INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

LECTURE 1.

On the Pursuit of Knowledge.

VANITY of Vanities! says the Preacher; Vanity of Vanities, all is vanity!

What remains to a man from all the work that he does under the sun?

A generation comes, and a generation goes, but the earth endures for ever!

And the Sun rises, and the Sun sets; and when the breeze of morn arises there he is!

The Wind travels to the South, and revolves towards the North, traveling in circles; and in its revolutions returns to its place of origin!

All rivers run to the Sea, but the Sea is not full. To that place from which the rivers came, there they return in due course!

All language is feeble;—a man cannot utter himself!—The sight is not satiated by seeing; and the ear is not filled by hearing!

What has been,—that will be; and what has been done, will be done;—for there is nothing new under the sun! If it is ever said, “See! This is new!” It has often been in former times that were before us. For there is no record of past events, and there will be none of future ones, for them to be remembered by those who are still more future.

LECTURE 2.

On the Pursuit of Happiness.

I consequently said to my heart, “Come, now, I will try you with pleasure, and seek happiness.”—But
I discovered that, also, was vanity.
2 I said of laughter, it is mad;—and of
mirth,—what does it accomplish?
3 I intentionally tried to embolden
my body by wine,—with my intellect
scientifically guiding me,—and to
seize upon folly until I could discover
what was best for the children of
Adam to do under the sun, for the
number of the days they lived?
4 I extended my operations,—I built
myself houses; I planted myself vine-
yards; I made gardens and parks;
and planted in them all kinds of fruit
trees. I made myself pools and brooks,
to water from them a forest of shadowy
trees. I purchased men and women
servants, and they had children in my
house. I also had herds of cattle and
great flocks,—more than all who
before me in Jerusalem,—I accumu-
lated for myself silver and gold, and
royal treasures from my provinces. I
had men and women singers trained
for myself, with men and women
waiters,—the luxuries of the sons of
Adam. Thus I enlarged and increased
myself more than all that were before
me in Jerusalem.—My scientific idea,
however, remained with me.—But
anything that my eyes demanded I
withheld not from them; nor did I
restrain my heart from any pleasure;
for my heart rejoiced in all my
endeavours;—and that was my reward
for all my efforts.
5 But when I reflected on all the
work that my hands had done, and
all the things I had striven to accom-
plish,—then I saw they were vanity
of vanity, and vexation of spirit! and
they had no result under the sun!
6 Then I reflected, and examined
my Science, and Madness, and Folly!
—And what kind of man would
succeed the King? With what he
might be able to do?—Then I saw
that there is a result to Science,
more than to Ignorance, as there is
a result to Light, more than to Dark-
ness,—For the eyes of the Instructed
are in his head;—the Ignorant goes
in Darkness;—but yet I perceived
myself also, that one event happens
to all of them.
So I said to my heart, “As it happens to the Ignorant, so it will
also happen to me!—Then why am
I more instructed than the rest?—
So I said in my mind that also is
useless! for there is no more remem-
brance of the Instructed than of the
Ignorant in the grave for ever! In
the times to come, all will be for-
gotten! For does not the Instructed
die like the Ignorant?”
Therefore I hated life! since all
the work I had done under the sun
was a grief to me! For it was utterly
useless, and a vexation of spirit. I
also hated all my works,—that I
had striven for under the sun, for I
must leave them to the man after me;
and who knows whether he will be wise
or a fool? Yet he will rule over all
the things for which I have laboured,
and the result of my science under
the sun!—That also is vanity!
So I abandoned my mind to despair
over all the objects I had attempted
under the sun. For a man may work
with science, and knowledge, and
skill,—but must leave the result to
a man who has not earned it!
That, also, is vanity, and a great
grief!—For what continues to a man
from all his endeavours, and from
all the efforts of his mind, that he
has striven for, under the sun?—
Where all his days are griefs, and
his efforts sorrows, and his mind does
not rest at night!—This also is vanity!
There is no benefit to a man to
eat and drink and let his mind
expect pleasure from his labour.
Yet I myself saw that this comes
from the hand of GOD Himself.—
For who could eat, and who excite
himself more than I?—For to the 26
man who pleases HEM, HE gives
science, and knowledge and plea-
sure; but to the offender HE gives
the trouble to gather and accumu-
late, to give the product to the
pleasing before GOD.—This, however,
is vanity, and vexation of spirit!

LECTURE 3.


3 There is a period for every purpose,
And for every desire under the sun.
2 A time for birth, and a time for death;
A time to plant, and a time to uproot;
3 A time to wound, and a time to cure

882
A time to pull down, and a time to build;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance!
A time to pick stones, and a time to cast out;
A time to fold hands, and a time to unfold;
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to hoard, and a time to spend;
A time to tear, and a time to mend;
A time to be dumb, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war, and a time for peace!

Yet what remains as the product, for which they are done? I have examined the endeavours that GOD has appointed for the children of Adam by which to develop themselves. He has made everything beautiful in its season. He has also placed Eternity in their minds, with the intention that man should never discover, from beginning to end, the complete Creation which GOD has made. Consequently learnt that there is nothing better for them, than to be glad, and do good in their lives; and also for all men to eat and drink and experience pleasure in all the labours GOD has given to them.

I have learnt, that whatever GOD has made, that will endure for ever. There is no adding to it,—and there is no taking from it,—and that GOD'S Creation is wonderful, next to Himself. What was produced formerly exists, and what was formerly will come again; for GOD attends to its course.

And, further, I observed under the sun, that on the Seat of JUSTICE there was VILLAINY, and on the seat of RIGHTEOUSNESS,—WICKEDNESS! But I said to my heart, GOD will judge both Righteousness and Wickedness,—for there is a time for every purpose under the sun, and for all that is created there.

I reflected in my mind about the affairs of the sons of Adam;—which are that GOD intends to try them, to show they are, by themselves, mere animals. For one event is for the sons of Adam, and one event for the animals;—and the one event that is to them is:—as these die, so those die; and the same breath is to all;—and man dies the same as the cattle! Is not the whole vanity?

The whole go to one place; the whole come from dust; and the whole return to the dust. Who knows that the breath of the sons of Adam when it goes, ascends? and that the breath of the cattle, when it goes down, departs to the earth?

Then I perceived there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his works,—for that is his reward; for who can bring him to examine as to what may be after him?

Lecture 4.

On Misgovernment.

I have applied myself and examined into all the wrongs that are done under the sun; and I have seen the tears of the oppressed, and they had no consolation;—for Power was in the hands of their Oppressors!—so they had no consolation. Therefore I congratulated the Dead, who died in the past, more than the living who are still alive. But, better than either is he who has not come to sensation;—who has not seen in Creation the suffering that is produced under the sun!

I also turned and examined all toil, and all the success produced by it;—that a man is envied for it by his neighbour. So it is also vanity and vexation of spirit! Yet the idler folds his hands and eats his own flesh!—Yet a handful with quietness is better than both hands full with anxiety and vexation of spirit!

Then I turned to examine this vanity under the sun. There may be a solitary without a companion; who possesses neither a son nor brother, yet there is no end to all his anxiety; nor are his eyes satiated with wealth;—nor does he ask, “For whom do I toil and deprive my life of enjoyment?” This also is vanity and a grievous trouble!

Two are better than one,—for there is a better reward to them for work. And if the one falls his companion can lift him up; but alas! for one
who falls when there is not another to help him to rise! Then if two lie together they will be warm; but if there is only one, where is the warmth? And one may be defeated, where two associated could stand, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

A poor and instructed youth is preferable to an ignorant and old king, who will never learn intelligence;—who brings men from the house of a slave-dealer to govern;—whilst those born in his kingdom he brings to poverty!

I compared the whole of the living that walk under the sun with the next generation coming after them.—There is no end to all the people,—to all who have been formerly,—yet their successors will not be cheered by it.—So this, is vanity and vexation of spirit!

LECTURE 5.
On Reverence in the Worship of God.

Guard your foot when you go to the House of GOD, and approach to listen, rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not understand that they do wrong.

Be not in a hurry with your mouth and your heart. Hasten not to pour out speech before GOD,—for GOD is in Heaven and you upon the Earth,—therefore let your words be few, for the dream comes from many anxieties, and a fool’s voice with many words.

When you vow a gift to GOD, delay not to pay it,—for He is not pleased with evasions.—Do what you have promised.—It is better not to promise, than to be promising and not performing. Do not allow your mouth to cause yourself to offend;—and do not say to the Messenger that it was a mistake.—Why should GOD be angered by your voice, and injure the work of your hands? For in many dreams there are delusions and many readings. Therefore reverence GOD.

If you see oppression of the poor, and distortion of justice and right in a Province, do not be surprised at the perversion, for a higher than the highest watches,—and a Higher than them. Yet the most excellent thing of all for a land is a King who is the Servant of his Country!

LECTURE 6.
On Avarice.

The love of money will never be satisfied with money;—nor he who loves wealth by its increase. That also is vanity. When wealth increases the consumers increase.—Then what benefit to its possessor?—except to look on it with his eyes? The labourer’s sleep is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the excess of the rich does not allow him to sleep.

There is a distressing misery I have seen under the sun,—wealth kept to the injury of its possessor;—And that wealth perishing by an unfortunate accident;—when he has begot a son, and he possesses nothing! As he comes naked from his mother’s womb, he will turn to depart as he came, and he takes away nothing for all his labour to carry in his hand.—Yes! this also is a grievous misery all bear,—that as they came, so they go,—and what continues is vexation of spirit. He also eats all his days in darkness, and much anxiety, sickness, and vexation. —Therefore, what I myself have concluded to be good and pleasant is, to eat and drink, and to see pleasure in all one’s efforts that one attempts under the sun, for the number of the days that GOD gives to us;—for that is one’s lot. Also that every man to whom GOD has given wealth, and treasures, and power, should taste of them, and enjoy his lot, and take pleasure in whatever work GOD appoints for him, so that he may not too much think upon the day of his life, when GOD removes him from the joys of his heart!

LECTURE 7.
On the Disappointment of Life.

There is a misery that I have observed under the sun,—and it is great upon mankind, a man to whom GOD has given wealth, and treasures, and honour, so that he wants nothing to wish for of all that he may look on,—but GOD has not enabled him to partake of them!—but others consume.—This is a terrible misery!—If a man beget a hundred, and possesses many years, and the days of his years become many, but his life is not filled with pleasantness—when he also comes not to have a tomb,—I say an abortion is preferable to him:
For he comes to vanity, and goes to darkness, and his name is wrapped in darkness!—He who has not seen the sun nor known it,—rests better than him!—even though he should have lived a thousand years twice over, and has not experienced pleasure!—Do not the whole go to one place?

LECTURE 8.
The Hopelessness of Earthly Effort.

All the labour of a man is for his mouth;—and yet the mouth is not filled! Then what remains with the educated more than with the ignorant,—and the poor,—who knows he walks with the living enjoying the sight of his eyes and the course of his life?—This also is vanity and vexation of spirit!

Who existed formerly? A name was given to him;—and it is known that name was Adam. But he could not contend with a mightier than himself.

Where there are many words there is much uselessness,—What does man gain? For who knows what is best for man in his life?—for the number of the days of his worthless life which he passes as a shadow? for who can inform man what will be after him under the sun?

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE PREACHER.
POEMS AND LECTURES.

INTRODUCTORY POEM.

On the Best Objects of Life.

A good name is better than sweet perfume—
And the day of death, than the day of birth!
Better go to the house of sorrow,
Than go to the house of feasting;
For that, is the end of all men,
And the living will lay it to heart.
Sorrow is better than laughter,
For by a sad face, the heart is improved.
The heart of the Wise seeks the house of Grief,
But the heart of the Fools, the house of Joy.
Better hear the reproof of the Wise,
Than attend to the singing of Fools!—
As crackling thorns sound under a pot,
So the laughter of Fools is vain!
Oppression can madden the wise,
And a bribe perverts the mind.
The end of a thing excels the beginning,—
And a gentle spirit excels a proud.
Excite not your spirit to anger,—
For anger resides in the bosom of fools!

LECTURE 9.

On the Folly of Discontent.

Do not ask why the former times were better than these?—for it is not wise to enquire why.—Science is good with an estate, and it is useful to those who see the sun, for science is a defence, as money is a defence, and abundant knowledge of science may preserve the life of its possessor.

Consider the Creation of God. Who is able to straighten what He has bent?

In the day of prosperity be happy; and in the day of adversity reflect; for God made both this and that. To spare words, no man can discover anything about events after himself!

I have observed all this in my unhappy days,—that sometimes a good man perished by his goodness; and sometimes a bad man is preserved by his crimes! Do not be
over good, or make yourself over learned;—why should you overwhelm yourself? Do not be very bad, and do not be foolish;—why should you kill yourself before your time? It is well that you should lay hold of this, and also not withdraw your hand from that;—but whoever reverences God will escape from all.

Science helps the educated, more than ten strong men who may be in a fortress; for there is not a clever man on earth who always does well, and never mistakes; so do not give your attention to all the things that are spoken, or perhaps you may hear your servant curse you, for your heart knows how often you yourself have cursed others.

I have ascertained all this scientifically. I declared I would become scientific.—But it was far from me.—Where does extent go? and who can explore space?

I turned back, and decided to learn, and investigate and seek knowledge and skill, and to learn the wickedness of Folly, and Perversity, and Recklessness;—and I discovered that a woman who has craft and vices in her heart, and snares in her hands, is worse than death! May the Good before God escape from her; but the Offensive be captured by her!

I have discovered these, says the Preacher, by comparing one with another, to discover motives, with my mind continually thinking. I have discovered one man's motive in a thousand. But in all these I have not discovered a woman's! I have only discovered this;—that God made Mankind right, but they have sought out many villainies!

LECTURE 10.

On the Characteristics of the Philosphic Mind in a Monarch.

Who is philosophic? and who knows how to explain a thing?—The education of a man brightens his face, and greatly changes his expression.

I commend a King to take care, because of the promises he swore to God. Be not in haste to go from before Him, nor persist in a wrong thing, for He does all He pleases. Although a King's word is powerful, and who dare say to him, "What are you doing?"—regard The Law;—and learn not bad practices,—but with an intelligent heart learn opportunity, and justice. For there is an opportunity for every purpose, and decision, since many miseries are upon mankind. For none of us know what will be; and as to what may happen, who can inform us?

No man has power over the breath, to retain the breath, and none are powerful in the day of death. And there is no discharge from that war; and villainy cannot deliver its possessor.

I observed all this when I applied my mind to all the things that are done under the sun, during the period that man has power over man, to injure him. And I examined the tombs of the wicked carefully, who had come to, and departed from the Holy Place, and were forgotten in the City where they had done so.—They also were vanity.—And I concluded that when quick punishment is not inflicted upon crime, then the heart of the sons of Adam is set in them to do wrong!—Yet, although a sinner does wrong a hundred times, and evades from it,—yet I myself know that it will be well for those who reverence God,—who fear before Him,—but it will not be well with the wicked; nor can they prolong their days like a shadow,—although they do not fear the presence of God.

LECTURE II.

On the Mystery of Life.

This is a puzzle that occurs upon earth;—There are good men who are treated as if they had done like the wicked;—and there are wicked who are treated as though they had done like the good. I said to myself, this is a puzzle!—So I, myself, commend cheerfulness, as there is nothing better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink, and be glad, and be at rest from his toil in the days of life which are given him under the sun.

When I applied my mind to learn science, and to the investigation of the phenomena that are produced upon earth, I perceived that day and night there must be no sleep for one's eyes. And having examined all the works of God, I perceived that it is not possible for a man to discover the
whole of the result that is produced under the sun;—since however a man endeavours to investigate, he cannot discover all. And even if a philosopher should assert "I know!" he has not been able to discover it.

For I had applied my mind to all that, and could only discover this,—That the Righteous and Philosophic in their labours, are in the hand of God. Whether he likes it or dislikes it, man cannot know all that is before him!—To the wicked,—to the good,—and to the pure;—and to the depraved;—and to the worshipper, and to the one who neglects worship;—to the Good and to the Bad alike;—to the Perjurer, and to him who respects his Oath, comes the same result!

This is the grief in all that is done under the sun;—that one event happens to all; therefore the mind of the Sons of Adam is full of grief, and agitation is in their hearts during their lives, —and after that,—the Dead! For who, of the living, has his choice? Who is hopeful? Yet a living dog is better than a dead lion!—The living, however, know they will die; but the dead know nothing whatever.—And they have no more fame;—for the remembrance of them is forgotten! And their former loves, and hatreds, and ambitions perish; and they have no more possession, for ever, in all that they accomplished under the sun!

LECTURE 12.

On the Enjoyment of Life.

Go! Eat your food with pleasure, and drink your wine with a merry heart;—for God is well pleased by your doing so. Let your clothing always be handsome, and let not your head need oil! Enjoy life with the wife you love, all the days of the worthless life given you under the sun!—all your worthless days!—for that is your lot in life, and your endeavour in all your efforts under the sun!

Whatever your hand finds to do,—do it with all your might! for there is neither Work, or Skill, or Knowledge, or Science, in the Grave to which you are going!

I have explored, and have seen under the sun, that the race is not to the swift; nor the battle to the strong;—nor bread to the wise;—nor wealth to the skilful; nor success to the prudent; but TIME and CHANCE happen to them all! Man, also, knows not his opportunity!—Like fishes caught in a cruel net,—and like birds caught in a trap,—the sons of Adam are caught like them, at a cruel time, that suddenly falls upon them!

Once I observed this result of intelligence under the sun,—and it was astonishing to me! There was a little town with few men in it, and a great General came against, and surrounded it, and built entrenchments against it. But a poor person possessing intelligence was found there, who rescued the town by his intelligence;—but the men did not remember that poor person!—I, however, said, "Intelligence is better than strength. Nevertheless the intelligence of the poor is despised, and no one will listen to his words."

LECTURE 13.—Two Epigrams.

On the Value of Intelligence, as compared with Ignorance in Human Affairs.

1. Wisdom and Folly.

The words of the Wise are heard in quiet,
While shouting rules among fools! Wisdom is better than weapons of war,
But one blunder destroys much success!

2. Dead Flies.

As dead flies make sweet oil stink,
So small follies, those held to be wise.
The wise man's heart is fixed at his right,—
The fool's heart, is at his left hand! And the fool goes on his senseless way,
And tells all men that he is but a fool!
LECTURE 14.
On the Evils of Incompetent Governments.

4 If the temper of the Ruler rises up against you, do not persist in your position, for great offences are remedied by submission!

Suggestions for our Conduct.

Who digs a pit, may fall into it;
Who breaks a fence, a snake may sting him;
Who removes stones may be hurt by them;
Who fells trees is by them endangered;
If the iron is blunt, and edge not sharp,—
Exert your strength, and use good skill.

The serpent stings without a charmer,
And an unbridled tongue the same.

The words of a wise mouth profit,
But a fool's lips will swallow himself,—
The opening words of his mouth are folly;
And the last from his mouth wild madness!

But why foolishly multiply words?
Man knows not what came before him,
And what will succeed,—who can tell?

The endeavours of fools exhaust them,
When they know not the road to the town!

Woe to you, land, when your King is a Slave,
And your nobles are drunk in the morning!

Happy land, when your King is from Princes,
And your Nobles seek health from food not excess!

By neglecting, the rafters will rot,
And the house falls from idling hands.

A feast is made for enjoyment,
And Wine cheers the living;
And money is useful for all things!

Curse not the King in your thoughts;
And curse not the rich in your chamber;—
For a bird of the sky bears the sound,
And the owner of wings tells the speech!

LECTURE 15.
Admonitions to Reflect on the Future, and to Hope.

11 Cast your bread on the face of the waters, for you will find it again after many days.

2 Give a portion to seven, and even to eight,—for you know not what distress may come over the country.

3 —But if the clouds are full they pour rain on the earth and if a tree falls towards the south or towards the north, the tree will lie on the place where it falls.—The watchter of the 4 wind,—will not sow; and the examiner of the clouds will not reap. As, however, you have no more knowledge of the course of the wind, than of the bones of the embryo in the belly of the pregnant; in like manner you know not the action of God, who produces everything!—Therefore at 6 morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you know not which will prosper,—this, or that,—or whether both alike will do well!

LECTURE 16.
A Poem advising to Enjoy Life.

7 Light is sweet, and good to the eyes to see the Sun.—
If many years are man's, in all of them rejoice,—

8 But think that the days of darkness are many;—
All is advancing Vanity!
Young man, enjoy your youth, and delight your heart while young; 9 And walk in the way of your heart, and in the desire of your eyes, But know about all these things, that GOD will come to judge. So cast care from your heart, and from your body suffering, For Youth and Age are Vanity!

LECTURE 17.
A Poem on Declining Life.

Your Creator remember in time of your youth, Ere sorrow’s days come, and the years full of grief,— When you cry out, “In them is no pleasure for me!”— Ere the Sun and the Light become dim, and the Morn and the Stars, And the clouds go away after rain! When the Guards of the House will be trembling, And the strongest of men will bow down; And the grinders will cease as but few; And the light of the windows be dim, And doors closed to the feet and the shuffling step; When the bird’s voice alarms, and the singers depress, — When fears come from the above, and the roadway below; And sleep flies away,— And the grasshopper loads, And Desire will fail; — And Man seeks his Long Home, And the Mourners will walk round the streets.— Ere the silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl broke; Or the Cup is found smashed at the spring, Or the Wheel is found lost at the Well, And Man goes to the earth that he was, And his Soul will return to the GOD Who gave it!

THE END OF SOLOMON’S LECTURES.

NOTE BY THE ANCIENT EDITORS.

Probably those employed under King Hezekiah to arrange these Lectures from the preserved manuscripts of his great ancestor, Solomon, for publication.

OLD EDITORIAL COMMENT.

8 “Vanity of Vanity,” said the Preacher, “Vanity of Vanity!”
9 But for the rest, the Preacher was skilful so far as teaching science to the People, and he was listened to, and selected many proverbs.
10 The Preacher sought to discover pleasing words, and wrote accurately truthful conclusions.
11 The discourses of philosophers are like pegs, and stakes, fixed by masterly shepherds. They keep the flock together. But nevertheless my son, be warned by this, that there is no end to the making of many books, and much learning is a weariness of the flesh.

When all is heard, this is the conclusion of the whole matter. “Reverence GOD, and keep His commands. —They are for all mankind.—For GOD will bring every act into judgment, along with every secret, whether Good or Bad!”

THE END OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES, OR THE PREACHER.