [kissing is a manifestation of love, sometimes also of honour, and obedience, see *Psal. 2. 12.* above, chap. 1. 2.] also they should not despise me: [those persons are despised, that either do, or at least are counted to do, something that is not honest, or not seemly and decent, *Gen. 38. 23. 2 Sam. 6. 16. Isa. 37. 22.* Therefore inasmuch as the Spouse by kissing her Bridegroom openly in the street; that is, by professing him publicly before men, and acknowledging him to be her Saviour, can do nothing unseemly or unbefitting, she cannot in that respect be justly despised or mocked by any godly or religious persons. Or these words (also they should not despise me) may be taken in this sense, as if the Spouse

Spouse had said, Mine enemies, that is, infidels or unbelievers; would then no more decide mine hope and expectation, which I have concerning the Messiah his coming in the flesh, as they were wont to do, when the promises of God tarried a while, and were not presently accomplished, as appeareth, *Psal. 42. 11.* and *2 Peter 3. 4.*

2 *I would lead thee,* [To wit, with reverence and with joy; desiring to disperse or spread abroad Christ, that is, the knowledge of Christ in the universal Church both of Jews and Gentiles, as followeth in the next words] *I would bring thee into my mothers house,* [that is, into the Church, or assemblies of believers, which are Gods houses and Temples, *Gal. 4. 26.* *2 Cor. 6. 16.* *Heb. 3. 6.*] *thou shouldest teach me;* [the Church speaketh this unto Christ, see *Deut. 18. 15.* *Isa. 2. 2, 3.* *Mich. 4. 1, 2.* *Joh. 1. 18.* and *4. 15.* and *15. 15.* *Heb. 1. 1.*] *I would give thee to drink of spiced wine, and of the juyce of my pomegranates.* [that is, I would bring forth such good fruits to thy praise and glory, that should be as pleasing and acceptable unto thee, as wine mingled with spices, or hypocras, or the juyce of pomegranates can be to any man. This pleasant drink is quite contrary to that cup, whereof mention is made, *Rev. 17. 2, 4.*]

3 *Let his left hand be under mine head, and let his right hand imbrace me.* [The Spouse considering her own weakness, beseecheth the Bridegroom to comfort and support her, to the end that she may finde rest for her soul, above, chap. 2. 6. *Oth. his left hand is,* or *lieth, under mine head;* that is, in the mean while he taketh care for me, manifesting his strength in my weakness; he supporteth me in my greatest necessity, as a faithful husband assisteth his wife in her necessity and distress.]

4 *I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem,* [That is, I charge you by oath] *that ye stir not up that love, nor waken (it) until it please (the same.)* [the Spouse feeling now the gracious comforts and consolations of her Bridegroom, wisheth that she may be, and constantly continue partaker thereof, forbidding her friends to disquiet or molest the same. See above, chap. 2. 7. and 3. 5. to wit, by heresies, schismes, or scandal. Some are of opinion, that the Bridegroom speaketh in this vers. *Oth. why,* or *to what end should ye stir up that love, or awake (it) before it please her?* This question signifieth as much as if it were said, Stir not up this love, it will neither benefit you nor us, to vex and grieve your mother, the Church. See the like phrase above, chap. 2. 7. and 3. 5.]

5 *Who is she that cometh up out of the wilderness, and leaneth lovingly upon her best-beloved?* [These are the words of the Bridegroom, admiring at the rising of a new Church in a place, where there had been no assembly or congregation of believers before. Or, if these be the words of the ancient Church of believers (as some are of opinion they are) then it is an admiration of the daughters of Jerusalem at the growth, strength, steadfast, and unmoveable faith and patience of this Church, leaning, trusting, and relying onely upon the gracious defence and protection of her Bridegroom. Compare above, chap. 3. 6. By the wilderness in this place may be understood the Nations of this world, out of which the people of God are chosen and called, *Joh. 15. vers. 19.* *Oth. joyning her self unto,* or *associating her self with her best beloved.* The Hebrew word that is used in the text is found no where else, but onely here. By this phrase of *leaning upon her best-beloved,* is shewed the weakness and infirmity which the Spouse feeleth in her self, her strength consisting alone in Christ, her Bridegroom, upon whom she leaning and relying by faith, is strengthened in all fears, doubtings, temptations and dangers, as being by union and communion with him, made partaker of his graces and benefits, for he that is joyned unto the Lord, is one spirit with him, *1 Cor. 6.*

17. which maketh him perfect, stablisheth, strengtngtheneth, and settleth him, *1 Pet. 5. 10.*] *I raised thee up under the apple-tree,* [these are the words of the Spouse unto her Bridegroom, whom she as it were raiseth up and awaketh out of sleep by her earnest and fervent prayer, as *Psal. 44. 24.* and *68. 1.* and *78. 65.* Understand here by the *apple-tree,* the tree of grace, whose shadow and fruits are pleasing and delightful unto the Spouse] *there* [to wit, under the apple-tree] *thy mother brought thee forth with sorrow, there she brought (thee) forth with sorrow,* (that) *bare thee,* [or thus; *There was thy mother in labour of thee, there was she in labour that bare thee.* Thy mother, that is, the primitive Church, or assembly of believers, in whom Christ in a manner may be said to be born, to wit, by the preaching, professing, and practising of his Word, and by suffering for it. To bring forth Christ into the world by the preaching of the Gospel, is here typified and represented unto us under the comparison of a woman, being in travel, or in pain of child-bearing; as *Gal. 4. 19.* *Revel. chap. 12. v. 2.* As child-bearing is accompanied with much pain and sorrow, so is it likewise when Christ is conceived and born in the hearts and minds of men, that they should believe in him. This is not done without much travel, care, pain and grief. See *2 Cor. 6. 4, 5.* and *4. 8.* to 11.]

6 *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm.* [In these words the Spouse prayeth unto Christ for assurance and confirmation of his love unto her, that she might be set and abide as a seal in and upon his heart, and continue so for ever. This hath respect to the breast-plate of the high Priest, wherein were given the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, in or upon twelve precious stones, *Exod. 28. 21, 29.* At all times seals were made use of for confirmation of a thing that was written or promised; to the end, that the same might not be broken, see *Nebem. 9. 38.* *Jerem. 22. 24.* *Hag. 2. 23.* *Mal. 3. vers. 16.* *2 Tim. 2. 19.* The High Priest bare the names of the twelve tribes, not onely upon his heart, but also upon his shoulders, for a memorial or remembrance of the children of Israel, see *Isa. 49. 16.* Some conceive, that by the heart here is meant the inward and intimate love of the Bridegroom, and by the arm the outward manifestation of his love, as *Psal. 77. 16.* and *86. 11.*] *for love* [to wit, the spiritual love of the Spouse unto Christ, and in like manner the love of Christ unto his Church and elect] *is strong as death:* [The meaning is, As death by its power overcometh and conquereth even the strongest man that is, *Psal. 89. 49.* so the mutual love between us both is exceeding strong, and cannot be quenched in us by any enemy or adversity, no not by death it self] *zeal is hard as the grave:* [Zeal or jealousy. This signifieth a vehement burning fervent love. This love or zeal is said to be hard as the grave, because it devoureth, and overcometh all difficulties, *Gal. 5. 24.* *Colos. 3. 5.* even as death and the grave do swallow up all things] *the coals thereof are fiery coals,* [here is spoken of the burning coals of love, that kindle and inflame the heart, and cannot be quenched]. *flames of the LORD.* [that is, great mighty flames. Or flames that are kindled by the LORD. Understand the flame or fire of the love and spirit of Christ, which may justly be called great, by reason of the strength of his love, and the powerful working of the Spirit in the hearts of the elect.]

7 *Many waters would not be able to quench this love; yea the Rivers would not (be able to) drown [or overwhelm, overflow] it.* [By waters and streams are oftentimes in Scripture signified adversities, persecutions, temptations, which the Lord Christ sustained for our sakes, and whereby the faith, love, and patience of the children of God are exercised and tried, as *Psal. 42. 8.* and *69. 2.* *Isa. 8. 7, 8.* and *59. 19.* *Dan. 9. 26.* and *11. 22.* *Matth. 7. 27.* See the Annotat. *2 Sam. 22.* on ver. 17. Compare *Rom. 8. 35.* to 39.] *though a man should give all the substance*

stance of his house for this love, he would be utterly condemned. [Hebr. *contemning they would contemne him*: that is, he would not be able to get it for the same: or his wealth or substance would not be accepted of, to give him this love for it, it would be utterly despised. As the love which is betwixt Christ and his Church, cannot be separated, being tied and fastened together by the band of the Spirit: So neither can love, nor any other spiritual gift be bought for money, but it is a free gift of God, who giveth it to whomsoever he pleaseth, *Acts* 8. vers. 18, 19, 20. *Rom.* 9. 11, to 19.]

8 *We have a little Sister, which yet hath no breasts*: [The Church of the old Testament speaketh here unto Christ of a new rising Church, which should be called and gathered from among the heathens or Gentiles, which was often promised of old, as *Psal.* 2. 8. and 72. 8. *Isai.* 11. 10. which heathen Church she calleth her Sister, in respect of the unity of faith. The Jewish Church is called the *eldest Daughter*, because she was first called to the fellowship of the covenant. See *Rom.* 9. 4, 5. (*A little Sister*:) Thus the Church which consisteth of heathens or Gentiles is called, not because she is little in respect of the number of believers; but because she was called later to the knowledge of God in Christ; to wit, in the fulness of time, *Ephes.* 1. 10. and 2. 6. For otherwise this least or youngest sister, who had been so long barren and unfruitful, bare many more Children, then the eldest sister did. (*Which yet hath no breasts*:) That is, she is not yet marriageable, or, of age to marry; the time is not yet come, that the Gentiles should be brought unto Christ, and married to him] *what shall we do for our Sister in that day, when she shall be spoken of?* [That is, when the time of her conversion unto Christ shall be come: what shall we then do or contribute towards her assistance, growth, and establishment in the truth and in the faith. It intimateth and sheweth the duty and office of love that one particular Church oweth unto another in the communication of gifts, and in praying for one another. See *Acts* 11. vers. 19, 22, 23. *Oth. when she shall be spoken against*, as the Hebrew letter *Beth* is taken, *Numb.* 21. 5. where it is said, *The people spake against God, and against Moses*. So *Psal.* 119. 25. *Princes spake against me*. As soon as a people convert themselves unto God, straight way the wicked set themselves against them both in words and works]

9 *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will compass her about with boards of Cedar*. [Some take these words to be the words of Christ; others, to be the words of the sister-Churches, wishing and desiring her prosperity. (*If she*) To wit, the Church of the Gentiles, (*be a wall*,) that is, firm and strong in the faith, being well grounded upon the foundation of the Doctrine of the twelve tribes of Israel, and of the Apostles. See *Rev.* 21. vers. 14, 19. (*we*, &c.) By the word *we* may be understood the Sister-Churches, or the Jewish Churches; for by the members thereof the Lord called the Gentiles to the fellowship and communion of Saints, especially and by name by the Holy Apostles, who were all of them Jews born, who as wise builders laid the foundation of this silver-palace, *1 Cor.* 3. 10. (*will build upon her*) That is, we will more and more strengthen and adorn her; to wit, by the word and the preaching of the Gospel. (*a palace*) Or, *castle*, or, *strong tower*, as they are wont to build in or at strong walls of Cities, (*of silver*:) This signifieth the pureness, beauty, and lastingness of this palace, being adorned with the gift of Gods Word and Spirit, whereupon she was to be built, for an habitation of God, *Eph.* 2. 22. (*and if she be a door*,) That is, if her heart standeth open, to let in the preaching of the Word of God into her heart, and to receive it with joy, (*we will compass her about*) Or, *strengthen, inclose, fence her*.

The Lord promiseth, *Zach.* 2. 5. that he will be a wall of fire round about his Church. (*with planks, or, boards of Cedar*:) That is, with strong palisadoes, or others fences. Cedar wood, and the boards or planks that are made of it, are fair, strong, lasting, and of a good smell. Of such kinde of wood was Salomons Temple built, *1 Kings* 6. 15. By these boards or planks of Cedar may here be understood the word of truth, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, *Matth.* 16. 18 and *2 Corinth.* 13. 8.]

10 *I am a wall*: [That is, I am grown up, and become strong in faith, and in the love of Jesus Christ. In these words the little sister, doth (as in a Propheticall manner) shew her willingness and readiness to receive and entertain the Doctrine of the Gospel, and to grow and increase in it. Others take these words to be the words of the Jewish Church, praising the Lord Jesus Christ for his grace and mercy, in that she was become a City of God, or was received for the City of God: Or, because her faith was strong like a wall] *and my breasts are like towers*. [The meaning of these words is, My breasts are grown big, or fully grown, as *Ezech.* 16. 7, 8. That is, Church-government is settled in me, sufficiently to bring up children unto Christ, feeding them with the milk of the Word of God, *1 Pet.* 2. vers. 2. The comparison of towers, signifieth also the strength, power, and glory of the administration of the Gospel, and the publick preaching or dispensing of it out of pulpits, or high places, to be heard by all. For the Hebrew word *migdal* is also taken for a pulpit of wood, *Neb.* 8. 5.] *Then was I* [To wit, when I got or obtained that answer, whereof mention is made, vers. 9.] *in his eyes* [To wit, in the eyes of Jesus Christ,] *as one that findeth peace*. [Hereby the Spouse will intimate, that it is an undeserved mercy, which she receiveth of her Bridegroom, that after long continued misery and affliction, she is comforted and relieved by him. See *Isa.* chap. 54. v. 7, 8, &c. See also *Eph.* 2. vers. 12, 13, &c. The Spouse speaketh this unto her companions (*as one that findeth peace*) We are all of us enemies of God, *Rom.* 5. 10. To wit, being considered in our corruption, or state of nature: but being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Isa.* 32. 17. It is, as if the Spouse here had said, *The* Bridegroom hath accepted of my faith and diligence, and therefore he was well pleased with me. Others take the meaning of these last words to be this, I was satisfied with that answer, and was well pleased]

11 *Salomon had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon: he gave this vineyard unto keepers, every one brought for the fruit thereof a thousand silverlings*. [These words may be taken as spoken by Christ; or, by the Spouse. If they be the words of Christ, then it is a comparison between Salomon and his vineyard, and between Christ and his people. Salomon could not in his own person heed and attend his vineyards, (as neither David could do his, *1 Chron.* 27. 27.) but he appointed Officers to keep and attend the same, which paid a yearly rent for them, and and themselves enjoyed some profit or benefit thereof for their labour: But Christ, who is alwayes present with his Church, *Matth.* 28. 20. *Revel.* 2. tendeth his own vineyard himself, and therefore all the fruits and profits thereof pertain to him alone. If these be the words of the Spouse, then they signify a greater care and diligence in her now, then in former time, when she confessed, that she had not sufficiently kept, or regarded the vineyard which she had, that is, which she was entrusted with, above ch. 1. 6. Of Salomons vineyards, see *Eccles.* 2. 4. (*at Baal-Hamon*:) *Oth.* in a fruitful place. Heb. a master, or, lord of the multitude, that is, a place that beareth many fruits; Understanding hereby either the World, among the multitude of whose nations Christ hath chose

that belong unto him, *Psal. 87. 4.* Or else the Church is so called, in respect of the manifold fruits which she yieldeth unto God; or ought to yield, being placed or planted in a fruitful soil, upon which God had poured forth his blessing; See *Isai. 5. 1.* (*He gave this vineyard unto keepers,*) That is, he let out this vineyard, or put it to farm unto farmers or keepers, to dresse and manure it, that it might bring forth much fruit. By the keepers, or diers of the vineyard, are to be understood the Prophets of the Old, and the Apostles, with their successours, in the New Testament. See *Matth. 21. 33. 1 Cor. 3. 9.* (*Every one brought for the fruit thereof a thousand silverlings: Or, a thousand [shekels] of silver;*) Hereby signifying the great fruitfulness of this vineyard, which brought in, or yeilded so much profit for the owner, besides the gain and profit of the farmer, or of him that had hired it. See also *Isa. 7. 23.* Of the rate or value of the *Silverling*, see *Genes. 20. 16.* and chap. 23. *vers. 15.*]

12 *My vineyard,* [That is, my Church, as above chap. 1. 6. *Isai. 5. 1, 7.* They are the words of the Bridegroom] *which I have,* [That is, which is committed to my care and custody; of which I have the oversight] *is before my face:* [I my self do continually heed and regard it; I my self take care, that it be well drest, & manured: not doing as Salomon, who left the whole care and business to the keepers, I my self in person do minde my vineyard, and my sheep, *Ezech. 34. 11, 2.* &c. *Joh. 10. 14. Revel. 2. 1.*] *the thousand [silverlings] are for thee O Salomon,* [As if he had said, Thou Salomon shalt have thy full rent or revenue, to wit, a thousand silverlings, *vers. 11.*] *but two hundred are for the keepers, of the fruit thereof.* [That is, the labourers and keepers of the vineyard shall have also their due, every one according to his labour and pains. See *Matth. 20. vers. 1, &c. 1 Cor. 3. 8.* Understand with all, *But the fruits of the vineyard do wholly and solely belong unto me.* This honour do all faithful Ministers of the Church, willingly ascribe and attribute unto their Lord Jesus Christ: we may plant, and water, but it is God alone that giveth the increase, *1 Cor. 3. 6, 7.* and *15. 10.*]

13 *O thou inhabitant of the gardens,* [Here Christ speaketh unto his Spouse, who dwelleth in the gardens, that is, who abideth or keepeth in those places, where Churches are planted, in divers Countreys and Cities,] *the companions attend unto thy voice:* [It seemeth that here by the companions must be understood, the other believing Christians, which have obtained like precious faith, *2 Pet. 1. 1.* and hear the Doctrine of the Church,

and follow it] *cause me to hear (it.)* [To wit, thy voice]

14 *Come quickly; my best-beloved,* [Come quickly. Hebr. *Flee.* It seemeth not to be taken so here in this signification; For the Church prayeth not that Christ would flee, or depart from her, that is the request of the Gadarenes, *Matth. 8. 34.* But *flee* signifieth here, come to us as quickly, as a man fleeth, that is pursued. The Spouse prayeth and requesteth, that she may see the end of the Kingdom of Christ in this world, (where he is persecuted and afflicted in his members) and likewise her taking up into the high heavens. Now Christ reigneth in the midst of his enemies, *Psa. 110. 2.* and that shall henceforth continue so, until he shall have put all his enemies under his feet, and untill he shall have delivered up the Kingdom unto God his Father, *1 Cor. 15. 24, 25.* After this day doth the Spouse earnestly long; and wisheth that he may come quickly, and that the Bridegroom would assist her, while she is here below in the conflict or combat, above chap. 2. 17. and that he would hasten his last coming for her deliverance and redemption. Or if we will needs retain the word *Barach* in its own proper signification, then this must be the rendering and meaning of the words, *Flee, my best-beloved, ----- to the mountains of spices;* that is, to the heavens, which are called here *the mountains of spices*, in respect of the height, the fruit, and delight which shall be for ever at the right hand of God. Above chap. 4. 6. Heaven is called a *mountain of myrrhe, and an hill of frankincense.* It is as much as if the Spouse here spake after this manner: Although it would be very pleasing and delightful unto me, to enjoy thy bodily presence continually with me, yet I confesse that it is better for me, that thou be in heaven to send from thence the Comforter the Holy Ghost unto me, and to prepare a place for me in thy fathers house, that thou mayest at length receive me unto thy self into everlasting blisse, *Joh. 14. 2.* and *16. 7.*] *and be thou like a roe,* [Which runneth swiftly or speedily; That is, make haste to come to us. See above chap. 2. *vers. 8, 9, 17.* As this high Song beginneth with an earnest longing of the Spouse after her Bridegroom, *that would kisse with the kisses of his mouth:* so it endeth and concludeth with an earnest and fervent longing after the second coming of Christ, when he shall receive and take up his Church into everlasting joy: *The Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come.* Christ himself saith, *I come quickly, Amen. Yea come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,* *Rev. c. 22. v. 17. 20, 21.*]

The end of CANTICLES, or the High Song
of SALOMON.