

ECCLESIASTES CHAPTER 2

¹ I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure." And behold, this is also vanity. ² I said to laughter, "It is madness!" And to mirth, "Why do you do this?"

³ And I examined whether my heart would excite my flesh as *with* wine, (though my heart guided *me* in wisdom,) and *I desired* to lay hold of mirth, until I should see of what sort that good is, which the sons of men are to pursue under the sun, all the days of their life. ⁴ I enlarged my work; I built myself houses; I planted myself vineyards. ⁵ I made for myself gardens and orchards, and planted in them every kind of fruit tree. ⁶ I made myself pools of water, to water from them the timber-bearing wood. ⁷ I acquired servants and maidens, and servants were born to me in the house. Also I had abundant possessions of flocks and herds, beyond all who were before me in Jerusalem. ⁸ Moreover I collected for myself both silver and gold, and the peculiar treasures of kings and provinces. I procured for myself singing men and singing women, and delights of the sons of men, a butler and female cupbearers.

⁹ So I became great, and advanced beyond all that were before in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom was established to me. ¹⁰ And whatever my eyes desired, I did not withhold from them, I did not withhold my heart from all my mirth; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor; and this was my portion of all my labor.

¹¹ And I looked on all my works which my hands had done, and on my labor which I labored to perform, and behold, all was vanity and grasping for the wind, and there is no advantage under the sun.

¹² Then I looked back to view wisdom, and madness, and folly; for who is the man who will follow after counsel, in all things where in he employs it? ¹³ And I saw that wisdom excels folly, as much as light excels darkness. ¹⁴ The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walks in darkness. And I perceived, even I, that one event shall happen to them all. ¹⁵ And I said in my heart, "As the event of the fool is, so shall it be to me, even to me." And to what purpose have I gained wisdom? Moreover, I said in my heart, "This is also vanity, because the fool speaks of his abundance." ¹⁶ For there is no remembrance of the wise man with the fool forever; forasmuch as now *in* the coming days all things are forgotten. And how shall the wise man die with the fool? ¹⁷ So I hated life, because the work that was done under the sun was evil before me. For all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

¹⁸ And I hated all of my labor which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will come after me. ¹⁹ And who knows whether he will be wise, or a fool? And whether he will have power over all my labor in which I labored, and in which I grew wise under the sun? This is also vanity.

²⁰ So I went about to dismiss from my heart all my labor in which I had labored under the sun. ²¹ For there is *such* a man that his labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in fortitude; *yet* this man shall give his portion to one who has not labored for it. This is also vanity and a great evil. ²² For it happens to a man in all his labor, and in the purpose of his heart in which he labors under the sun. ²³ For all his days *are* sorrowful, and vexation of spirit is his; in the night also his heart rests not. This is also vanity.

²⁴ A man has nothing good to eat, and to drink, and to show his soul *as* good in his trouble. This also I saw, that it is from the hand of God. ²⁵ For who shall eat, or who shall drink, without Him? ²⁶ For *God* has given wisdom, knowledge, and joy to the man who is good in His sight, but He has given to the sinner trouble, to add and to heap up, that He may give to him that is good before God; for this is also vanity and grasping for the wind.