

¹Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.²Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.³For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.⁴When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.⁵Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.⁶Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?⁷For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.⁸If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.⁹Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field.¹⁰He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.¹¹When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?¹²The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer

¹أَحْضَطْ قَدَمَكَ حِينَ تَذْهَبُ إِلَى بَيْتِ اللَّهِ، قَالِ اسْتِمَاعُ أَقْرَبُ مِنْ تَقْدِيمِ ذَبِيحَةِ الْجَهَالِ، لِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُبَالُونَ بِفِعْلِ الشَّرِّ. لَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ قَمَكَ وَلَا يُسْرِعْ قَلْبُكَ إِلَى تُطْقِ كَلَامِ قُدَامِ اللَّهِ. لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ، قَلِيلُكَ لَتَكُنْ كَلِمَاتُكَ قَلِيلَةً. لِأَنَّ الْحُلْمَ يَأْتِي مِنْ كَثَرَةِ الشُّغْلِ، وَقَوْلُ الْجَهْلِ مِنْ كَثَرَةِ الْكَلَامِ. إِذَا تَذَرْتَ نَذْرًا لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَتَأَخَّرْ عَنِ الْوَفَاءِ بِهِ، لِأَنَّهُ لَا يُسَرُّ بِالْجُهَالِ. فَأَوْفِ بِمَا نَذَرْتَهُ. أَنْ لَا تَتَذَرَّ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ تَتَذَرَّ وَلَا تَفِي. لَا تَدْعُ قَمَكَ بِجَعْلِ جَسَدِكَ بِخَطِيئَةٍ. وَلَا تُقِلْ قُدَامَ الْمَلَكِ، إِنَّهُ سَهْوٌ. لِإِذَا يَعْصِبُ اللَّهُ عَلَى قَوْلِكَ وَيُفْسِدُ عَمَلَ يَدَيْكَ. لِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ كَثَرَةِ الْأَحْلَامِ وَالْأَبَاطِيلِ وَكَثَرَةِ الْكَلَامِ. وَلَكِنْ أَحْسِنِ اللَّهُ. إِنْ رَأَيْتَ طَلَمَ الْفَقِيرِ وَتَرَعَ الْحَقَّ وَالْعَدْلَ فِي الْبِلَادِ فَلَا تَرْزُقَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ، لِأَنَّ فَوْقَ الْعَالِي عَالِيًا يَلْحِظُ، وَالْأَعْلَى قَوْقُهُمَا.⁹ وَمَنْفَعَةُ الْأَرْضِ لِلْكَلِّ. الْمَلِكُ مَخْذُومٌ مِنَ الْحَقْلِ. مَنْ يُجِبُّ الْفِصَّةَ لَا يَسْبِغُ مِنَ الْفِصَّةِ، وَمَنْ يُجِبُّ التَّرْوَةَ لَا يَسْبِغُ مِنْ دَخْلِ. هَذَا أَيْضًا بَاطِلٌ.¹¹ إِذَا كَثُرَتِ الْخَيْرَاتُ كَثُرَ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَهَا، وَأَيُّ مَنْفَعَةٍ لِصَاحِبِهَا إِلَّا رُؤُوسُهَا يَعْنِيهِ.¹² تَوْمُ الْمُسْتَعِيلِ حُلُوٌّ إِنْ أَكَلَ قَلِيلًا أَوْ كَثِيرًا، وَوَفَّرَ الْعَنِيَّ لَا يُرْبِحُهُ حَتَّى يَتَامَ. يُوجَدُ شَرٌّ حَيْثُ رَأَيْتَهُ تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ، تَرْوَةٌ مَصُونَةٌ لِصَاحِبِهَا لَصَرَرِهِ.¹⁴ فَهَلَكَتْ تِلْكَ التَّرْوَةُ بِأَمْرِ بَشَرٍ، ثُمَّ وَلَدَ ابْنًا وَمَا بِيَدِهِ شَيْءٌ.¹⁵ كَمَا خَرَجَ مِنْ بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ غُرْبَانًا يَرْجِعُ ذَاهِبًا كَمَا جَاءَ، وَلَا يَأْخُذُ شَيْئًا مِنْ تَعْبِهِ فَيَذْهَبُ بِهِ فِي يَدِهِ.¹⁶ وَهَذَا أَيْضًا مَصِيبَةٌ رَدِيئَةٌ. فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ كَمَا جَاءَ هَكَذَا يَذْهَبُ، فَأَيُّ مَنْفَعَةٍ لَهُ لِلَّذِي تَعَبَ لِلرَّيْحِ. أَيْضًا يَأْكُلُ كُلُّ أَيَّامِهِ فِي الظَّلَامِ، وَيَعْنَمُ كَثِيرًا مَعَ حُزْنٍ وَعَظِيطٍ.¹⁸ هُوَذَا الَّذِي رَأَيْتَهُ أَنَا خَيْرًا الَّذِي هُوَ حَسَنٌ، أَنْ يَأْكُلَ الْإِنْسَانُ وَيَسْرَبَ وَيَتَرَى خَيْرًا مِنْ كُلِّ تَعْبِهِ الَّذِي يَتْعَبُ فِيهِ تَحْتَ الشَّمْسِ مُدَّةَ أَيَّامِ حَيَاتِهِ الَّتِي أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ إِيَّاهَا، لِأَنَّهُ مَصِيبَةٌ.¹⁹ أَيْضًا كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ غِنًى وَمَالًا وَسَلَطَةً عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى يَأْكُلَ مِنْهُ وَيَأْخُذَ تَصِيبَهُ وَيَفْرَحَ بِنِعْمِهِ، فَهَذَا هُوَ عَطِيَّةُ اللَّهِ.²⁰ لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَذْكُرُ أَيَّامَ حَيَاتِهِ كَثِيرًا، لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُلْهِمِهِ يَفْرَحُ قَلْبِهِ.

him to sleep.¹³ There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.¹⁴ But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.¹⁵ As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.¹⁶ And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?¹⁷ All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.¹⁸ Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.¹⁹ Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.²⁰ For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.