

¹قُلْتُ أَنَا فِي قَلْبِي، هَلُمَّ أَمْتَحِنُكَ بِالْفَرَحِ فَتَرَى خَيْرًا. وَإِذَا هَذَا أَيْضًا بَاطِلٌ.² لِلصَّخَرِ قُلْتُ، مَجْنُونٌ وَلِلْفَرَحِ، مَاذَا يَفْعَلُ.³ إِفْتَكَّرْتُ فِي قَلْبِي أَنْ أُعَلِّلَ جَسَدِي بِالْحَمْرِ، وَقَلْبِي يَلْهَجُ بِالْحِكْمَةِ، وَأَنْ أُخَذَ بِالْحَقَاقَةِ حَتَّى أَرَى مَا هُوَ الْحَيَرُ لِيَتَنَبَّأَ الْبَشِيرَ حَتَّى يَفْعَلُوهُ تَحْتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ مُدَّةَ أَيَّامِ حَيَاتِهِمْ.⁴ فَعَظَّمْتُ عَمَلِي. بَنَيْتُ لِنَفْسِي بُيُوتًا، عَرَسْتُ لِنَفْسِي كُرُومًا.⁵ عَمِلْتُ لِنَفْسِي جَنَاطٍ وَقَرَادِيسَ، وَعَرَسْتُ فِيهَا أَشْجَارًا مِنْ كُلِّ نَوْعٍ تَمَرٍ.⁶ عَمِلْتُ لِنَفْسِي بَرَكَ مِيَاهٍ لِيُسْقَى بِهَا الْمَعَارِسُ الْمُمِيتَةُ الشَّجَرِ.⁷ فَبَنَيْتُ عَيْبِدًا وَخَوَارِجَ، وَكَانَ لِي وَلَدَانُ النِّيبِ. وَكَانَتْ لِي أَيْضًا قُنْبَةٌ بَعْرٌ وَعَتَمٌ أَكْثَرُ مِنْ جَمِيعِ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا فِي أُورُشَلِيمَ قَبْلِي.⁸ جَمَعْتُ لِنَفْسِي أَيْضًا فَصَّةً وَدَهَبًا وَخُصُوصِيَّاتِ الْمُلُوكِ وَالْبُلْدَانِ. اتَّخَذْتُ لِنَفْسِي مُعْتَبَرِينَ وَمُعْتَبَرَاتٍ وَتَنْعُمَاتِ بَنِي الْبَشِيرِ، سَيِّدَةً وَسَيِّدَاتٍ.⁹ فَبَعِظْتُمْ وَارْدَدْتُ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ جَمِيعِ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا قَبْلِي فِي أُورُشَلِيمَ، وَفَقِيتُ أَيْضًا حِكْمَتِي مَعِي.¹⁰ وَهَمَّاهُ اسْتَهْنُهُ عَيْنَايَ لَمْ أُمْسِكُهُ عَنْهُمَا. لَمْ أَمْنَعْ قَلْبِي مِنْ كُلِّ فَرَحٍ، لِأَنَّ قَلْبِي فَرِحَ بِكُلِّ تَعْيٍ. وَهَذَا كَانَ يَصِيْبِي مِنْ كُلِّ تَعْيٍ.¹¹ ثُمَّ التَّقْتُ أَنَا إِلَى كُلِّ أَعْمَالِي الَّتِي عَمِلْتُهَا بَدَايَ، وَإِلَى التَّعَبِ الَّذِي تَعَبْتُهُ فِي عَمَلِي، فَإِذَا الْكُلُّ بَاطِلٌ وَقَبْضُ الرِّيحِ، وَلَا مَنَفْعَةَ تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ.¹² ثُمَّ التَّقْتُ لِأَنْظُرَ الْحِكْمَةَ وَالْحَقَاقَةَ وَالْجَهْلَ. فَمَا الْإِنْسَانُ الَّذِي يَأْتِي وَرَاءَ الْمَلِكِ الَّذِي قَدْ تَصْنُوهُ مُنْذُ رَمَانَ.¹³ قَرَأْتُ أَنْ لِلْحِكْمَةِ مَنَفْعَةً أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْجَهْلِ، كَمَا أَنَّ لِلنُّورِ مَنَفْعَةً أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الظُّلْمَةِ.¹⁴ الْحَكِيمُ عَيْنَاهُ فِي رَأْسِهِ. أَمَّا الْجَاهِلُ فَيَسْلُكُ فِي الظُّلَامِ. وَعَرَفْتُ أَنَا أَيْضًا أَنَّ خَادَتَهُ وَاجِدَةٌ تَخْذُلُ لِكُلِّيهِمَا.¹⁵ قُلْتُ فِي قَلْبِي، كَمَا يَخْذُلُ لِلْجَاهِلِ كَذَلِكَ يَخْذُلُ أَيْضًا لِي أَنَا. وَإِذْ ذَلِكَ، فَلِمَ أَتَا أَوْفَرَ حِكْمَةٍ. قُلْتُ فِي قَلْبِي، هَذَا أَيْضًا بَاطِلٌ.¹⁶ لِأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ ذِكْرُ الْحَكِيمِ وَلَا لِلْجَاهِلِ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ. كَمَا مُنْذُ رَمَانَ كَذَا الْأَيَّامُ الْآتِيَةُ، الْكُلُّ يُنْسَى. وَكَيْفَ يَمُوتُ الْحَكِيمُ. كَالْجَاهِلِ.¹⁷ فَكَرِهْتُ الْحَيَاةَ. لِأَنَّهُ رَدِيءٌ عِنْدِي الْعَمَلُ الَّذِي عَمِلْتُ تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ، لِأَنَّ الْكُلَّ بَاطِلٌ وَقَبْضُ الرِّيحِ.¹⁸ فَكَرِهْتُ كُلَّ تَعْيٍ الَّذِي تَعَبْتُ فِيهِ تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ حَيْثُ أَتْرَكُهُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ الَّذِي يَكُونُ بَعْدِي.¹⁹ وَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ، هَلْ يَكُونُ حَكِيمًا أَوْ جَاهِلًا، وَيَسْتَوِلِي عَلَى كُلِّ تَعْيٍ الَّذِي تَعَبْتُ فِيهِ وَأَطْهَرْتُ فِيهِ حِكْمَتِي تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ. هَذَا أَيْضًا بَاطِلٌ.²⁰ فَتَحَوَّلْتُ لِكَيْ أَجْعَلَ قَلْبِي

¹I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.²I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?³I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.⁴I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits:⁵I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:⁷I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:⁸I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.⁹So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.¹⁰And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.¹¹Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.¹²And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly:

يَأْسُ مِنْ كُلِّ السَّعْيِ الَّذِي تَعْبَثُ فِيهِ تَحْتَ
 السَّمْسِ.²¹ لَأَنَّهُ قَدْ يَكُونُ إِنْسَانٌ تَعْبَهُ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَعْرِفَةِ
 وَبِالْقَلَّاحِ، فَيَتْرُكُهُ تَصِيْبًا لِلْإِنْسَانِ لَمْ يَتَّعِبْ فِيهِ. هَذَا أَيْضًا
 بَاطِلٌ وَشَرٌّ عَظِيمٌ.²² لَأَنَّهُ مَاذَا لِلْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ كُلِّ تَعْيِهِ وَمِنْ
 اجْتِهَادِ قَلْبِهِ الَّذِي تَعْبَثُ فِيهِ تَحْتَ السَّمْسِ. لَأَنَّ كُلَّ
 أَيَّامِهِ أَحْزَانٌ وَعَمَلُهُ عَمٌّ. أَيْضًا بِاللَّيْلِ لَا يَسْتَرِيحُ قَلْبُهُ.
 هَذَا أَيْضًا بَاطِلٌ هُوَ.²⁴ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ حَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ
 وَيَشْرَبَ وَيُبْرِي تَفْسَهُ خَيْرًا فِي تَعْيِهِ. رَأَيْتُ هَذَا أَيْضًا أَنَّهُ
 مِنْ يَدِ اللَّهِ.²⁵ لَأَنَّهُ مَنْ يَأْكُلُ وَمَنْ يَلْتَذُّ غَيْرِي.²⁶ لَأَنَّهُ يُؤْتِي
 الْإِنْسَانَ الصَّالِحَ قُدَّامَهُ حِكْمَةً وَمَعْرِفَةً وَفَرَحًا. أَمَّا
 الْخَاطِئُ فَيُعْطِيهِ شُغْلَ الْجَمْعِ وَالتَّكْوِيمِ لِيُعْطِيَ لِلصَّالِحِ
 قُدَّامَ اللَّهِ. هَذَا أَيْضًا بَاطِلٌ وَقَبْضُ الرِّيحِ.

for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.¹³ Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.¹⁴ The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.¹⁵ Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.¹⁶ For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.¹⁷ Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.¹⁸ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.¹⁹ And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.²⁰ Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.²¹ For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.²² For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?²³ For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his

Ecclesiastes 2

heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.²⁴ There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.²⁵ For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto , more than I?²⁶ For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.