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¶ C H A P. 1. Ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *The words of the Preacher the sonne of David, King in Jerusalem.*

2. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

THe chiefe good of the sonnes of men, which the morall Philosophers amongst the Heathen sought after, but found not, Solomon in this book truly and fully openeth to us. The Philosophers being vain and wicked themselves, how could they finde or teach the true chiefe good? but this wise and good King, upon his own experience, both found it himselfe, and taught us to finde it after him.

The summe of his discourse standeth upon these two points: 1. That the chiefe good of the sonnes of men is not to be found in all the creatures under the Sun, nor in mens labours and waies about them. For they are all vanity and vexation of Spirit. 2. That it is to be found in the feare of God and keeping his Commandements, *Chap. 12. v. 13.*

These two verses contain, First, the Title of the book; wherein the book is set forth, 1. By the Authour: 2. And he by, 1. His condition, *Coheleth.* 2. His Linage, the sonne of David. 3. By his Office, a King. 4. The place of his government, in *Hierusalem*, v. 1.

Secondly, the Argument, or sum of his discourse, or at least of the former part of it, v. 2. Wherein is set forth, 1. The condition of all things, by the Adjunct of *vanity*, *all is vanity.* And this vanity is amplified by many ornaments of Rhetorique:

1. An Hyperbole, *vanity* it selfe, for vaine.

2. Polyptoton, *vanity of vanities.*

3. Epizeuxis, the like sound continued in the same sentence, *vanity of vanities.*

4. Anadiplosis, (the same sound repeated in the end of one sentence, and the beginning of the other.) *vanity of vanities, vanity &c.*

5. Epanalepsis, (the same sound repeated in the beginning of

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of the sentence, and in the end, vanity &c. all is vanity.

6. *Anaphora* (the same sound repeated in the beginning of the sentences) vanity &c. vanity &c.

7. *Epistrophe* (the same sound repeated in the end of the sentences) of vanities &c. of vanities.

8. *Epanodos* (the same sound repeated in the beginning and midſt, in the midſt and end.) vanity, vanity, vanity.

9. *Numerus Oratorius*, (the same number of syllables repeated in both sentences.) vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities.

10. *Climax*, (the same sound continued and increased by degrees) vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities &c.

11. *Paronomasia*, (the repeating of like sounds, yet somewhat differing.)

2. This confirmed by the Testimony of *Cohē'eth*, saith the Preacher, vers. 2.

Chap. I. Vers. 1, 2.

THE words of *Cohēleth*] Solomon had four names. *Solomon*, *Jedidiah*, *Lemuēl*, *Cohēleth*. 2 Sam. 12. 24, 25. Prov. 31. 1, 4. and the Text. This name *Cohēleth* is onely given him in this Book, when after long experience of all earthly vanities, he in his old age speaketh to weare his people from them, and teacheth them the feare of the Lord for their chiefeg ood.

It is a participle of a verb out of use in the Active voyce; yet in the Passive used to signifie, to be gathered, or assembled; whence קָרְבָּה a Congregation; קָרְבָּה then being a Noune or Participle of the Feminine gender, may imply to us these three things:

First, *Solomons* gathering him selfe to the Church and Assembling therewith, when yet his wives, and many other Idolaters with them assembled to the Conventicies, and Synagogues of false gods.

Secondly, That in this true Church assembled, he was *Anima concionans, in hac verba*, he spake these words, or delivered them in the Congregation, by word or writing, as a testimony of his repentance: which may also further appeare if we consider,

1. What he saith by his experience of the dangerous-

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or the soules of the Parents, see notes in *Chap. 11. 5.*

Use 1. To employ the soul in Gods service, to which end it was made, *Prov. 16. 4.* yea to returne to him with advantage, *Matth. 25. 27.*

Use 2. To feed it with spiritual food, as word, Sacraments, &c. for it is a spirit.

Use 3. Then God may take it againe at his pleasure, *Job 1. 21.* at death the soul returneth to God againe, *Luke 23. 43, 46. Acts 7. 59.*

Reason 1. From the account to be made, and the reward to be received,

Use 1. To assure the Immortality of the soul, and to reprove the brutish ignorance of such as consider it not, *Eccles. 3. 21.*

Use 2. To exhort to prepare for this returne, and therefore to remember our Creator in the dayes of our youth.

Use 3. To comfort the godly in assurance of their returne to God at the last.

Eccles. 12. v. 8.

8. *Vanity of vanities (saith the Preacher) all is vanity.*

IN these words *Solomon* repeateth the conclusion of the whole book, which he laid downe in the beginning, *Chap. 1. 2.* and hath proved by sundry arguments throughout the book, especially by an Induction of many particulars. And now having finished his prooofe thereof, and demonstrated last of all, the vanity of childhood and old age, youth and death, he repeateth againe his conclusion, as that which he hath fully cleared, *vanity of, &c.*

Doct. 1. The whole estate of the creature from first to last and the whole estate of man from his childhood to his old age, yea to death it selfe, is a state of excessive vanity, vanity of vanities, university of vanities. *Rom. 8. 20.*

Exesse of vanity] For therefore it is called by an not vaine but vanity it selfe, yea, *vanity of vanities*; which is a superlative vanity, as holy of holies is a superlative holiness. *Vanity of vanities]* for it is vanities in the Plural number, vanities of many sorts; *University*, or *Universality of vanities* AN